



Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District

General Manager's Report – May 2019

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Outreach | Presentations and Community Events

The Communications and Marketing Department has been focused on preparing for the busy summer season ahead. With students out of school and warm summer weather, many families and leisure riders are trying out the train for the first time. In the month of May, Communication and Marketing staff attended several large-scale community events to reach a broad audience and provide information about train service and railroad safety. The summer season kicked off in high gear over Memorial Day weekend with the launch of two pilot fare programs.

This summer, kids 18 and under can ride the train for free on weekends and holidays when accompanied by a paying adult. The pilot program will run through Labor Day. Parking at SMART-owned lots is also free on weekends and holidays throughout the summer. The outreach team set up a pop-up booth at the Petaluma Downtown station to welcome families and promote the inaugural weekend of the summer campaign. The team also rode trains to announce the summer fare program and give out orange kids t-shirts. Riders were encouraged to use the hashtag *#SMARTSummerRide* to share pictures of their summer adventure on the SMART train. Looks like we've got a new generation of SMART riders!





SMART partnered with Sonoma and Marin counties to provide veterans, and active duty military personnel and their families with free train service and free entry to regional parks during the Memorial Day weekend. Many took the opportunity to ride the train for the first time and brought their families to enjoy the experience with them. Communications and Marketing staff boarded trains throughout the holiday weekend to connect with riders and hand out special giveaways to service members to thank them for their contributions.





Many of the veterans riding with us on Memorial Day took the time to get to know one another, and became fast friends.

They posed for a group picture (left) together, with the U.S. Navy, Army, and Air Force represented.

Our passengers onboard gave them a round of applause, in recognition of their service to our country.

In addition to those events, Bike to Work Day was celebrated on May 9 in the Bay Area, as part of National Bike Month. SMART hosted an energizer station at the Petaluma Downtown station to offer snacks and encouragement to cyclists commuting to work. Coffee was provided by our partners at Taylor Lane Organic Coffee. Riders also received a tote bag from the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition. Bicycle commuters were excited to share with us how using the train and bike to commute has notably improved their quality of life.



Since the last SMART Board meeting, outreach staff has participated in the following community events and presentations:

- May 30 | Group Trip: Disability Services and Legal Center (Santa Rosa)
- May 18 | Santa Rosa Rose Parade and Festival (Santa Rosa)
- May 17 | School Safety Presentation: The Cove School (Corte Madera)
- May 17 | Group Trip: Grant Elementary School (Petaluma)
- May 11 | May Madness Classic Car Show (San Rafael)
- May 10 | Mill Valley Age Friendly Fair (Mill Valley)
- May 10 | School Safety Presentation: Redwood Adventist Academy (Santa Rosa)
- May 9 | Bike to Work Day (Petaluma)
- May 8 | Hamilton Forum Presentation (Novato)
- May 7 | Group Trip: Cross and Crown School (Rohnert Park)
- May 6 | School Safety Presentation: Richard Crane Elementary School (Rohnert Park)
- May 5 | Roseland Cinco de Mayo (Santa Rosa)
- May 4 | Community Heritage and History Day (Larkspur)
- May 2 | School Safety Presentation: Cross and Crown School (Rohnert Park)
- May 2 | Group Trip: Loma Vista Immersion Academy (Petaluma)

MARKETING

Digital Programs | Social Media

Social media is a key factor in the success of new programs aimed at increasing ridership. Leading up to the launch of the new fare programs, the Communications and Marketing department created promotional collateral to share across all digital platforms in order to create awareness and excitement. SMART’s website provided information on the homepage for both pilot fare programs.

The most popular post during the month of May was the announcement of the new summer youth fare program. Followers were enthusiastic about the opportunity to ride the train with their kids and explore new places in the North Bay.

SMART consistently shares safety material, service advisories, and rider information to an audience of over 20,000 across all platforms, including social media and the e-newsletter. All of SMART’s social media platforms continue to increase their organic reach and levels of engagement.



