



DATE: March 18, 2025

TO: Transit Advisory Committee

FROM: Jared Hall, Transit Manager

SUBJECT: Transit Manager Report

Transit Manager's Report to Transit Advisory Committee

Ridership on Petaluma Transit provided 21,059 rides in December 2024 compared to 20,612 rides provided in December 2023, a 2.1% ridership increase.

Ridership on Petaluma Paratransit service provided 925 rides in December 2024 compared to 728 in December 2023, a 27% increase.

Transit Operations – Contracted Services

Petaluma Transit contracts for a large proportion of its transit operations. This includes driving, dispatch, fleet and facility maintenance, safety and several other areas of operations. Currently the City is contract with MV Transportation to provided this service through an agreement that has run from FY18-FY25.

This being the final year of the contract, the City has need to conduct a new competitive bidding process in order to create a new operations contract for FY26 and beyond.

Accordingly, staff created and issued a request for proposals (RFP) that was issued on February 10. This RFP is asking for submissions from contractors who are able to operate all three modes of Petaluma Transit service (fixed route, paratransit, and microtransit). The contract will be a maximum of eight years with a base award of five years (FY26-FY30) and one three year option period (FY31-FY33)

New items added from the prior contract will include: operations of LumaGo microtransit service, additional software options for paratransit dispatch software, operations of electric buses, an expansion in the number of service hours that the contractor provides.

The timeline for the procurement process is as follows:

Date	Milestone
February 10, 2025	Selection Ad-Hoc Group - Kickoff
February 18, 2025	RFP Issued
February 27, 2025	Virtual Pre-Proposal Conference – 10:00 a.m. Optional Site Visits -11am
March 13, 2025	Last day for submission of questions
March 18, 2018	Issuance of Final Addenda, if any
April 9, 2025	Proposal submittal due date and time; 5:00 p.m. PST
April 10, 2025	Proposals and scoring sheets to Selection Committee
April 16, 2025	Selection Ad-hoc Group Meeting
April 23, 2025	Virtual Proposer presentations, if required
April 24-31, 2025	Best and final negotiations
May 6, 2025	Transit Advisory Committee Meeting (Special Meeting)
June 2, 2025	Petaluma City Council award contract
July 1, 2025	Commence service

A selection ad-hoc group was formed to provide input throughout the procurement process including in the review, scoring and selection of the preferred contractor. The ad-hoc group will be involved in scoring of the proposals received. The group consists of seven members including two members from the Transit Advisory Committee (Gail Abrams and Dave Alden).

The Transit Advisory Committee intends to hold a special meeting on Tuesday, May 6th to discuss awarding of the contract prior to final consideration before the City Council on June 2nd.

LumaGo Microtransit Update

LumaGo continues to demonstrate strong ridership and success since its launch on September 30, 2024. As of March 10, 2025, the service has completed **10,200 rides**, with our highest ridership day on December 20, 2024, when **120 rides were completed in a single day**. The service consistently meets demand, maintaining an **85.8% ride request fulfillment rate**. To better accommodate peak time demand, LumaGo operates with two vehicles between **2–6 PM, Monday through Friday**.

The program continues to gain traction in the community, with over **3,800 accounts created** and more than **230 service expansion requests received**. LumaGo has earned an average rating of **4.9 stars**, underscoring its popularity and positive reception among users.

These results highlight LumaGo’s potential to improve mobility within Petaluma. However, as the service progresses, it’s essential to evaluate its role within the broader transit system to ensure sustainable operations and complementarity with fixed-route and paratransit services.

Key Statistics (as of March 10, 2025)

- Highest Ridership Day: December 20, 2024 (120 rides completed)
- Total Rides Completed: 10,200
- Met Demand Rate: 85.8%
- Accounts Created: 3,811
- Riders with 5+ trips completed: 331
- Utilization (Riders per Hour): 3.9
- Average Rating: 4.9 out of 5

Next Steps

While LumaGo has seen early success, City staff will focus on analyzing ridership patterns and community needs to ensure the service operates sustainably and complements existing fixed-route and paratransit offerings. This includes examining service requests and evaluating whether trips can be better served by other transit modes.

Planned Actions (March-April 2025)

1. Survey Riders and Requestors

- **Current LumaGo Riders:** Surveys will collect demographic data, use cases, and information on how riders traveled before using LumaGo. The survey will also uncover pain points related to fixed-route service and opportunities for improvement. A survey is currently being drafted.
- **Requestors/Account Holders:** Focus on those who have requested service expansion or created accounts but have not yet taken rides. Surveys will explore their current travel habits, demographics, and potential use cases for LumaGo.

Insights from these surveys will help refine the program and identify areas where fixed-route or paratransit might better meet specific needs.

