



DATE: July 11, 2024
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 28,820 rides in May 2024 compared to 21,636 rides provided in May 2023 a 33% ridership increase.

Ridership on Petaluma Paratransit service provided 896 rides in May 2024 compared to 704 in May 2023, an increase of 27%.

Electric Bus Purchase

Council approved the purchase of the first four battery electric, zero-emission transit buses for the City of Petaluma in December 2023.

In the interim, staff has started creating a training plan for all staff to be able to operate the electric buses upon their arrival. This includes training for drivers, mechanics and other staff towards the operations and maintenance of the buses. Electrical upgrades for the bus maintenance shop are also being identified in advance of the buses arrival.

All specs for the buses have now been finalized as of July 2024 and buses continue on schedule to begin production in November 2024. The vehicles are estimated for delivery in February 2025.

Transit Facility Electrification

Design work continues for the infrastructure improvements to the Petaluma Transit Operations Yard (555 N. McDowell Blvd). Design work for the project continues prior to the project being issued for bid in the latter half of 2024. This includes creating design plans for the improvements in advance of a bid for proposals anticipated to occur in fall 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. 30% design plans have now been finalized for the project. 90% design plans are currently being created for the project and purchase of the Chargepoint bus chargers (approved by Council in FY24) is being executed. Final design plans will be completed in Q3 2024.

Infrastructure improvements are scheduled to be completed in Q4 2024 in advance of the buses arriving and being placed into service in Q1 2025.

Paratransit Evaluation and Programs

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

- Staff Received and processed 8 applications for June 2024
- Staff mailed out 14 Eligibility reminder letters for June 2024

The average number of processing days in June (from when a fully completed application is received to when its processed) was seven days (the Federal Transit Administration requires processing of applications within 21 days).

Fare Free Update

Petaluma Transit launched its Fare-Free Program on Monday, July 1! Staff provided press and community outlets with a press release, FAQ and images from the first day of fare-free service. Multiple, local press covered the story and the response has been a positive one.

Why is this story newsworthy? Petaluma Transit is the first transit agency in the Bay Area and only second in the state of California to launch a full transit network including paratransit services in their fare-free offering! In addition, Petaluma Transit has removed barriers common with most fare-free programs such as qualifying factors (age, income, etc), application process, a card or pass-this program allows EVERYONE to simply board the bus and go. [Petaluma Transit | Ride For Free - Petaluma Transit \(cityofpetaluma.net\)](https://www.cityofpetaluma.net/ride-for-free)

Staff will continue promotion of the Fare Free Program throughout the community in July 2024 working with community partners to help spread the word.



BREAKING NEWS

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Petaluma Bus And Transit Services Are Now Free To All For A Year

July 2, 2024

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Petaluma is the first Bay Area city to offer free bus rides

By KTUU Staff | Published July 2, 2024 8:28 PM PDT | Petaluma | KTUU FOX 2



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Petaluma Transit rolls out new free fare pilot
Free fares will be offered on Petaluma Transit's fixed-route bus and paratransit services for one year.

Show Up & Go! RIDE FOR FREE
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Petaluma is the first Bay Area city to offer free bus rides

By KTUU Staff | Published July 2, 2024 8:28 PM PDT | Petaluma | KTUU FOX 2

Petaluma is the first Bay Area city to offer free bus rides
Petaluma is the first Bay Area city to offer free bus rides.

Petaluma Transit Be Rides For All
In a first for the Bay Area, Petaluma Transit is providing free public transportation for all riders.

In Bay Area first, Petaluma's public bus services are now free

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Have you heard the news?

Planetizen

Petaluma Transit Eliminates Fares
The agency is offering free bus rides for one year as part of an effort to boost ridership and encourage residents to choose transit over cars.

Petaluma Transit Eliminates Fares
The agency is offering free bus rides for one year as part of an effort to boost ridership and encourage residents to choose transit over cars.