Media | News Coverage

- May 25, *SMART officials discuss bid to seek sales tax renewal as soon as March 2020* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 24, *SMART to offer free rides...* (The Community Voice)
- May 23, *SMART officials discuss bid to seek sales tax renewal as soon as March 2020* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 19, *San Rafael braces for SMART construction traffic mire* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 17, *SMART to seek up to \$364 million to get to Healdsburg and Cloverdale* (North Bay Business Journal)
- May 16, *Major housing bill stalls, slowing development push along SMART line* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- May 16, *SMART to seek up to \$364 million to get to Healdsburg and Cloverdale* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 16, *SMART Summer Rides Start Memorial Day Kids Ride FREE on Weekends* (Sonoma County Gazette)
- May 16, *In Your Town for May 16, 2019: Train plans free rides for young passengers* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 14, *CA: Marin grand jury calls for bolstering SMART transit options* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- May 14, *Editorial: SMART needs to fulfill its promises before considering expansion* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 13, *Marin grand jury calls for bolstering SMART transit options* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 7, *SMART report outlines passenger-rail feasibility in northern California* (Progressive Railroading)
- May 7, *North Bay employers offer SMART train incentives to ease commutes* (North Bay Business Journal)
- May 6, *SMART commuter train exploring extension for Hwy 37 traffic relief, Amtrak link* (KPIX Channel 5)
- May 5, *Marin-to-Solano SMART extension estimated at \$1B* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 4, *SMART finds rail service expansion to Napa and Solano counties would cost about \$1 billion* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- April 30, *SMART Surpasses the 100,000-Cyclist Mark* (California Transit Association)
- April 25, *Sonoma County officials consider 2020 renewal of sales tax for road upgrades* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- April 25, *Lawmakers' deal pushes housing near Santa Rosa, Petaluma SMART stations* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- April 25, *Compromise legislation will help spur apartment building near North Bay train stations* (North Bay Business Journal)

LARKSPUR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Francisco Boulevard West roadway construction is complete and the road was opened on May 11th.
- Track construction is underway between Andersen Drive and 2nd street.
- Work at the station consists of constructing of curbs, gutter, station amenities and the platform ramp.
- Track is being constructed in the Bettini Transit Center.
- Construction of the City of San Rafael Multi Use Pathway from Rice Drive to Andersen Drive is nearly complete.
- Train control and communications systems installation work is ongoing with the installation of pedestrian gates, signal houses and signals.



Larkspur Station- Curb and Gutter Construction at the Parking lot



Track construction in the Bettini Transit Center



Bettini Transit Center – Track and concrete wall construction



Conduit installation at the 2nd Street



Larkspur Station- Ramp Construction



Installation of vehicle gate at Andersen Drive



Signal conduit installation at 2nd Street

WINDSOR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Preliminary engineering is nearly complete.
- Environmental permit applications are anticipated to be submitted at the end of May.



Windsor Extension- Looking north at Windsor River Road Crossing

PATHWAY

Payran to Southpoint Multi-Use Pathway

- The construction contractor was awarded to Granite Construction, Inc on May 1st.
- Construction activities are anticipated to begin in June.



Looking North along the Pathway route at Payran Avenue.

VEHICLE ENGINEERING

Alstom continues work on DMU 110 repairs, including custom orders for parts from the cars Manufacture Nippon Sharyo.

SMART continues its final review of the testing documentation for the 4 new cars. Once the review is complete the cars will begin a “burn in” period where the cars will be running regularly in order to work out any issues prior to introducing the cars to revenue service.

Cummins and Sumitomo have completed 9 of the 18 engine modifications.



SMART’s wheel truing machine is undergoing final testing at the Manufacturer in Michigan. The week of May 27th SMART staff was onsite in Michigan to inspect prior to the machine’s delivery to SMART.

OPERATIONS

MAINTENANCE OF WAY:

- Staff hosted inspections by Federal Railroad Administration and California Public Utility Commission inspectors looking at both Track and Signal records and infrastructure.
- Staff addressed vegetation issues at two of our larger non-revenue properties at Corte Madera and Healdsburg.
- Staff repainted marine information signs on Haystack bridge. They also installed a new navigation light with an external solar panel.
- We began providing Employee In-Charge protection this month for the contractor installing underground conduit for the new Novato station.
- We continue to work on vegetation abatement on a weekly basis.

