



October 2, 2014 (Revised – change is highlighted)

To: Fox Cities Transit Commission

From: Deborah Wetter
General Manager

Subject: 2015 Proposed Fare Increase

In order to balance Valley Transit's budget for 2015 without reducing service, staff is proposing a fare increase for both fixed route bus service and ADA paratransit services in 2015. The last fare increase for Valley Transit was in 2009 when regular fares were raised from \$1.50 to \$1.80. Since that time, Valley Transit costs have increased by 11% due to increasing costs of fuel, parts and tires in addition to an increased number of parts being needed due to the aging fleet. Purchased transportation expenses have increased approximately 12% since 2009 primarily because of increased ridership, but also because the cost of the rides has also increased during that time. Salaries and fringe benefits have only increased 2% since 2009 and utility costs have remained relatively flat.

Since 2009, non-transportation revenue (from advertising on the buses, scrap metal sales, AASD tripper routes and selling several vehicles that were past their useful life) increased 21.5%, combined state and federal revenues increased by 9%, local share revenue increased 23%, but farebox revenue only increased 5.9%. In past years, local share revenue and farebox revenue each accounted for about 20% of Valley Transit revenue. Farebox revenue has been falling in the last several years and now makes up only 18% of revenue which has meant that local funding partners had to increase their contribution and now make up 22% of the revenue.

Staff is proposing several changes to the fare structure in addition to recommending a fare increase on the regular cash fare from \$1.80 to \$2.00. For a number of years, customers and community partners have requested that Valley Transit institute a youth fare. The AASD program only covers middle and high school students so elementary school children who ride the bus are paying full fare. And the youth in all communities other than Appleton are paying full fare for all their rides. It is a hardship for families with several kids to pay full fare for them to get to school every day. We are proposing a \$.75 youth fare with a \$22 30-day youth pass (Freedom Pass) which would be good year-round, not just in the summer. The Kids on the Go program will no longer be needed and will be eliminated. The Valley Transit II (VT II) basic fare will increase from \$3.60 to \$4.00, twice the regular fixed route fare which is allowable by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The premium VT II fare will remain at \$6.00.

We are also proposing to increase the ticket and pass prices except for the Senior/Disabled 30-Day Pass which was already at a higher rate. The fare for the Link (Route 9) would remain \$0.50. We are also proposing to reduce the Call A Ride fare from \$2.50 to \$2.00 to be consistent with the regular bus fare and allow free transfers to any bus route from Call A Ride. Lastly, in order to encourage Day Pass use rather than having customers pay cash for each ride, we propose to lower the Day Pass from \$5.00 to \$4.00 (the price of one round-trip bus ride). We hope that by pricing the Day Pass in this way, it will

provide more flexibility for our riders and also speed up operation of the routes by reducing the number of people paying cash fares. The table of existing and proposed fares is attached to this memo.

It is important to provide a number of opportunities for the public to provide comments to you about the fare increase. The communications plan is as follows:

ACTION ITEM	DATE
Memo to Fox Cities Transit Commission regarding proposed fare increase	October 8, 2014
Notice regarding Information Sessions & Public Hearing posted in Valley Transit buses and provided to Running, Inc. for distribution to VTII riders	October 9, 2014
Letters sent to non-profit agencies and businesses to inform them of the proposed fare increase and Public Hearing.	October 9, 2014
Press Release issued	October 10, 2014
Information Sessions in the following communities: Grand Chute/Town of Menasha, Neenah, Menasha, Heart of the Valley, Buchanan, Appleton – downtown & east	October 13-23, 2014
Public Hearing Legal Notice in Post-Crescent	October 19, 2014
Public Hearing on the Budget – Fox Cities Transit Commission	October 22, 2014 3:00 pm
Fox Cities Transit Commission Special Meeting – Valley Transit Budget Approval Requested	October 29, 2014
Budget Saturday – Council review of City of Appleton 2015 Budget. Public attendance is allowed.	November 1, 2014
Public Hearing on City of Appleton 2015 Budget (including Valley Transit) Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers	November 5, 2014 7:00 pm
2015 City of Appleton Budget (including Valley Transit) approval requested by Common Council	November 12, 2014 7:00 pm
Fare increase in effect	January 5, 2015
All information during the process on website, Facebook, Twitter and e-alerts	

The Commission will have several opportunities to give input and vote on the fare increase. The first is a discussion today. There will also be a public hearing on the fare increase and the budget at the Transit Commission meeting on October 22, 2014 when the item will be on the Commission agenda for discussion as well. And there will be a special meeting on October 29 for the Transit Commission to approve Valley Transit's budget including whatever fare increase the Commission decides is appropriate. In addition, there will be the opportunity for the public to give input on Valley Transit's budget at the Appleton Common Council public hearing on November 5, 2014 at 7 p.m. If a fare increase is approved by the Transit Commission and the Appleton Common Council, it will go into effect on January 5, 2015.