2. Refine the App and Service Zone

- **Service Zone Adjustments:** Based on ride patterns and feedback, a slight zone expansions was rolled out in March to enhance productivity and better serve existing riders.
- **Fixed-Route Integration:** By April 2025, fixed-route schedules will be integrated into the LumaGo app. Riders requesting trips via LumaGo will receive information about fixed-route options alongside ride proposals to encourage use of the most appropriate mode of transit.

3. Continue Promoting LumaGo and Fixed-Route Services

- Outreach efforts will promote both LumaGo and fixed-route transit, emphasizing the complementary nature of these services. Users will be encouraged to request service expansions while exploring existing fixed route options.

4. Review and Expansion Planning

- Staff will continue reviewing service area requests, evaluating the program's effectiveness, and preparing for a potential transition to permanent service after the one-year pilot phase.

Links for LumaGo assets:

- [LumaGo Service Area](#)
- [Download the LumaGo app](#)
- [Request LumaGo marketing assets](#)
- [Request LumaGo in your neighborhood](#)

AC Transit bus donation

Staff has taken possession of four free 2008 Van Hool 1200 series transit buses from AC Transit in early March. The 40' diesel buses are being donated by AC Transit in partnership with Petaluma Transit demonstrating their excellent collaboration and partnership as a leader in transit throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

Staff is currently in the process of getting the vehicles road ready to operate Petaluma Transit service. This includes the need for several efforts including: installation of new exterior graphics, cleaning/detailing, ordering of new parts/tires as needed, titling and registration, minor body repair, training for drivers and mechanics



2008 Van Hool 1200 series bus- est. arrival in Feb 2025.

The buses will help to provide additional availability of fixed route buses to run on fixed route service over the next two years while the City receives its first electric buses and puts them into regular revenue service.

The buses will begin revenue service for Petaluma Transit in April 2025.

Electric Bus Update

Council approved the purchase of the first four battery electric, zero-emission transit buses for the City of Petaluma in December 2023. The buses will include two 35' and two 40' New Flyer Excelsior zero-emission, battery electric buses. They will feature sleek, modern interiors and a

striking exterior design that will echo the buses' advanced features and commitment to sustainability.

Production of the buses started on January 13, 2024 and will through the next eight weeks prior to their arrival on June 6th.

The bus shells have now been completed at the New Flyer Winnipeg factory and awaiting resumption of work to complete the build, resuming on March 17th.







The City of Petaluma has contracted with Vehicle Technical Consultants to provide in-plant inspection services throughout the build process.

As part of the upcoming deployment of the zero-emission transit buses, City staff is currently developing a comprehensive marketing campaign to generate excitement about the sustainability and innovation of this project.

The campaign aims to re-energize public interest in fixed-route transit services by emphasizing the benefits of electrification, including zero emissions, quieter operations, and cutting-edge design. Through strategic outreach and engaging visuals, the campaign will position the electric buses as a cornerstone of Petaluma Transit's future.

Key Campaign Goals:

- **Build Community Excitement:** Highlight the innovative features and environmental benefits of the electric buses.
- **Promote Fixed-Route Service:** Use the campaign to showcase the value of Petaluma's fixed-route services, encouraging new and returning riders to explore the system.
- **Sustainability Education:** Reinforce the City's commitment to sustainability by showcasing the move to a cleaner, greener fleet.

As the designs for the buses' exterior wraps are still in development, the campaign will emphasize the transformative impact of electrification while leaving room for creative flexibility. City staff are drawing inspiration from the sleek interior features (as shown in the attached example) to ensure the exterior design aligns with the buses' cutting-edge aesthetic. Staff will provide further updates on the campaign, including promotional events and materials, as we approach the buses' delivery in mid-2025.

Paratransit Evaluation and Programs

Staff continue to self-administer the paratransit evaluation process. Recent highlights include:

- Staff received and processed 11 applications for January 2025
- Staff received and processed 23 applications for February 2025
- Staff mailed out 13 eligibility reminder letters for January 2025
- Staff mailed out 18 eligibility reminder letters for February 2025

The average processing time (from the receipt of a fully completed application to approval) was **2 days in January** and **4.6 days in February**, well within the Federal Transit Administration's requirement of 21 days.

Upcoming Programs and Improvements

To further enhance paratransit services and increase awareness of transit options in Petaluma, staff are developing initiatives to modernize and improve the program:

1. Public Transit Education Series:

In collaboration with the Petaluma Senior Center, staff will offer a 3-part series titled “Your Guide to Car-Free Travel in Petaluma.” This series will provide valuable information on using public transit, including paratransit, fixed-route services, and LumaGo, empowering residents to explore transportation options that fit their needs.

