



DATE: January 22, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

FROM: Bjorn Gripenburg, Project Manager, Public Works and Utilities (PW&U)
Jared Hall, Transit Manager, PW&U
Christopher J. Bolt, MPA, PE, ICMA-CM – Director of PW&U

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of ChargePoint Express Plus Battery-Electric Bus Charging Equipment Through Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute All Documents Necessary to Complete the Purchase

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve the attached resolution authorizing the purchase of ChargePoint Express Plus battery-electric bus charging equipment through Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program and authorizing the City Manager to execute all documents necessary to complete the purchase.

BACKGROUND

On September 11, 2023, the City Council approved Resolution No. 2023-136 N.C.S. adopting the Petaluma Transit Zero-Emission Fleet Transition Plan, which formalizes Petaluma Transit's framework for the transition from its existing internal combustion fleet to battery-electric, zero-emission buses, and paratransit vans. The Zero-Emission Transition Fleet Plan meets Federal Transit Administration and California Air Resource Board requirements, the latter of which requires agencies to transition fixed-route buses to zero-emission fleets by 2035 fully. In alignment with the City's Climate Emergency Framework, the Zero-Emission Transition Fleet Plan envisions transitioning the entire transit fleet to zero-emission by 2030.

In order to start this transition, the City of Petaluma first needs to install charging infrastructure at its transit facility (555 N. McDowell Blvd.), which is a significant undertaking requiring upgrades on Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) "to-the-meter" (TTM) infrastructure, as well as the City's "behind-the-meter" (BTM) and charging infrastructure (Figure 1). The City successfully applied to PG&E's Electric Vehicle Fleet Program, through which PG&E will construct, own, and maintain all TTM infrastructure at no cost to the City. The City will design, build, own, operate, and maintain all BTM and charging infrastructure. Additionally, PG&E provides up to \$600,000

in incentives and rebates to support the City’s design, purchase, and installation of BTM and charging infrastructure. The City’s contract with PG&E commits to purchasing and deploying 20 buses and paratransit vans and installing 10 dual-port chargers (with the capability to charge up to 20 vehicles) by 2027 in order to receive TTM upgrades and BTM and charging infrastructure incentives and rebates. The charging loads are restricted to off-peak hours only (9 PM-6 AM) and capped at 1800 kW.

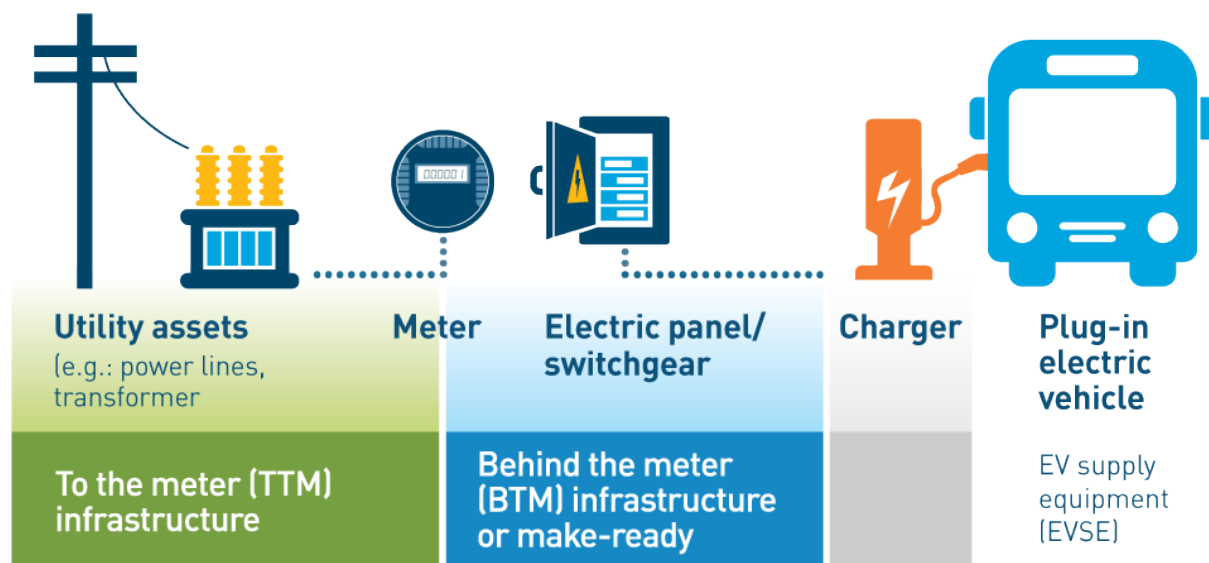


Figure 1: Overview of to-the-Meter (TTM, shown in green) and behind-the-meter (BTM) infrastructure (BTM, shown in blue). Source: PG&E

On October 16, 2023, the City Council approved Resolution No. 2023-160 N.C.S., which authorized the City Manager to grant an easement to PG&E needed to install and maintain its TTM infrastructure at the transit facility, and 2023-161 N.C.S., which authorized the City Manager to purchase switchgear and busway (BTM equipment with a long lead time).