TRANSPORTATION:

- Interviews continued to fill one open position as a Controller Supervisor.
- 1 Conductor is currently in training to become an Engineer-Conductor
- Performed Emergency Preparedness Training

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Performed annual maintenance on 2 Diesel Multiple Units
- Performed mid-year maintenance on 1 Diesel Multiple Unit
- Performed 500-hour oil change on 6 Diesel Multiple Units
- Installed emergency use only stickers to the fleet. The stickers were applied to the emergency brake valve area near the door
- Performed wheel change out on Diesel Multiple Units 101 and 106 due to ride quality
- Automatic Train Control maintenance performed on 8 Diesel Multiple Units
- Performed under car inspection on 4 Diesel Multiple Units.
- Performed engine swap, reverse gear replacement and transmission replacement on Diesel Multiple Unit 101
- Replaced the center windshield to Diesel Multiple Unit 108 after striking a wild turkey. The windshield was shattered

HUMAN RESOURCES

CURRENT OPEN RECRUITMENTS:

- Engineer-Conductor
- Controller Supervisor
- Railroad Information System Specialist

INTERVIEWS:

- Controller Supervisor
- Railroad Information System Specialist

NEW HIRES:

Operations hired one Laborer on April 8, 2019.

LABOR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS:

- Labor Negotiations with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers began on May 17, 2019. The current contract is set to expire on June 30, 2019.

MISCELLANEOUS:

The Human Resources Manager participated in initial interviews for the Sonoma Corps Pilot Program that will be launching in the fall of 2019. On Saturday, May 11th, teams of industry and educational staff met with students from Piner High School who have applied to participate in the Sonoma Corps Program.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety staff attended the Marin Fire Prevention Officers meeting and the Marin Fire Chiefs meeting. In Sonoma County, staff met with Petaluma Fire Marshall and the Healdsburg fire staff to discuss access to the right of way and other fire related issues.

In an effort to be a part of the planning phase of projects in close proximity to the SMART right of way, safety staff met with code officials in Marin, Sonoma and Mendocino counties. The consensus was to try and include SMART in the planning phases early on for projects near the right of way.

Ongoing trespassing issues continue, particularly in Sonoma County. On a daily basis, Code Compliance contacts trespassers along the SMART right of way and the pathway. The pathway trespassers tend to block the path preventing others from using it freely. Below is the pathway in Santa Rosa.



In the early morning hours, the below subject was contacted in Santa Rosa blocking the pathway entrance to the Santa Rosa north station.



The below female was contacted near College Ave in Santa Rosa, she was getting her tent set up when she was contacted by code compliance.



The area between 8th and 9th Streets in Santa Rosa continue to be an issue for transients loitering. The group photographed below are “regulars” that loiter on the pathway.



This extremely large camp appeared in Santa Rosa near 3rd Street. With the assistance of CHP, the camp was removed and trespassers moved along.



The below trespassers set up a camp behind one of our signal houses in Petaluma. After being confrontational with code compliance, Petaluma Police Department arrived for assistance. The male was arrested for possession of a knife.



A female trespasser was reporting by a passing train in the area of Santa Rosa north station. After being evasive with code compliance, Santa Rosa Police responded and the female was arrested for warrants.



GRANTS, LEGISLATION, PLANNING AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

LEGISLATION

AB 147 (Burke & McGuire): This legislation updates existing law regarding retailers engaged in business in California to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Wayfair v. South Dakota*. The SMART Board unanimously supported this bill and the bill was signed into law by the Governor on April 25

SB 742 (Allen): This legislation makes several changes to existing law related to operation of intercity rail feeder bus service. This SB 742 legislation would remove an existing restriction limiting intercity rail feeder bus service to passengers solely connecting to and from an Amtrak Intercity Rail service in California. In other words, currently people are only allowed to purchase a ticket on an Amtrak Thruway Intercity Rail feeder bus if they are also purchasing an Amtrak Intercity Rail ticket for the same journey. In the SMART corridor, the Amtrak Route 7 feeder bus travels between McKinleyville and Petaluma onward through Napa and Vallejo to Martinez at the Amtrak rail station. The SMART Board unanimously supported this bill and that support was communicated in a letter to the bill author on May 16, 2019. The bill passed from the Senate 37-0 and is currently in the Assembly, where it has been read one time on May 20, 2019.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Regional Transportation Plan Update: The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has begun the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan, currently named *Plan Bay Area 2040*. The updated financially constrained plan will be called *Plan Bay Area 2050*. MTC is also developing an unconstrained transportation vision plan called Horizon and has requested submittals of transit and roadway projects by June 30, 2019.

In conjunction with this regional plan update, each of the Congestion Management Agencies in the region are simultaneously updating their county-wide long-range plans. The Transportation Authority of Marin began reviewing a draft list of projects for submittal from Marin. The Sonoma County Transportation Authority has requested project sponsors submit projects to update their Countywide Plan and the regional plan at the same time, with submittals due to their staff by mid-June. That list of projects will subsequently be presented to their Board. As a multi-county transit district, SMART is asked to submit projects directly to MTC for the regional plan update after SMART Board review.

