



## **City of Milpitas**

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### **Milpitas Secures \$2.77M VTA Grant for SMART**

*Expansion adds autonomous vehicles, VTA trip planning, and business partnerships.*

MILPITAS, CA – SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The City of Milpitas has been awarded a \$2.77 million grant from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to support the continuation and expansion of the Milpitas SMART (Simple, Mobile, Access to Reliable Transit) program, an on-demand rideshare service designed to meet the real-world mobility needs of transit-dependent residents.

Funded through VTA's Innovative Transit Service Models Grant Program, the award reflects SMART's success as a scalable and sustainable model for equitable transportation across the region. The expansion will grow the fleet by 50%, increase service hours, and introduce autonomous vehicles (AVs) as a pilot, positioning Milpitas at the forefront of community-based mobility innovation.

"This grant is a huge win for Milpitas and a testament to the SMART program's impact," said Milpitas Mayor Carmen Montano. "With thousands of rides already completed and growing monthly demand, SMART is transforming how our residents, especially seniors, students, and families access the places they need to go. This funding helps us meet that need and lead the way on the future of transit."

Launched in late 2022, SMART fills critical first/last-mile transportation gaps by providing low-cost, on-demand rides via a free mobile app. The service has proven especially valuable for disadvantaged populations, with more than 100,000 rides completed to date.

In July 2025 alone, SMART provided 5,934 rides, 4,537 of which served disadvantaged and transit-dependent users. The program connects riders to schools, healthcare providers, shopping centers, and transit hubs delivering a vital service where fixed-route transit may not reach.

"SMART is more than a transit option, it's a lifeline for some members in our community," said City Manager Deanna J. Santana. "This investment allows us to expand a proven service that

reduces emissions, supports our Climate Action Plan, and ensures that mobility in Milpitas is inclusive, forward-thinking, and people-first.”

The newly funded expansion includes several major enhancements:

- **Fleet Expansion:** A 50% increase in vehicles and service hours to meet rising demand.
- **Autonomous Vehicle Pilot:** Deployment of AVs to evaluate long-term fiscal sustainability and innovation potential.
- **Integrated Trip Planning:** In-app tools to help users seamlessly connect with VTA buses and light rail.
- **Employer Engagement:** Outreach to local businesses to support commuter access and workplace mobility options.

As Milpitas continues to grow especially through new housing and transit-oriented developments, the SMART program is positioned to scale with the community. The expansion also strengthens regional sustainability efforts by shifting short car trips to shared, electric-powered rides.

“We thank VTA and its leadership for recognizing the value of SMART, not just to Milpitas, but as a model for the county and beyond,” added Mayor Carmen Montano.

For more information about Milpitas SMART, visit: <https://book.smart.rideco.com/login>.

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### **About the City of Milpitas**

Located at the southern end of San Francisco Bay, Milpitas is a progressive community that is an integral part of Silicon Valley. A full-service city with water utility, sewer utility, police and fire services, Milpitas is a flourishing community with a very diverse and inclusive resident population of nearly 80,000. Often referred to as the Crossroads of Silicon Valley, the City is situated between major thoroughfares in the Bay Area and considered a highly desirable location for world-class technology companies seeking to build a central base of operations. With the addition of the new Milpitas Transit Center offering BART, light rail, and bus service, and multiple new mixed-use development projects, along with a host of new City Plans and Programs in support of an inspiring and sustainable future, the City is at the forefront of building the next generation economy. For more information, visit: [www.milpitas.gov](http://www.milpitas.gov)