**Valley Transit
Proposed 2015 Fare Schedule**

Fare Type	Existing	Proposed	\$ Increase (Decrease)	% Increase
Cash - Regular	\$1.80	\$2.00	\$0.20	11.11%
Cash - Senior/Disabled	\$0.90	\$1.00	\$0.10	11.11%
Daypass	\$5.00	\$4.00	(\$1.00)	-20.00%
10-Ride Ticket	\$15.00	\$17.00	\$2.00	13.33%
10-Ride Senior/Disabled Ticket	\$9.00	\$10.00	\$1.00	11.11%
30 Day Pass	\$56.00	\$60.00	\$4.00	7.14%
30 Day Pass - Senior/Disabled	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Freedom Pass	\$42.00	Eliminated		
30 Day Freedom Pass (available all year)	\$20.00	\$22.00	\$2.00	10.00%
Route 9	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.00	0.00%
Call A Ride with free transfers	\$2.50	\$2.00	(\$0.50)	-20.00%
VT II	\$3.60	\$4.00	\$0.40	11.11%
VT II Premium	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Connector - ESA	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Connector - ESH	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Kids on the Go	\$0.60	Eliminated		
Kids (4 & Under)	Free	Free		
Youth Fare (18 & Under)	\$1.80	\$0.75	(\$1.05)	-58.33%
Transfers	Free	Free		



2015 PROPOSED FARE INCREASE
Frequently Asked Questions
 October 8, 2014

Proposed 2015 Fare Increase:

	Current	Proposed 2015
Cash (Riders 5 to 64)	\$1.80	\$2.00
Cash (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.90	\$1.00
DayPass	\$5.00	\$4.00
10-Ride Ticket	\$15.00	\$17.00
10-Ride Ticket (Senior/Disabled)	\$9.00	\$10.00
30 Day Pass	\$56.00	\$60.00
30-Day Pass (Senior/Disabled)	\$40.00	\$40.00
Freedom Pass	\$42.00	Eliminated
30 Day Freedom Pass (available all year)	\$20.00	\$22.00
Route 9 – The Link	\$0.50	\$0.50
Route 9 – The Link (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.25	\$0.25
Call A Ride with free transfers	\$2.50	\$2.00
VT II	\$3.60	\$4.00
VT II Premium	\$6.00	\$6.00
Connector – ESA	\$4.00	\$4.00
Connector – ESH	\$6.00	\$6.00
Kids on the Go	\$0.60	Eliminated
Kids (4 & under)	Free	Free
Youth Fare (18 & under)	\$1.80	\$0.75
Transfers	Free	Free

Why is Valley Transit proposing a fare increase?

In order to balance the budget for 2015 without reducing service, Valley Transit is proposing a fare increase for both fixed route and ADA paratransit services in 2015.

The last fare increase was in 2009. Since that time, Valley Transit costs have increased by 11% due to increasing costs in fuel, bus parts and tires. This amount continues to grow primarily due to our aging fleet. Expenses related to our paratransit services have increased 12% since 2009 primarily due to increased ridership, but also because the cost of the rides has increased during that time. Employee salaries and fringe benefits have only increased 2% since 2009 and utility costs have remained relatively flat.

In the past, farebox revenue accounted for 20% of Valley Transit revenue but has been falling in the last several years and now makes up only 18% of Valley Transit's budget. That has resulted in an increasing dependence on state and federal funding (60% of the revenue) and has caused the local funding partners to increase their contribution which now accounts for 22% of the revenue.



Won't the fare increase impact a large number of riders who can least afford it?

We realize that this fare increase comes at a time when many people in our community, including many of our riders, are trying to stretch their dollar further. While our cash fares are going up \$0.20, we encourage people to consider purchasing one of our pre-paid passes or tickets to save money. Our Regular 10-Ride Ticket will be priced at \$17.00, providing a \$0.30 discount per ride. For our frequent riders, Valley Transit will continue to offer a 30 Day Pass. The Regular 30 Day Pass will be \$60.00 and the Senior/Disabled 30 Day Pass will remain \$40.00.