The SMART Board-approved list of Plan Bay Area 2050 projects has been transmitted to MTC and County Transportation Agency staff as of May 24.

State Route 37 Project: The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), Napa County Transportation Planning Agency (NCTPA) and Solano Transportation Authority (STA) have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to continue to jointly study needed improvements to State Route (SR) 37. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 6th, 2019 and agenda topics will tentatively include San Pablo Bay Active Transportation Access Study, restoration projects in San Pablo Bay, Solano Transportation Authority's Ferry feasibility study,

SMART update on the Novato to Suisun City engineering feasibility study, and an ultimate environmental phase discussion

Local Planning Department Notification and Coordination Tracking: SMART Planning staff tracks and reviews all notices sent by local jurisdictions for projects occurring adjacent to or nearby the railroad tracks. To date in 2019 staff has received and reviewed 71 different notices.

Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update Technical Advisory Committee Meeting: SMART staff attended the first of three meetings of the technical advisory committee (TAC) for the Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update project in Santa Rosa on Thursday May 30th. Following initial community workshops, and other outreach efforts designed to garner community input on issues and opportunities, a set of three alternatives for the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan will be prepared that represent different approaches that could be taken to addressing the issues and opportunities identified. The alternatives will focus on options for land use mix, circulation/connectivity, and design and will be the focus for a second round of community outreach, including an interactive online survey, community workshop and pop up outreach events. The TAC discussed alternatives are being developed in order to vet the alternatives before they are presented to the community. Two more meetings will be held on future dates to further discuss the Specific Plan and its alternatives.

SYSTEM ACCESS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Transit Coordination Meetings:

- May 1, 2019 - Staff attended the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) monthly Transit Finance Working group meeting.
- May 15, 2019 – Staff attended Sonoma County Transportation Authority’s monthly Transit Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

Transit Support Programs:

Means Based Fare Discount Working Group – In 2015 MTC launched a study to determine if a transit fare program based on household income would be feasible and effective. SMART has been participating in the MTC-hosted Means Based Fare Discount Working Group, with monthly meetings and a recent launch of a Clipper-based means-based fare pilot program on selected regional transit operators. SMART staff attended the most recent working group meeting, held on May 14, 2019. Program participants are working to come to consensus on details regarding implementation, in particular on the third-party income verification process and any Federal Title VI program requirements.

511 Transit Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – SMART staff attended the most recently-held meeting of the 511 Transit TAC in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s (MTC) offices on Wednesday May 22nd. Topics discussed included enhancements being made to MTC’s Transit Data Manager website, efforts to create a regionally-merged General Transit Specification Feed (GTFS) for ease of use and enhanced data quality of all transit agency’s shared data, upcoming 511 transit system changes and other 511 updates such as website alterations and coordination with Google.

BICYCLE ACCESS AND PARKING

Bike Share: The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) submitted a joint application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to receive a grant to create a bike share system in close proximity to the SMART stations. SCTA & TAM recently released Request for Proposals from qualified vendors for professional services to develop, launch and operate the bike share system. An evaluation committee containing representatives from SCTA, TAM, SMART, and local jurisdictions met on Friday May 10 to review all eight proposals that were formally received by SCTA & TAM and to reach a consensus on which vendors to select for interviews. The committee will reconvene on Friday June 21 to interview the finalists and make a selection on which firm to proceed forward with in the creation of a Bike Share system in Sonoma and Marin Counties. Conservative estimates are that the program would launch by Spring 2020. SMART will continue to collaborate on program implementation moving forward.

BikeLink™ Lockers: Staff is working with the locker vendor, BikeLink, to procure and install four additional bicycle locker parking spaces, one locker “quad”, at the Novato Hamilton station to accommodate unexpectedly high demand at that station. Installation of the equipment is tentatively scheduled for June 20, 2019. Additionally, BikeLink is preparing to launch Clipper Card integrations with their lockers throughout the SMART system. Users will be able to enroll with BikeLink to use their existing Clipper Card to access bike lockers, instead of having to carry and use a separate BikeLink card. BikeLink staff began testing the Clipper enabled system on the SMART Station lockers the week of April 15 and anticipates launching the Clipper functionality Summer 2019.