POPULUS

Populus is a transportation software company that helps cities and private mobility providers deliver safe, efficient, and equitable streets. Populus was formed to empower city transportation planners and policymakers with secure access to data from private commercial fleets, and deliver solutions for cities to manage the public right of way.

Software Provider

Software Services

- Street and curbside space management
- Multimodal mobility data analysis
- Data mapping and reporting

Website

- https://www.populus.ai/

Contact

- Eliot Mueting, Director of Solutions Engineering, eliot@populus.ai

References

- City of Oakland, CA
- City of San Diego, CA
- City of Baltimore, MD

Experience

The Populus platform is the only comprehensive digital solution that empowers cities to manage their streets and curbs—with access to mobility data from shared bike, scooter, moped and car operators, and delivery services. The Populus platform serves over 80 cities around the world on 4 continents, as the trusted digital platform to manage the future of mobility. The Populus platform ingests data from more than 25 operators and 70 million rides to date.

Populus helps all communities—rural, suburban, and urban—pursuing shared mobility programs to support a range of transportation needs. Populus software services are especially empowering

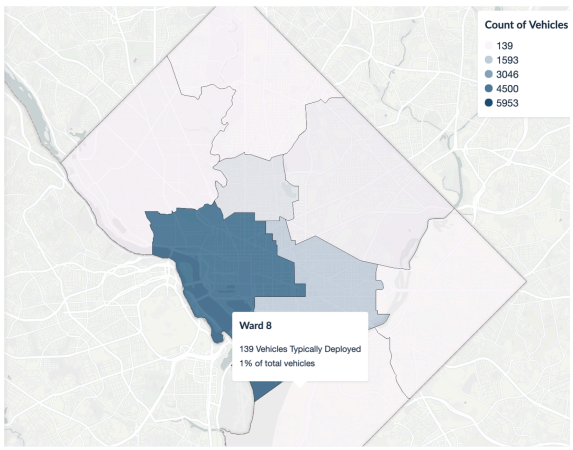
for communities that do not have the data analysis or GIS resources that larger cities often have. Users do not need to have GIS experience and can conduct all of their compliance, planning, and reporting tasks in the platform.

Services

Populus leverages its experience delivering data aggregation, analysis, and digital mobility management solutions to support a smooth launch, effective oversight, and comprehensive evaluation of shared mobility programs. Populus's objective is to provide cities with a platform to address all needs across compliance, reporting, policy, and planning for shared bike, scooter, moped, and car programs, and delivery services. Populus's key abilities and advantages include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ingesting data using open standards that our engineering team also contributes to, including the Mobility Data Specification (MDS), General Bikeshare Feed Specification (GBFS), General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS), and CurbLR. Policies designed in Populus can be communicated to operators using the current version of the MDS Policy specification.
- Ingesting data from all types of shared passenger and delivery vehicles, including shared bikes, scooters, cars, and mopeds
- Synthesizing data from complex zone and blockface parking regulations, and harmonizing this data into the CurbLR format
- Communicating policies designed in the platform to operators using the current version of the MDS specification
- Coordinating with operators continuously to identify and resolve any potential issues with their data-sharing feeds before they become problems for cities, providing technical support on behalf of cities if desired
- Exporting raw data to cities that have established the regulatory authority to require such data from operators

Equity



Engagement

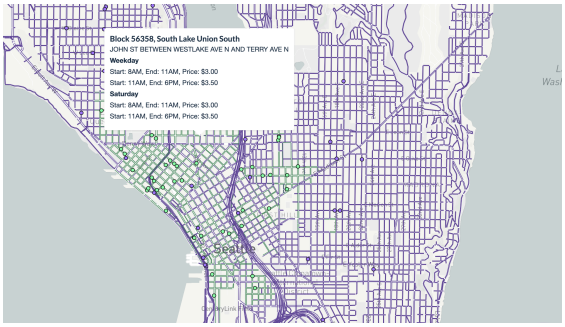
The Populus platform enables cities to create and evaluate programs that support the equitable distribution of shared mobility devices within a geographic region. Primary equity analysis methods include: 1) evaluating the physical availability of vehicles within disadvantaged communities through the provision of GPS- or location-based data; 2) evaluating equitable vehicle utilization (i.e., the use of each vehicle by

people with certain demographic attributes) through proxies that allow for privacy protection; and 3) measuring vehicle distribution at different times of day and over different time periods to ensure access is equitable.