Petaluma Transit is now fare-free

Press Outlets that covered Fare-Free Launch:

Mass Transit Magazine

editors@masstransitmag.com

<https://www.masstransitmag.com/technology/fare-collection/press-release/55093531/petaluma-transit-petaluma-transit-rolls-out-new-free-fare-pilot-july-1>

The screenshot shows a web page from Mass Transit Magazine. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site logo and various menu items like 'SUBSCRIBE', 'MAGAZINE', 'ADVERTISE', etc. Below the navigation bar is a 'MARKET MOVES ENERGY' banner. The main article title is 'Petaluma Transit rolls out new free fare pilot', dated July 3, 2024. The article text states that free fares will be offered on Petaluma Transit's fixed-route bus and paratransit services for one year. A large graphic features the Petaluma Transit logo and the text 'Show Up & Go! RIDE FOR FREE' with 'ZERO ZILCH NADA' below it. To the right of the graphic is a Facebook post image with the text 'CONNECT with the transit industry'. Below the main article text, there is a 'LATEST IN FARE COLLECTION' section with two smaller article teasers.

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TECHNOLOGY > FARE COLLECTION

Petaluma Transit rolls out new free fare pilot

Free fares will be offered on Petaluma Transit's fixed-route bus and paratransit services for one year.

July 3, 2024

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¡Todas Viajan Gratis! <https://transit.cityofpetaluma.net>

Show Up & Go!

RIDE FOR FREE

ZERO ZILCH NADA

NO MATTER HOW YOU SAY IT - EVERYONE RIDES FREE ON PETALUMA TRANSIT

A partir del 1 de julio de 2024, el servicio de autobús de Petaluma Transit será gratuito.

Petaluma Transit has eliminated fare collection on all of its fixed-route bus and paratransit services as a part of a one-year pilot program. The pilot aims to increase ridership, promote Petaluma Transit's network of services, alleviate the financial burden of low-income riders, improve access and meet the rigorous climate goals set forth by the city.

Petaluma Transit notes paratransit passengers have historically not benefited from common fare-free programs. The initiative aims to use both fixed-route bus services and paratransit services for free, expanding access to those with fixed or limited incomes.

No application is needed to participate in this program

CONNECT with the transit industry

LATEST IN FARE COLLECTION

Management
TransLink unveils corporate cost-cutting measures to address funding gap
TransLink
June 28, 2024

Management
SEPTA Board approves FY25 budget

KSRO: Sonoma County's FM NEWS TALK

<https://www.ksro.com/2024/07/02/petaluma-bus-and-transit-services-are-now-free-to-all-for-a-year/>

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JUL 3, 2024 - WED

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28%
756.81 mmHg



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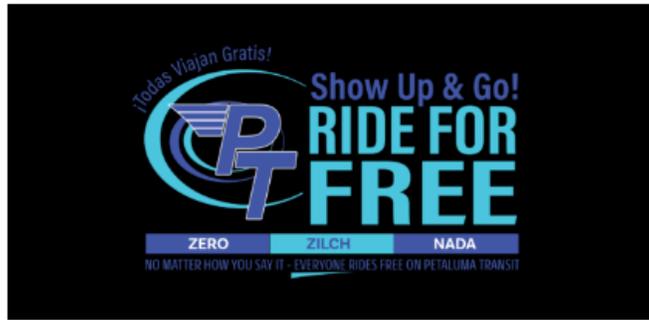
BREAKING NEWS | [Man Arrested After Starting Small Grass Fire in Santa Rosa with Fireworks](#) posted 11 hours ago

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Petaluma Bus And Transit Services Are Now Free To All For A Year

JULY 2, 2024 [APP LOCAL NEWS](#), [APP TOP STORIES](#), [LOCAL NEWS](#), [MORNING NEWS](#), [TOP STORIES](#)



Ride for Free graphic (Petaluma Transit)

Bus services in Petaluma are now free. The city began a one year pilot program yesterday during which all Petaluma Transit services will be completely fare-free. No tickets, no passes, no cash – just show up and ride. Paratransit clients can schedule their trips as they have done in the past, but a fare will no longer be required for their Petaluma Transit paratransit trip. The goal of this program is to promote Petaluma Transit's network of services, alleviate the financial burden of low-income riders, improve access, and meet the rigorous climate goals set forth by the City.

