



DATE: January 21, 2025

TO: Transit Advisory Committee

FROM: Jared Hall, Transit Manager

SUBJECT: Transit Manager's Report

Transit Manager's Report to Transit Advisory Committee

Ridership on Petaluma Transit provided 22,211 rides in November 2024 compared to 23,167 rides provided in September 2023, a 4.1% ridership increase largely attributable to a larger share of days with weekend service compared to the year prior.

Ridership on Petaluma Paratransit service provided 902 rides in November 2024 compared to 746 in November 2023, a 20.9% increase.

LumaGo Microtransit Update

LumaGo continues to demonstrate strong ridership and success since its launch on September 30, 2024. As of January 13, 2025, the service has completed **5,779 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 **85.5% ride request fulfillment rate**. To better accommodate peak travel times, City staff are working with MV staff to operate two vehicles between **2–6 PM, Monday through Friday**.

The program continues to gain traction in the community, with over **3,000 accounts created** and more than **200 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 January 13, 2025)

- Highest Ridership Day: December 20, 2024 (120 rides completed)
- Total Rides Completed: 5,779

- Met Demand Rate: 85.5%
- Accounts Created: 3,001
- Active Riders: 716
- 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 (February–March 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.
- **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, slight zone expansions will roll out in February/March to enhance productivity and better serve existing riders.
- **Fixed-Route Integration:** By March 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. Expanding Two-Vehicle Peak Operations

- MV staff will operate two vehicles during peak hours (2–6 PM), with plans to monitor demand and adjust schedules as needed.

5. 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](#)

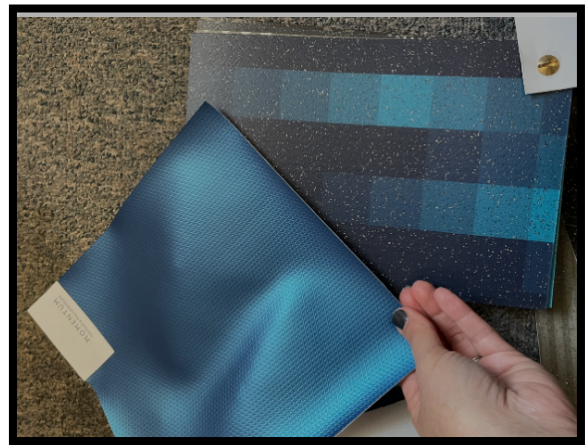
Electric Bus Update

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 continue in various stages over the next 24 weeks until the buses are delivered starting in June 6th. 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.



Material samples for the Petaluma Transit New Flyer Excelsior buses

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.

AC Transit bus donation

Staff is currently in the process of receiving four free 2008 Van Hool 1200 series transit buses from AC Transit. 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.

The AC Transit board will be considering an item at their January 22nd meeting to approve donation of the buses. If approved, Petaluma Transit is expected to receive the buses and have them in service in February 2025. The buses all have newer drivetrains with less than 60k miles and are CARB compliant.



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.

Sustainable Transportation Grant

Staff will be applying to the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program in January to request funding for a "Petaluma Transit Vision Project."

The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program was created to support the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Mission: Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment.

Given the changed conditions of a post-covid 19 world and changed commute and mobility patterns, the City of Petaluma (Petaluma Transit) has identified the need to create a long-range transit visioning plan for the community. The Petaluma Transit Vision plan will help to identify short through long term vision, goals, priorities, and operating and capital projects to implement

for the agency going forward to create a innovative, sustainable approach to transit for the community going forward. The plan will help to address a multitude of changed condition in Petaluma and surrounding region in recent years in areas including population and housing growth, financial projections, changed community patterns and preferences, economic considerations and increased cost of living for the Petaluma community. The plan will be a collaborative, community focused initiative involving a robust community outreach and involvement component throughout to ensure that all people and parts of the community are involved and well represented in an equitable manner. The study will include items such as an existing conditions report, summary of the Petaluma Transit system, analysis of current and changed conditions and commute patterns, financial analysis, comprehensive operational analysis and creating a short term (fiscally constrained) and long-term vision for the transit agency into 2025 and beyond. The process will include draft and final reports which will be presented and ultimately adopted by the Petaluma Transit Advisory Committee and City Council.

Grant awards will be announced by Caltrans in summer 2025.