If the proposed fare structure passes, there will be a decrease in the cost of the unlimited ride DayPass from \$5.00 to \$4.00. There will also be two new fare options for youth ages 5 to 18: a special cash fare of \$0.75 and a 30 Day Freedom Pass for \$22.00. This pass will be available for purchase year-round and provide unlimited bus rides for 30 days after it's activated.

Will you require passengers to exchange their existing tickets and passes if the fare increase is approved?

There will be a brief grace period during which time passengers may continue to use their existing fare media however; passengers should be prepared to exchange their passes as soon as possible in January 2015. A formal policy will be posted and distributed to our passengers following the decision by the Fox Cities Transit Commission on October 29, 2014.

Prior to this time, we ask that agencies purchasing large quantities of tickets and passes limit their purchases to the amount that they anticipate their clients will use prior to December 31, 2014.

What is the timeline for passing this proposed fare increase?

Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 3:00 p.m. - Public Hearing before Fox Cities Transit Commission

Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers

Public comments are welcome at this meeting or can be submitted in advance to Valley Transit via phone at 920-832-1629, email: valley.transit@appleton.org or mail to: Valley Transit, Attn: Proposed Fare Increase, 801 S. Whitman Ave., Appleton, WI 54914.

Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 3:00 p.m. – Action requested by Fox Cities Transit Commission

Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers

Saturday, Nov. 1 - Council review of the City of Appleton 2015 budget (including Valley Transit) Public attendance is allowed.

Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers.

Wednesday, Nov. 5 at 7:00 p.m. - Public Hearing on City of Appleton 2015 Budget (including Valley Transit)

Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers

Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 7:00 p.m. - 2015 City of Appleton Budget (including Valley Transit) approval requested by Common Council

Meeting location: Appleton City Hall, Council Chambers

Monday, January 5, 2015 - Fare increase in effect, if approved.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

PROPOSED 2015 FARE INCREASE

In order to balance the 2015 budget without reducing service, Valley Transit is proposing a fare increase for fixed route and paratransit services to take effect January 5, 2015.

	Current	Proposed
Cash (Riders 5 to 64)	\$1.80	\$2.00
Cash (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.90	\$1.00
DayPass	\$5.00	\$4.00
10-Ride Ticket	\$15.00	\$17.00
10-Ride Ticket (Senior/Disabled)	\$9.00	\$10.00
30 Day Pass	\$56.00	\$60.00
30-Day Pass (Senior/Disabled)	\$40.00	\$40.00
Freedom Pass	\$42.00	Eliminated
30 Day Freedom Pass (available for purchase all year)	\$20.00	\$22.00
Route 9 - The Link	\$0.50	\$0.50
Route 9 - The Link (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.25	\$0.25
Call A Ride with free transfers	\$2.50	\$2.00
Valley Transit II	\$3.60	\$4.00
Valley Transit II Premium	\$6.00	\$6.00
Connector - ESA	\$4.00	\$4.00
Connector - ESH	\$6.00	\$6.00
Kids on the Go	\$0.60	Eliminated
Kids (4 & under)	Free	Free
Youth Fare (5 - 18)	\$1.80	\$0.75
Transfers	Free	Free

PUBLIC HEARING DATES:

Wednesday, October 22, 2014
3:00 PM - Appleton City Hall
 Public Hearing before Fox Cities
 Transit Commission

Wednesday, October 29, 2014
3:00 PM - Appleton City Hall
 Action requested by Fox Cities
 Transit Commission

Saturday, November 1, 2014
Appleton City Hall
 Council Review of City of Appleton Budget
 (including Valley Transit)
 Public attendance is allowed but comments are not
 allowed. Public comment will be on Nov. 5.

Wednesday, November 5, 2014
7:00 PM - Appleton City Hall
 Public Hearing on City of Appleton 2015
 Budget (including Valley Transit)

Wednesday, November 12, 2014
7:00 PM - Appleton City Hall
 2015 City of Appleton Budget (including
 Valley Transit) approval requested by
 Common Council

Monday, January 5, 2015
 Fare increase in effect, if approved

Questions?

Please call 920-832-5800



Public comments are welcome at the public hearings listed above or may be submitted in advance to Valley Transit:

Mail: Valley Transit Proposed Fare Increase
 801 S. Whitman Ave.
 Appleton, WI 54914

Phone: 920-832-1629 (leave message)
 or email: valley.transit@appleton.org

Comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM on the day prior to each scheduled meeting listed above.