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3 hours ago

A Santa Rosa man has been arrested for starting a small vegetation fire near homes and a school with fireworks.

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1
2

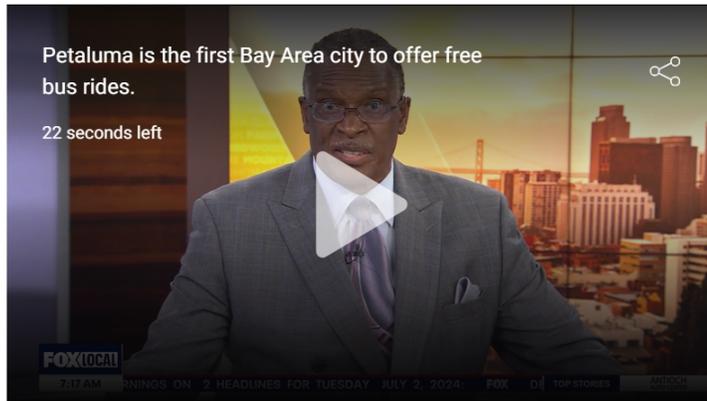
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Petaluma is the first Bay Area city to offer free bus rides

By KTVU Staff | Published July 2, 2024 8:23am PDT | Petaluma | KTVU FOX 2 | ↗



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Petaluma Argus Courier

https://www.petaluma360.com/article/news/petaluma-transit-free-bus-service/?utm_source=article_share&utm_medium=copy-link

Statewide, it is believed Petaluma is the second city to offer entirely free transit rides after the city of Commerce, in Southern California. | 4



A Petaluma Transit bus pulls out of the Eastside Transit Center at Washington Square on Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2014. (Petaluma Argus-Courier file photo)

JENNIFER SAWHNEY
PETALUMA ARGUS-COURIER
July 1, 2024, 4:22PM

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As of July 1, anyone looking to ride Petaluma's fixed-route or paratransit buses will ride fare-free under a one-year pilot program — the first of its kind in the Bay Area, [the city announced Monday in a news release.](#)

"By removing the cost barrier, Petaluma Transit hopes to encourage more residents to leave their cars at home and opt for alternative modes of transportation, thereby reducing traffic congestion and the community's carbon footprint," the release said.

Patch

<https://patch.com/california/petaluma/petaluma-transit-begins-free-rides-all>



Traffic & Transit

Petaluma Transit Begins Free Rides For All

In a first for the Bay Area, Petaluma Transit has launched a one-year experiment to provide free public transportation for all riders.

Lucas Combos, Patch Staff

Posted Tue, Jul 2, 2024 at 11:19 am PT | Updated Tue, Jul 2, 2024 at 2:50 pm PT



The pilot program began July 1 and will run for at least a year, with the option to extend the initiative further. (Petaluma Transit)



PETALUMA, CA — Petaluma Transit this week became the Bay Area's first transit agency to offer free rides to all, kicking off a one-year pilot program designed to boost ridership and remove financial hurdles.

As of Monday, transit riders can "show up and go," without needing tickets, passes, or cash to take buses and paratransit service. The move away from fares builds on earlier programs at Petaluma Transit, including free rides for K-12 students, which officials said grew youth ridership by 35 percent.

The Press Democrat

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/petaluma-transit-free-bus-service/>



eEdition



The Press Democrat



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In Bay Area first, Petaluma's public bus services are now free

Statewide, it is believed Petaluma is the second city to offer entirely free transit rides after the city of Commerce, in Southern California. | 8



A Petaluma Transit bus pulls out of the Eastside Transit Center at Washington Square on Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2014. (Petaluma Argus-Courier file photo)

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There's a new Sunday outdoor market at the Santa Rosa Veterans building



Petaluma Transit Eliminates Fares

The agency is offering free bus rides for one year as part of an effort to boost ridership and encourage residents to choose transit over cars.