Financial

Cost

Typically, 100% of the costs to procure Populus's platform are passed onto mobility operators through an operating permit. Populus recommends funding the city or agency's program management costs through vouchers, with a portion earmarked for the platform's upfront base license fee. Alternatively, CMO could directly pay for all cities that request a data management platform. The remaining cost would result from a revenue split when the city generates operating revenue.



Pricing

The cost of Populus's platform-based license fee is $3,250 - $50,000 annually, depending on city size and preferred cost structure (fixed vs. variable). Add-ons could be funded through a voucher to the city or directly to Populus for:

- Curb Manager platform: $12,500 - $37,500 for the first year, which includes the platform plus one year of historical dataplus 25% of all fees collected by operators.
- A mobility evaluation survey: $10,000 for deployment of a standard mobility evaluation survey to 4+ operators and citizen groups. Deliverables include cleansed mobility survey data, insights, and a data dictionary for city staff.
- 311 Integration: $0 - $10,000 depending on the level of customization required to set up a 311 integration into the Populus platform to support city staff oversight of shared scooter programs (up to 20 hours of engineering support included).

Revenue

The cost of the software platform revenue share is 10%. Populus typically aligns platform costs to program revenue, specifically the per-trip or per-vehicle fees that cities collect from operators. In Populus's recommended model (with incentives), public agencies and operators receive some form of revenue. Operators are directly paid by users and/or by incentives through the voucher program, and Populus and the overseeing public agency would share a portion of any fees paid by the provider.

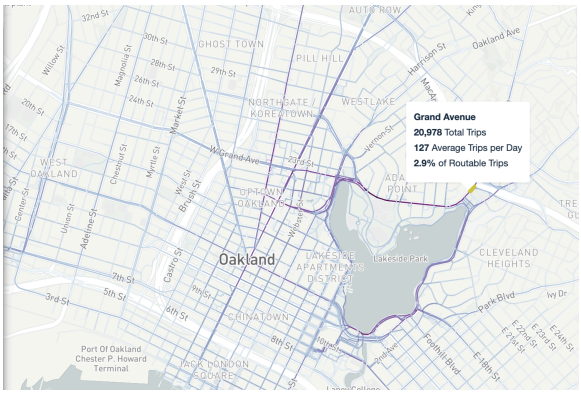
Financial Sustainability

Founded in 2017, Populus is a venture-backed technology company that has continuously secured financing to support R&D and future innovations of the platform. Populus has received numerous multi-year competitive procurements in major metro areas that provide recurring revenue sufficient to cover basic staffing and existing technology stack. Populus is committed to providing these services to all of the cities under its current agreements and any that it procures in the future.

Data

Populus uses Google Cloud exclusively for its data storage and processing services, which implement software- and hardware-level security measures. Populus encrypts all city data at rest and in transit with controlled access.

All data are aggregated so that individual trips cannot be identified. No personally identifiable information in the form of disaggregate route traces are stored in the database, which is queried by external-facing Populus data APIs.



All data stored permanently in Google Cloud has a retention policy of two years unless the client requests disposal of the data prior. Populus restricts access to authorized users and bases access to specific data on the role an employee or contractor plays in the business, authorizing access to the minimum amount of data required for that function. Access to the web-based platform is granted via a secure, permissions-based security system in order to facilitate the protection of potentially sensitive operator or trip data. Different features of the platform can be made available to users with different levels of access. Upon termination of services, access would be discontinued, but Populus can transfer data to cities in an industry-standard format.