2. Paratransit Rider Guide and Recertification Application Updates:

Over the next six months, staff will revitalize the Paratransit Rider Guide and streamline the recertification application process. These updates aim to enhance efficiency, improve user experience, and reflect the evolving needs of our community.

3. Focus on Efficiency and Accessibility:

Staff are committed to maintaining a high level of service while exploring opportunities to increase efficiency and productivity. These changes will ensure that paratransit services continue to meet the needs of Petaluma’s residents effectively.

Further details on these updates and programs will be shared in the coming months, as staff works toward modernizing this essential service and improving the service throughout the community.

Marketing and Outreach

Transit Coordination

Staff attended the following Transit and Area Coordination meetings recently:

- Bay Area Paratransit Advisory Committee –February 10, March 10
- SCTA Transit Technical Advisory Committee – February 26, March 12
- SCTA Transit Paratransit Coordinating Committee – January 21,
- MTC Transit Finance Working Group – February 5, March 5
- Cool Petaluma – joint advertising program discussion – February 10
- Transit Comms Meeting facilitated by BART- March 3
- Marin-Sonoma Coordinate Transit Study (MASCOTS)
 - General Manager Committee – February 14, March 13
 - Planning subcommittee –January 21, February 4, 18,
 - Finance subcommittee – March 11
 - Marketing Subcommittee – March 13
- City/Petaluma Downtown Business Assn meeting – March 5
- Petaluma Downtown Parking Study Meeting – February 13, March 13

Community Outreach Events

- Safe Routes to School Task Force – January 16
- Petaluma Urban Chat Film Festival – February 12
- Santa Rosa/Sonoma County regional wayfinding pilot program ribbon cutting – February 20
- Petaluma Climate Roundtable – March 6

Bay Area Transit Summit

Petaluma Transit staff attended Bay Area Transit Summit on January 30th, hosted by Via and participated on a panel titled “*Building Equitable and Cost-Effective Mobility Through Smart Service Design.*” The panel discussed service design and community engagement process for launching microtransit.

Petaluma Chamber & Downtown Association Tourism Event

Petaluma Transit and a LumaGO bus attended the event on March 11th. The event was designed to promote Petaluma and the benefits and experiences that it has available to tourists.

CAFÉ Puente

A presentation on LumaGo was provided on March 11th

- National Transit Employee Appreciation Day-March 18
 - City Staff have begun a campaign to celebrate transit employees in coordination with agencies across the country. Signage and social media have been posted, requesting that the community submit a commendation for their favorite transit employee. Transit employees will also be provided with a gift and snacks on March 18th to show our appreciation.

Upcoming Campaigns & Outreach Events

- **Saturday, April 19 – Butter & Egg Days Parade, Downtown Petaluma** - City Staff have begun working with the Downtown Association to prepare for the annual Butter & Eggs Parade and Festival. Petaluma Transit will run fare-free on the day of the event and will have added service to shuttle attendees to the event and a Petaluma Transit bus participating in the parade. LumaGo will be operating during the day of the parade for the first time ever, utilizing a modified service zone downtown due to the parade.
- **Sunday, April 27 – Petaluma Antique Faire, Downtown Petaluma** – LumaGO service will be operating during the day of the parade for the first time ever.
- **May 4 – Future Fest & Expo – 12-4pm at the Petaluma Community Center** - Staff will again be in attendance to table at the fourth annual expo promoting local sustainability focused services and resources.

New Fixed-Route Schedule Coming in May

Petaluma Transit is launching a campaign to promote the benefits of fixed-route service. The

campaign will center around the release of an updated bus schedule featuring improved time points, increased frequency on Routes 2 and 11, and a fresh, bold design that reflects the ease and sustainability of public transit.

Senior Center Presentation Series:

Staff will offer a 3-part series titled “Your Guide to Car-Free Travel in Petaluma.”

- Jan 15, 2-3 pm – **LumaGo-specific:** Learn about Petaluma’s on-demand transit service and how it can get you where you need to go.
- Feb 24, 1-3 pm – **Paratransit-specific:** Discover the ins and outs of Paratransit and how it provides essential services for those who qualify.
- Mar 13, 11:30 am-12:30 pm – **Fixed-route-specific:** Get to know Petaluma Transit’s fixed-route bus system and how to navigate it effectively.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 15, 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A. December 2024 - Fixed Route Stats
Attachment B. December 2024 - Paratransit stats
Attachment C. LumaGo - Stat Update
Attachment D. Bus stop - improvement list

Future Transit Advisory Committee Meeting **Agenda Items for Consideration**

- Petaluma Active Transportation Plan – Presentation, April 15
- Electric Paratransit Bus Procurement
- Transit Budget Update
- Transit Operations Contract Award

Transit Advisory Committee members are requested to provide ideas and recommendations for additional items