Transit Facility Electrification

Design work has been completed for the infrastructure improvements to the Petaluma Transit Operations Yard (555 N. McDowell Blvd). This includes creating design plans for improvements in advance of a bid for proposals anticipated to occur in December 2024. The City anticipates taking a two-phase approach to the project due to fiscal constraints and needing to identify additional funding to complete a second phase of the project. The first project phase will include trenching and the installation of five power cabinets, five dual-plug chargers, electric switchgear, and associated components (cabling, conduits, etc.). The second project phase will purchase and install additional power cabinets and chargers to be able to charge a fully electric bus fleet by 2030.



The Petaluma Transit yard will see significant service impacts during the extent of the construction project, estimated to take 2-3 months to complete. Staff are currently reviewing alternatives for storing the Petaluma Transit vehicle fleet during the construction period of the project as approx. 50% of the transit yard will be inaccessible during that period

Staff received all the Chargepoint charging cabinets and dispensers for phase 1 of the project in January 2024. This includes all the charging hardware needed to complete phase one of the project. The last remaining piece of major equipment needed to begin phase one of the project, an Eaton electric switchgear cabinet is expected to arrive in March 2025.

Bidding for the project is currently being assembled and is expected to be issued in February 2025.

Infrastructure improvements are scheduled to be completed in August 2025.

Paratransit Evaluation and Programs

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

- Staff received and processed 14 applications for November 2024
- Staff received and processed 20 applications for December 2024
- Staff mailed out 12 eligibility reminder letters for November 2024
- Staff mailed out 20 eligibility reminder letters for December 2024

The average processing time (from the receipt of a fully completed application to approval) was **2.4 days in November** and **4.6 days in December**, 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.

You're Invited
Petaluma Transit's three part series:
Your Guide to Car-Free Travel in Petaluma

PetalumaTransit

2 attendees

- **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.

SCAN ME  For more information about public transportation options visit:
707-778-4460, transit@cityofpetaluma.org, transit.cityofpetaluma.net

Location: Petaluma Senior Center
211 Novak Drive, Petaluma

RSVP: 707-778-4399 or come to the PSC Front Desk

PetalumaTransit

Discover the freedom of car-free travel in Petaluma with our engaging 3-part series! Each session will explore a different transit option to help you navigate the city with ease. Learn how to make the most of your transportation choices, ask questions, and gain confidence to travel independently.

Join Us!

THE GREAT PETALUMA MILL

Location: Petaluma Senior Center
211 Novak Drive, Petaluma

RSVP: 707-778-4399 or come to the PSC Front Desk

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:

- California Transit Association (CTA) Fall Conference- November 20-22
- Bay Area Paratransit Advisory Committee – December 9 and January 13
- SCTA Transit Technical Advisory Committee – December 11, January 8
- Clipper Customer Service and Distribution Meeting-December 19
- Transit Comms Meeting facilitated by BART-January 6
- IDEA Task Force, CTA -January 7
- Marin-Sonoma Coordinate Transit Study (MASCOTS)
 - General Manager Committee – December 12, January 16
 - Planning sub-committee – December 3, January 8
- Petaluma Downtown Parking Study Meeting – January 9
- Sonoma County Emergency Transportation Committee – January 15

Community Outreach Events

- Presentation to Committee on the Shelterless staff (COTS) -November 14
- Petaluma Transit Toy and Food Drive – December 7
- Business Improvement District Meeting-December 17
- Petaluma City Schools Professional Development Day -January 7
- Petaluma North SMART Station Opening Ceremony-January 10
- Safe Routes to School Task Force – January 16



Petaluma Transit staff at the December 7th Holiday food and toy drive



Staff attending the Petaluma City School Professional Development Day – Jan 7



Petaluma North SMART Station Opening Ceremony – January 11



Petaluma Transit Employee Holiday and Employee Appreciation Party – December 15th

Upcoming Campaigns & Outreach Events

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.

This effort aims to break down negative perceptions of buses by showcasing transit as an easy, connected, and eco-friendly way to get around.

Planners will focus on optimizing timetables, while marketing will develop an eye-catching design to drive engagement and interest. More details will be shared as the campaign develops.

Bay Area Transit Summit

Petaluma Transit staff has been invited to speak on a panel at the Bay Area Transit Summit on January 30th, hosted by Via. The panel is titled “*Building Equitable and Cost-Effective Mobility Through Smart Service Design.*” The panel will discuss service design and community

engagement process for launching microtransit. It is free to attend, and we encourage those interested to register.

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, February 18, 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A. Fixed Route Ridership - November 2024
Attachment B. Paratransit Ridership - November 2024
Attachment C. Fixed route and LumaGo Ridership data
Attachment D. Redwood Bikeshare Data

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

- Electric Paratransit Bus Procurement
- Petaluma Transit Education Series Update
- Transit budget update

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