



Ventura County Transit Smart Card

Ventura County, California, covers an area of 1,873 square miles with 43 miles of coastline. Public transportation serves the communities of Ventura, Oxnard, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, Camarillo, Santa Paula, and Fillmore. The population of Ventura County is 742,000, making the county the 12th most populous county in California. Within Ventura County, the Ventura County Transportation Commission manages six transit operators, with service that crosses into Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties. The six operators are Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA), South Coast Area Transit (SCAT), Simi Valley Transit (SVT), Thousand Oaks Transit (TOT), Camarillo Area Transit (CAT), and Moorpark City Transit (MPT).

In 2000, the Ventura County Transportation Commission awarded a contract to the Motorola/ERG alliance to supply an AFC system using smart cards. The proposed system combined the smart card fare medium with automated passenger counting and Global Positioning System (GPS) location. In late 2001, the Motorola portion of the contract was transferred to ERG, with ERG assuming sole responsibility for the contract.

A total of 330 pieces of equipment have been installed and put into revenue service since January 2002. This equipment includes on-bus smart card readers, driver's consoles, and automated passenger counters. A network of 19 POS terminals allows cards to be purchased and reloaded. In addition, passes and e-purse values can be loaded remotely. This capability allows reloading to occur automatically when the smart card is tagged on a bus.

A total of 10,000 cards have been supplied, and additional cards are in procurement for the current year. The cards in use are dual-interface smart cards with 4 KB of memory that comply with the ISO/IEC 7816 and ISO/IEC 14443 Type B standards.

In addition to collecting fares, the system includes automated passenger counting equipment that provides GPS location data and passenger entrance and exit counts.

The campus of California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) has its own version of the smart card. The card is used for transit on the VCTC system and serves as a student identity badge for use on campus. The student smart cards carry two e-purses—one for transit and one for use on campus. The campus e-purse will be suitable for small transactions typical at a university, such as those at vending machines, photocopiers, cafeterias, and for computer services. Other potential uses of the card include on-campus parking and building access.

The student smart card allows university students to travel on the buses free of charge. The system records all bus rides taken by students using their cards. This record is used to reimburse the transit agencies, using funds provided by the university.

This profile was developed by the Smart Card Alliance Terminal and eTransaction Infrastructure Task Force with the assistance of David McIlwraith, ERG Group, for the report, "Transit and Retail Payment: Opportunities for Collaboration and Convergence," available at http://www.smartcardalliance.org/alliance_activities/transit_retail_payment_report.cfm. For more information about how smart cards are used for transit and retail payment, visit the Alliance web site at <http://www.smartcardalliance.org>.