



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 23, 2008

Contact: Crystal Odum Ford  
Transit Superintendent

codumford@ci.vallejo.ca.us, (707) 648-5241

---

**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\***

---

### **Baylink Ferry Fare Reduction Planned - Ferry Bus Connections Added**

**Vallejo, CA** – A new plan to reduce fares on the popular Baylink Ferry has been developed to coincide with the startup of a new SolanoExpress/Baylink Route 78 and Local Route 5. The City of Vallejo has developed the plan in partnership with the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Solano Transportation Authority (STA), and Solano County. Operated by Vallejo Transit, this new and expanded service will provide improved access to Vallejo's Baylink Ferry Terminal. The City expects that the partial fare rollback, effective November 1, 2008, coupled with the new express service will help recapture the estimated 10% to 15% loss in ridership following a recent fare increase.

"I am pleased to be part of this plan to roll back the fares for the riders of the Baylink Ferry between Vallejo and San Francisco," commented Vallejo Mayor Osby Davis. "With the difficult economic times facing the City of Vallejo and the State of California and the recent fluctuations in the price of gas, it is critical that we work together to continue to provide and maintain the affordability of the Baylink Ferry Service for our riders and our residents."

Up to \$2.2 million is needed to cover the operating costs of the service for the balance of Fiscal Year 2008/09 and enable the City of Vallejo to reduce the Ferry fares. The largest share of these funds (up to \$1.9 million) would be allocated from the voter-approved toll bridge funds which are administered by MTC, with WETA concurrence, with the balance provided by the STA and Solano County.

"It has been a pleasure to work in partnership with the City of Vallejo, MTC, STA, and Solano County to develop a plan that we hope will bring more riders back to the Baylink Ferry," said WETA Vice Chair Tony Intintoli. "Our goal is simple – let's work together to get riders out of their cars and onto safe, reliable, relaxing and affordable ferries."

In order to allow Vallejo to implement this Plan, all 5 partners need to take action to support the increased funding contribution. The STA and WETA Boards already approved their contributions, and the City of Vallejo, MTC, and the Solano County Board of Supervisors are also scheduled to consider their contributions to the plan.

If approved, this plan would enable the City to rollback the fares for the service for a monthly Ferry pass from \$330 per month to \$290. The fares for one way, daily and ten day passes will also be rolled back at the same rate. Collectively the funding plan would cover the operating shortfall this fiscal year for the City of Vallejo's Baylink Ferry Service which was caused by the recent and dramatic spike in gas prices, and avoid potential cuts in the Ferry Service. The plan helps ensure a smooth transition of the Baylink ferry service to WETA as soon as July 1, 2009.

"This funding plan for the Baylink Ferry comes at an opportune time for both Ferry riders and Solano County residents," stated Solano County Supervisor and MTC Commissioner Jim Spring. "The \$290 monthly fare pass for the Ferry compares favorably with the combined cost of gas, bridge tolls, parking and the wear and tear on the car for those commuting by automobile. The collaboration between Vallejo, MTC, STA, WETA and Solano County is particularly timely with the recent and upcoming rollout of new bus services designed to improve the transit connectivity to and from Vallejo's Ferry Terminal."

The New SolanoExpress/Baylink Route 78 is scheduled to begin service on October 6, 2008 with commuter-style buses with connections to the Ferry from Vallejo, Benicia and Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek BART. Route 78 will be operated by Vallejo Transit in partnership with the STA.

A new Ferry feeder express bus route, operated by Napa VINE Transit, is scheduled to begin operation in early 2009. The new route will be the first express bus service from the Napa Valley to serve the Baylink Ferry. Both the SolanoExpress/Baylink Route 78 and the new Napa service receive funding from Regional Measure 2 bridge toll money. After successfully competing for and receiving a Lifeline Funding Grant in August, Vallejo Transit modified its Route 5 to introduce service to the new Solano Community College Vallejo campus and serve the Ferry.

For more information on the Baylink Ferry System services and the proposed reduction in Ferry fares, please contact City of Vallejo's Transit Superintendent, Crystal Odum Ford at 707-648-5241, or go to the website: <http://www.baylinkferry.com>. For more information on the range of transit connections serving the Ferry and Solano County, contact STA's Solano Napa Commuter Information at 1-800-53-KMUTE or go to the website at [www.solanolinks.com/commuterinfo.html](http://www.solanolinks.com/commuterinfo.html).

\*