DISCUSSION

On March 24, 2023, the City Manager executed a Professional Services Agreement with NV5 to assist with the design of Petaluma Transit’s charging infrastructure. Staff worked closely with NV5 to explore charging equipment options, with an emphasis on 1) compatibility with the City’s authorized charging loads as determined by PG&E, 2) compatibility with the City’s preferred battery-electric bus makes and models, 3) eligibility for incentives and rebates from PG&E, 4) compatibility with the transit yard configuration, and 5) ease of use and customer support for the operation and maintenance of charging equipment and software. Through this exercise and outreach to peer transit agencies, NV5, and staff agreed that ChargePoint’s Express Plus equipment and software best met the abovementioned criteria.

In seeking a competitive and expedient purchasing option for charging equipment, the project team solicited quotes and lead times through the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program (Formerly National Joint Powers Alliance). Sourcewell allows the City to access competitively awarded, nationally leveraged cooperative purchasing contracts and purchase items in a more expeditious

and less time-intensive manner than inviting bids. Participating in this competitively bid and awarded purchasing program complies with the Petaluma Municipal Code, Section 4.04.100 (Cooperative purchasing programs), which supports the purchases of supplies and equipment made under a cooperative purchasing program with other public agencies that have been competitively bid and awarded.

Installation of the charging infrastructure would be completed as part of the first of two construction phases of improvements to the Petaluma Transit facility, currently anticipated for late 2024 to coincide with the delivery of switchgear and busway (long lead items ordered in November 2023). The charging equipment would be installed in two phases, with the second occurring upon securing additional funds needed to fulfill Petaluma Transit's future bus charging needs and its contract with PG&E. The first phase will provide enough charging equipment to charge ten buses simultaneously. The second phase will provide equipment to charge an additional ten buses.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Petaluma Transit Zero-Emission Transition Fleet Plan was discussed at the July 13, 2023, Transit Advisory Committee meeting and the September 11, 2023, City Council meeting. Additionally, the Transit Advisory Committee discussed this charging equipment purchase request at its January 11, 2024, meeting and recommended it for the City Council's consideration. City Council and Transit Advisory Committee meetings are publicly-noticed.

This agenda item appeared on the City's tentative agenda document on January 8, 2024, which was a publicly-noticed meeting.

COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

This action supports the following City Council Goals:

- Workplan item #52 - Develop a framework to move the City and Transit vehicle fleet from fossil-fuel-based to hybrid, renewable compressed natural gas, and/ or electric vehicles; continue pursuing grant funding opportunities for electric vehicles.

CLIMATE ACTION/SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

Petaluma Transit will eliminate tailpipe emissions and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by transitioning from internal combustion vehicles to a zero-emission fleet. This will help to achieve many of the goals outlined in the Petaluma Climate Action Framework, including assisting the City in achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (New Construction). Section 15303 consists of the construction of new, small facilities or structures and the installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures and explicitly includes accessory structures. Here, the

charging equipment that would be installed within an existing facility is small and would be considered an accessory structure. Additionally, the purchase and installation are exempt pursuant to CEQA Section 15301, as the purchase and installation of charging equipment would be made to an existing facility. CEQA Class 1 modification exemptions consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Here, the electrical infrastructure and improvements would be minor, and an existing facility that conveys negligible or no expansion of use is covered under this exemption.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

The anticipated cost for the charging equipment is \$876,185.31, including tax and shipping. The adopted budget for the Transit Facility Electrification project (CIP #C65502214) in FY 24 is \$1,349,000 and is fully funded through outside funding sources, which include \$940,000 from the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant and a \$420,000 rebate from PG&E for the design, purchase, and installation of chargers.

ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives are available as a means to purchase the chargers:

1. Obtain formal bids for the purchase of chargers, or
2. Include the purchase of chargers in the scope of work for the construction phase, which will likely go to bid in early 2024.

Although City staff does not anticipate taking delivery of its first electric buses and final BTM equipment until late 2024 or early 2025, ordering charging equipment is recommended at this time in order to secure more competitive pricing, as ChargePoint has indicated it will increase prices by at least ten percent after January 2024. Additionally, by purchasing directly through a distributor, the City will avoid markup fees typically charged by contractors.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
2. Quote for Charging Equipment