Publication: The Post-Crescent
Run Dates: 10/12/14 and 10/19/14

Notice of Public Hearing

In order to balance the budget for 2015 without reducing service, Valley Transit is proposing a fare increase for both fixed route and ADA paratransit services in 2015.

Valley Transit would like to welcome public comment at a public hearing to be held **Wednesday, October 22, 2014 at 3:00 PM in Council Chambers at Appleton City Hall, 100 N. Appleton St., Appleton, WI 54911.**

	Current	Proposed 2015
Cash (Riders 5 to 64)	\$1.80	\$2.00
Cash (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.90	\$1.00
DayPass	\$5.00	\$4.00
10-Ride Ticket	\$15.00	\$17.00
10-Ride Ticket (Senior/Disabled)	\$9.00	\$10.00
30 Day Pass	\$56.00	\$60.00
30-Day Pass (Senior/Disabled)	\$40.00	\$40.00
Freedom Pass	\$42.00	Eliminated
30 Day Freedom Pass (available all year)	\$20.00	\$22.00
Route 9 – The Link	\$0.50	\$0.50
Route 9 – The Link (Senior/Disabled)	\$0.25	\$0.25
Call A Ride with free transfers	\$2.50	\$2.00
VT II	\$3.60	\$4.00
VT II Premium	\$6.00	\$6.00
Connector – ESA	\$4.00	\$4.00
Connector – ESH	\$6.00	\$6.00
Kids on the Go	\$0.60	Eliminated
Kids (4 & under)	Free	Free
Youth Fare (18 & under)	\$1.80	\$0.75
Transfers	Free	Free

Individuals with comments are welcome to attend the public hearing or may submit comments in writing to *Valley Transit Fare Increase*, 801 Whitman Ave., Appleton, WI 54914. Comments can also be made by phone at 920-832-1629 or e-mail at valley.transit@appleton.org. The deadline to submit written or phone comments is 5:00 PM, Tuesday, October 21, 2014.



Proposed 2015 Fare Increase

Public Comments as of 10/16/14

The public has several ways to provide comments regarding the proposed fare increase: in person during public hearing on 10/22/14, leaving a message on the recorded line, emailing, U.S. Mail and social media posts.

The following reflect the comments received via each method as of 10/16/14 – the date we have to mail packets to the Fox Cities Transit Commission.

Another list of comments received through 5:00 PM on 10/21/14 will be handed out at the Fox Cities Transit Commission's public hearing on 10/22/14.

Recorded line:

No messages received as of 10/16/14.

U.S. Mail:

No letters received as of 10/16/14.

Email:

From: Sr. Pia Bautista
Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2014 12:04 AM
To: Nicole Voelzke
Subject: Re: Valley Transit Proposed 2015 Fare Increase

Hi, Nicole....the 2015 increase/adjustment of bus fares will not be a burden on anybody! Am glad that the fare of 25 cents for seniors on the Link remains the same because I am aware that some tenants from Riverwalk Place at Eagle Flats limit their trips just to the Link, even to buy groceries (within walking distance from the Transit Center, the end of the line for the Link). Thus they need not spend another 90cents/\$1 to use the other buses just to go marketing. And glad for the reduction of the 5-18-yr-old fare to 75cents, rather than a full adult fare. Thank you all! Enjoy Fall days! Sr.Pia

From: Sr. Pia Bautista **Sent:** Tuesday, October 14, 2014 8:58 PM
To: Nicole Voelzke
Subject: Re: Valley Transit Proposed 2015 Fare Increase

Another thanks: that the Link route goes on Fremont St. - some of us at Eagle Flats go to the doctors' clinic on Madison St. behind St. Elizabeth Hospital and the hospital too. Otherwise, use the VT II, like tomorrow for me. And a real blessing too is its running on Walnut St. with the two churches I go to at noon on weekdays and on

Saturday afternoons (for Sunday). When we were moving from Washington Place downtown, some preferred to move to Oneida Hts. to remain on bus routes - I "dared and trusted" and we got the Link!!! To you all, thanks again! Pia

Social Media:

Twitter: No comments received as of 10/16/14.

Facebook:

Comments to first post regarding proposed fare increase. Posted on 10/10/14.

- 7 people like this.

Edward C Treuer Jr What is Connector - ESA and Connector -ESH? No information on valley transit II for a monthly passes information. We will be there for this meeting on Oct. 22nd at 3 pm . My wife never been there in Appleton city hall pls give me address soon as possible for my wife.

* the machine at downtown bus station need new machine to add credit card or debt card there. Also need ATM Machine for trying to get bus pass out of that machine.