1 Minute Read

July 2, 2024, 11:00 AM PDT

By Diana Ionescu [@aworkoffiction](#)



Stepheng3, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons / Wikimedia Commons

The San Francisco Bay Area city of Petaluma will offer fare-free bus transit as part of a one-year pilot program, according to reporting by KTVU. "City leaders say the goal is to help people learn about public transit, remove cost barriers, and meet the city's climate goals."

In addition, many other news outlets reposted the Fox 2 story, such as Yahoo! News.

Microtransit Update

Petaluma Transit has finalized the service contract for the software-as-a-service platform to be used for our microtransit service, selecting VIA. City staff have been collaborating with VIA to formalize the application, and we are currently 90% through this process.

Staff have been fine-tuning the color scheme, logo, and name for the service. This microtransit service will have a distinct look, differentiating it significantly from Petaluma Transit's fixed-route and paratransit bus services.

A final meeting with the Microtransit Ad Hoc group is scheduled for Monday, July 29, 2024. During this meeting, we will provide updates on the service zone, branding details, and gather further input on community outreach efforts. The contributions of this group have been invaluable, and we extend our gratitude for their time and input.

The implementation of the program is now scheduled to begin in Fall 2024 to avoid overlapping with the efforts of the Fare Free Campaign.

Draft Microtransit Imagery/Logos

Round 2 Logo Explorations: Concept C
Under working name: "Lumago"

Typeface

- 1 LUMA **GO**
- 2 LUMA **GO**
- 3 **luma** **GO**
- 4 **LUMA** **GO**

Lockup



Color



Logo



Round 2 Logo Explorations: A & C Comparison Sheet
Under working name: "Lumago"

A



C



Round 2 Logo Explorations: Concept A
Under working name: "Lumago"

Typeface

- 1 **luma** **gc**
- 2 **luma** **gc** **Luma** **gc**
- 3 **luma** **gc**
- 4 **LUMA** **gc**

Lockup



Color



Logo



Petaluma Police Department Coordination

Petaluma Transit has been working with the Petaluma Police Department to prepare for the launch of the Transit Fare Free program starting July 1.

In advance of the program implementation transit admin staff has been working with transit operations staff (drivers and dispatchers) to identify various areas of impact and training needed prior to rollout of the program. City Staff held focus groups with drivers and dispatchers to determine what would help them to feel safe and supported. One such area was working with Petaluma PD to coordinated policy and response procedures for incidents that occur on-board Transit buses to ensure that safety is maintained for all involved and a top priority. To meet those needs and requests City Staff and MV management worked with PD to devise an SOP for safety issues on the bus. Lieutenant Parnow and Communications Supervisor Marie Horton offered to present the process at the June monthly Safety Meeting for operations staff. PD provided an overview of their policies and procedures for how they respond to incidents that may occur on transit buses. They also described the various types of support that they can provide such incidents, and answered staff questions about their policies and procedures.



