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DATE: November 18, 2024

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

FROM: Jared Hall – Transit Manager, Public Works and Utilities (PW&U)  
Gina Benedetti-Petnic, PE – Interim Director, PW&U

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Cooperative Funding Agreement No. G31301E1J between the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and the City of Petaluma for the Petaluma Transit Expansion Project Under the Move Traffic and Improve Safety Program as Part of the Go Sonoma Expenditure Plan

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute Cooperative Funding Agreement No. G31301E1J between the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and the City of Petaluma for the Petaluma Transit Expansion Project under the Move Traffic and Improve Safety Program as part of the Go Sonoma Expenditure Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

On November 3, 2020, Sonoma County voters approved the Go Sonoma Act (Measure DD), a 20-year extension of Sonoma County's ¼-cent sales tax dedicated to transportation improvements (Measure M), which was set to expire on March 31, 2025. With the passage of Go Sonoma, voters approved a new Expenditure Plan that will take effect in April 2025. The Go Sonoma Expenditure Plan includes four programs in two categories:

Category 1: Fix Roads, Fill Potholes, Improve Safety and Usability for All (65 percent of funds)

- 1.1: Smooth and Maintained Roads (38 percent)
- 1.2: Move Traffic and Improve Safety (27 percent)

Category 2: Improve Alternatives to Cars, Fight Climate Change (35 percent)

- 2.1: Increase Bus Service, Affordability, and First/Last Mile Connections (23 percent)
- 2.2: Build Bikeways and Pathways (12 percent)

## **DISCUSSION**

Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) adopted the 2023 Strategic Implementation Plan, which outlines the policies for the Go Sonoma program and the use of funds provided under the 2020 Go Sonoma Act Expenditure Plan and Ordinance, approved by Sonoma County voters on November 3, 2020 (hereinafter referred to as “Go Sonoma”).

The Petaluma Transit Expansion Project was awarded funding through the Move Traffic and Improve Safety Program (MTIS), a key component of the Go Sonoma initiative. The MTIS program is designed to allocate approximately \$7.0 million annually toward competitive projects that enhance mobility and safety in Sonoma County. Projects in the MTIS program are evaluated based on criteria such as improving traffic flow, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing safety, and providing alternatives to driving, including public transit.

The Petaluma Transit Expansion Project will receive \$2,031,000 in funding to support expanded transit services for Petaluma Transit from FY25 through FY27. This includes increasing service frequency on routes 11 and 2, as well as partially funding the first two LumaGo microtransit on-demand shuttle zones.

Pursuant to the Strategic Implementation Plan and Go Sonoma, SCTA requires the City of Petaluma to enter into a Cooperative Funding Agreement. This agreement establishes a collaborative framework between the two parties to develop transportation improvements that enhance mobility and safety in Sonoma County. By entering into these Cooperative Funding Agreements, SCTA will be able to make quarterly distributions to the City of Petaluma for the identified programs once the Go Sonoma Expenditure Plan goes into effect in April 2025.

SCTA - Transit Expansion Grant FY25-FY27					
Service/ Route	Est Start Date	Description	Service - Modified	Hours	Total
LumaGo (Zone 1)	Sep-24	Downtown-midtown-SMART- Petaluma	2 buses peak time, 1 off peak	M-Th 7am-8pm, Fr 7am- 10pm, Sat 8am-10pm, Sun 9am-6pm	\$953,134
School Trippers	Aug-24	Routes 301, 302	1-2 trips per route during school	M-F 7-9am, 3-5pm	\$161,759
Route 11	Jan-25	Washington St	15-minute peak service frequency	M-F 7am-6pm	\$392,971
Route 2	Aug-25	N. McDowell Blvd	15-minute peak service frequency	M-F 7am-6pm	\$320,574
LumaGo (Zone 2)	Sep-25	East Petaluma- SRJC-Corona SMART station	2 buses peak time, 1 off peak	M-Th 7am-8pm, Fr 7am- 10pm, Sat 8am-10pm, Sun 9am-6pm	\$624,549
					\$2,452,987

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

SCTA conducts public outreach efforts related to Go Sonoma. SCTA Board of Directors and Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public, and meeting dates and agendas are available at <https://scta.ca.gov/meetings-and-events/>.

The Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) unanimously approved a recommendation in support of Council adopting this resolution at the October 15, 2024 meeting.

This agenda item appeared on the City’s tentative agenda document on November 4, 2024, which was a publicly noticed meeting.

### **COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT**

The transit operations efforts funded by Go Sonoma will support the City Council’s Safe Mobility and Community Connectivity / Safe Streets Goal, as well as the following Council Workplan Items:

- #23: Expand transit service on primary corridors.
- #27: Encourage transit use through expanded service, pass programs, partnerships, and promotion.
- #215: Update the Transit vision for the City, including reviewing transit service levels, alternative delivery models, reducing barriers to use, and increasing ridership

### **CLIMATE ACTION/SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS**

By expanding transit offerings along major Petaluma arterials, the project aims to ease congestion, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and encourage more residents to utilize public transportation. These improvements will contribute to a more reliable and efficient transit system, while also supporting the broader goals of reducing emissions and enhancing mobility throughout Petaluma. Transportation is Petaluma's leading source of greenhouse gas emissions, at 66.5 percent.<sup>1</sup>

This action helps to create additional “high quality transit corridors” as outlined in the City’s Blueprint for Climate Action adopted on November 4, 2024. Specifically, this action is consistent with the Blueprint Cornerstone Action TS-1 “Petaluma transit service”, which seeks to “Expand and improve Petaluma Transit and shared mobility services to be more accessible, affordable, and timely.” This action is also aligned with Blueprint actions TS-3 “Microtransit pilot program”, TS-4 Transit service planning, TS-5 “Transit access planning”, and TS-6 “Regional coordination and partnership.”

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(2), in that entering into cooperative agreements does not meet CEQA’s definition of a “project,” because the action or and the operations of transit service does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and because this action constitutes administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. If this action qualified as a “project” under CEQA, it would be exempt under the Common Sense Exemption (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)), as the funds will be allocated to expanding the City’s existing

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rcpa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/RCPA-GHG-Inventory-Update-2022-Full-Report-FINAL-2024-07-08.pdf>

public transit system, with the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by single-occupancy vehicles.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

Authorizing the City Manager to execute this Cooperative Funding Agreements with SCTA would enable SCTA to allocate and distribute Go Sonoma transportation sales tax revenues to the City of Petaluma to support transit operations. As noted above, the funding agreement will provide \$2,031,000 in funding for transit with \$421,987 in TDA transit enterprise funding as local match for a total project amount of \$2,452,987.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

If the City Council decides not to authorize the City Manager to execute the Cooperative Funding Agreement with SCTA, the City will not receive Go Sonoma transportation sales tax revenues to support the Petaluma Transit Expansion Project and other transit operations.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution with Exhibit A (Cooperative Funding Agreement No. G31301E1J)