October 10 at 2:05pm · Edited · Like · 1

Edward C Treuer Jr Please provide us sign language interpreter on Oct. 22 at appleton city hall at 3pm. Pls contact us . Thanks.

October 10 at 2:05pm · Like

Jennifer Binder I understand the raise in price but its hard! I can barley afford the 56 a month and without the pass I cant get to work. Mabey someone can figure out a way to get more goverment funding so the poor people in this city can still ride the bus

October 10 at 6:40pm · Like · 2

Sarah Treuer It is hard for us foods goes up even electric and bus too. We are low income so we have to hang there...if valley tansit put donation box at downtown or put on every buses for donation box. it would be good idea.

October 10 at 10:07pm · Like

Kong Meng Vue Valley Transit...Under the public hearing dates the very last day it say Monday, January 5, 2014 and shouldn't it be 2015?

October 11 at 1:10pm · Unlike · 1

Kristi Murray It's high time that the prices have been raised! you've held off for so long. It's not that bad of a price increase. Maybe stopping the change cards could/would help too?! However, most of all THANKS for NOT raising the s/d 30 day pass. That helps so many of your regular riders, including me, tremendously

October 11 at 2:46pm · Like

Carri Kramer Yes but a lot needs to be done with people sleeping at the bus station and other things on in transit also. Security don't look at the camera often enough and a lot happens when security is not around

October 11 at 6:20pm · Like · 2

Valley Transit Kong Meng Vue, thanks for catching that. We'll correct it and post an updated notice.

Commented on by Nikki Voelzke · October 13 at 9:58am · Like · 2

Jennifer Binder And swearing on the bus! Passangers shouldnt have to yell at people who are saying th 4 letter word repetely in front of young kids

October 13 at 6:03pm · Like · 1

Valley Transit Edward C Treuer Jr and Sarah Treuer, we will make sure to have a sign language interpreter at the meeting at 3:00 PM on Wednesday, October 22. The meeting will be held on the 6th floor of City Hall. The address is 100 N. Appleton St. It is located at the end of City Center which is in front of the Transit Center on the other side of Washington St. City Hall is at the end of the building at College & Appleton St. near Chase Bank.

Commented on by Nikki Voelzke · 12:51pm · Like

Comments to second post regarding proposed fare increase. Posted on 10/14/14.

5 people like this.

Elizabeth Binish Dislike.

October 14 at 10:02am · Like

Kristi Murray Agreed Elizabeth but they haven't done it in years.

Yesterday at 4:57am · Like

Kelly Olson Kohl WILL Old Passes Still Be good?

16 hours ago · Like

Valley Transit Kelly Olson Kohl, there will be a brief grace period during which time passengers may continue to use their existing fare media however; passengers should be prepared to exchange their passes as soon as possible in January 2015.

A formal policy will be posted and distributed to our passengers following the decision by the Fox Cities Transit Commission on October 29, 2014.

Commented on by Nikki Voelzke · 12:54pm · Edited · Like

Nicole Voelzke

From: Rachel Raasch <rsraasch27@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2014 8:39 AM
To: Valley Transit
Subject: Proposed Fare Increase

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my indignation over the proposed fare increase. The plan for adjusting the transit fares would place additional burden on regular transit riders, many or most of whom are low income and depend on the bus system for transportation. Furthermore, the proposed decrease in day fares would benefit primarily people attending a downtown event such as Oktoberfest, who are *not* financially challenged. The regular fare increase may seem modest to some, but for people who depend on the bus system to get to work, appointments, and class every day, it adds up very quickly. Low income people often work with a case manager or social worker to create a budget for their finances, and their money is budgeted to the last dime. Just to put the amount of increase into perspective, consider that people using SNAP benefits to feed their families receive only \$1.30 per meal. An extra dollar or two for a monthly pass should not be squeezed out of those who already are struggling to make ends meet. Please reconsider your proposal.

Sincerely,
Rachel Raasch

Nicole Voelzke

From: Lo Lee <lolee@tds.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2014 4:02 PM
To: Nicole Voelzke
Subject: RE: Valley Transit Strategic Planning - next meeting

Hi Nicole,

Either day works well with me but prefer between morning and 3pm if possible. Regarding Transit Fare Increment proposal, in my opinion and on behalf of the Hmong Speaking Transit Users, I believe that our transit authority is currently doing its best in term of ensuring that local transit continues exist to provide its crucial services to members of our community in a fair cost with respect to continuity of the system.

I will be out of town tomorrow and will not be able to join you but wish thing going well.

Lo Lee