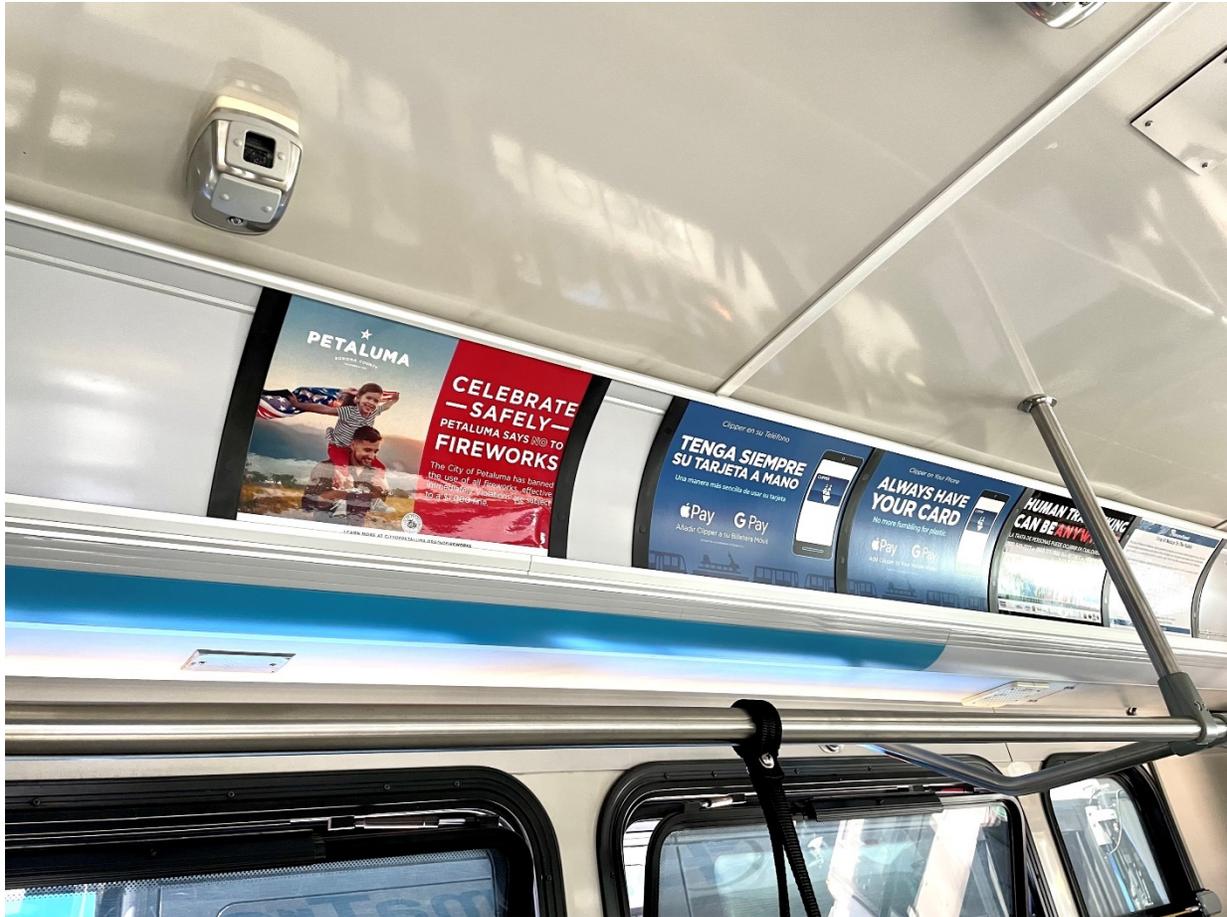
Bridges Between the Public and Emergency Help

Transit and PD staff will continue to discuss the Transit fare free program prior to and during implementation of the program to ensure partnership and coordination throughout the program.

Fire safety awareness partnership with Petaluma Fire Department

Petaluma Transit is working with the Petaluma Fire Department to help spread the word regarding Fire Safety this 4th of July. Shelter posters were posted around the city at multiple bus stop locations to help spread awareness regarding the ban on fireworks. In addition, posters were installed on the interior of the Petaluma Transit fleet.





Marketing and Outreach

Staff attended the following Transit Coordination meeting recently:

- Bay Area Marketing Coordination meeting, organized by BART-June 3
- Bay Area Regional Emergency Transportation Exercise – June 5
- BAPAC-Bay Area Transit Accessibility Working Group-June 10
- MTC Regional Fare Coordination Working Group – June 11
- Marketing Coordination Meeting for Sonoma operators-June 13
- Blue Zones Build Environment Transformation Team – Jun 17
- Petaluma Safe Routes to School Meetings – June 20
- Marin-Sonoma Coordinate Transit Study (MASCOTS)
 - General Manager Committee –June 7
 - Planning sub-committee – April 26
 - Finance sub-committee – May 9, June 4
- Sonoma County DUI Prevention Program Coordination Meeting – June 25
- Solano County – Mobility Manager Open House – June 27

Standing Item – Recent Development Review Notes

No Items to report

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled TAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 8, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A. May 2024 - Paratransit stats
- Attachment B. May 2024 - Fixed Route stats

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

- Regional Zero Emission Bus Plan
- Bus Stop shelter and bench Procurement
- Electric Paratransit Bus Procurement

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