



## Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District

### General Manager's Report – October 2019

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Community Outreach | Presentations and Community Events



As we approach the opening of the Larkspur station, the Communications and Marketing department is making it a priority to engage with the community and prepare them for the start of service. The community outreach team participates in the Marin Senior Fair each year, providing information on SMART service, as well as distributing discount Clipper cards for seniors. Seniors receive a 50% discount on the SMART train when they use the discount Clipper card. SMART's

booth was a popular stop at the Senior Fair and many attendees expressed excitement as we get closer to beginning service to Larkspur.

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

- October 23 | Rotary Club of Rancho Cotati (Cotati)
- October 23 | School Safety Presentation: Rancho Elementary School (Santa Rosa)
- October 23 | Marin Senior Fair (San Rafael)
- October 21 | Safety Presentation: Girl Scout Group (Santa Rosa)
- October 18 | Group Trip: Senior Group (Santa Rosa)
- October 18 | Presentation: Petaluma Chamber of Commerce (Petaluma)

### Community Outreach | Safety Education and Awareness



Rancho Elementary School in Novato welcomed SMART to their campus to participate in Red Ribbon Week, a school-wide event dedicated to encouraging safety. The community outreach team presented railroad safety information to the entire student population of over 400. Special emphasis was placed on the new Novato Downtown station, which is slated to open for service by the end of the year. Students are encouraged to stay alert and aware near all tracks, trains, and stations.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Digital Programs | Social Media

SMART's social media platforms and communication channels are imperative in order to provide timely information regarding service alerts and updates for the public. Multiple PG&E Public Safety Power Shutdowns in the month of October have caused significant impacts to SMART service. Nixle is an important line of communication for many in Sonoma and Marin Counties, especially during emergency situations. SMART service updates are sent through Nixle, Twitter, and Facebook, with a combined audience of over 22,000. To subscribe to SMART service alerts via Nixle, text the word SMART to 888-777. The community outreach team works around the clock to provide information as soon as it is available. Updates and press releases are also posted on SMART's website at [www.SonomaMarinTrain.org](http://www.SonomaMarinTrain.org).

Followers on Facebook continue to show excitement for the opening of the Larkspur extension. In October, SMART's most popular post was an update on the Larkspur station. Updates on the Novato Downtown station are also well received across all social media platforms.

### Digital Programs | Construction Outreach

Preparation for the Larkspur extension opening continues. The Community Outreach and Marketing department has been working closely with the City of San Rafael, County of Marin, and the City of Larkspur to issue testing notifications and updates via social media platforms, including Nextdoor, Facebook, and Twitter, with a total reach of more than 37,000 people. Construction notification canvassing has also been performed in Novato neighborhoods near the Downtown station. For the latest updates, please visit [www.SonomaMarinTrain.org/Projects-Update](http://www.SonomaMarinTrain.org/Projects-Update).

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from 'Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit' dated October 14 at 11:07 AM. The post text reads: 'The Larkspur station is almost ready for the start of service! Our crews are working hard to open the extension by the end of the year. #SMARTtrain' followed by a photo credit: 'courtesy of @bayareatransit1 on Twitter.' The post features three images: a large photo of the Larkspur station platform with a sign that says 'LARKSPUR STATION', and two smaller photos below it showing different views of the station and surrounding area. The post has 8,355 People Reached and 2,275 Engagements. It shows 342 reactions (likes, loves, wow), 30 comments, and 40 shares. There are buttons for 'Like', 'Comment', 'Share', and 'Boost Post'.



## Media | News Coverage

- October 28, *SMART cancels service because of PG&E shutoff* (Rohnert Park-Cotati Patch)
- October 28, *23 school districts closed through Friday due to Kincadee fire* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 28, *Sonoma County airport in Santa Rosa closed due to wider evacuations from Kincadee fire* (Marin Independent Journal)
- October 28, *PG&E power shutoffs expected to majorly impact Bay Area's morning commute* (KGO/ABC Channel 7)
- October 28, *SMART trains canceled Monday due to power shutdown* (Novato Patch)
- October 27, *Sonoma County airport in Santa Rosa closed due to wider evacuations from Kincadee fire* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 27, *SMART trains canceled Monday for safety reasons* (SF Gate)
- October 27, *SMART cancels Sunday train service due to traffic signal outage* (SF Gate)
- October 24, *Rohnert Park Council drops plans to request slower SMART train speeds* (KSRO/Radio 1350)
- October 23, *Rohnert Park drops plan requesting SMART to reduce train speeds through fatal intersection* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 21, *Rohnert Park Council to appeal SMART train speeds within city limits* (KSRO/Radio 1350)
- October 20, *Rohnert Park set to finalize request for SMART to reduce train speeds through fatal crossing* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 17, *SMART advances 30-year tax extension vote for March 2020 ballot* (North Bay Business Journal)
- October 17, *CA: SMART board to consider placing sales tax extension on March ballot* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- October 17, *SMART advances sales tax renewal in March* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- October 17, *SMART cancels last 2 trains for Larkspur testing on Oct. 9* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 16, *SMART advances 30-year tax extension vote for March 2020 ballot* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 16, *SMART advances 30-year tax extension ballot measure* (Marin Independent Journal)

- October 24, *Rohnert Park Council drops plans to request slower SMART train speeds* (KSRO/Radio 1350)
- October 21, *Rohnert Park Council to appeal SMART train speeds within city limits* (KSRO/Radio 1350)
- October 15, *SMART board to consider placing sales tax extension on March ballot* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 10, *Rohnert Park asks SMART to drop train speed through intersection after 5<sup>th</sup> fatality* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 9, *Supes approve study for another Sonoma County SMART station* (Petaluma Patch)
- October 7, *State rail regulators to decide fate of Santa Rosa's Jennings Avenue SMART crossing* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- October 7, *State rail regulators to decide fate of Santa Rosa's Jennings Avenue SMART crossing* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)

## LARKSPUR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Work at the Larkspur Station is substantially complete.
- Train testing concluded on October 19, 2019.
- Pre-Revenue testing is planned to start in November.
- The Novato Downtown Station construction well underway with shelters, fencing, railings, lighting and other amenities installed.
- The quad-gate installation at Main Street in Penngrove is on-going.



San Rafael 2<sup>nd</sup> Street – train testing



Francisco Boulevard Pedestrian Safety Enhancements Installation



Bettini Transit Center – Pedestrian Safety channelization along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street



Novato Downtown Platform – Construction of Bicycle





Main Street in Penngrove – installation of additional enhancement warning system gates

WINDSOR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Procurement of a Civil Design-Build contractor is on-going.
- Coordination with Windsor and Sonoma County is on-going.
- Environmental permitting is underway.



Windsor Extension - Looking North at Michelle Lane

PAYRAN TO SOUTHPOINT MULTI-USE PATHWAY

- Paving is completed and site cleanup started in October.
- Fencing throughout the pathway started in early October.



Payran Pathway - Fencing Installation



Paving North of the Petaluma River

## **ADDITIONAL PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

Pedestrian channelizing fence installation has been completed at the following locations:

1. San Miguel Rd (Santa Rosa)
2. Piner Rd (Santa Rosa)
3. W. Steele Ln (Santa Rosa)
4. Guerneville Rd (Santa Rosa)
5. College Ave (Santa Rosa)
6. 9th St (Santa Rosa)
7. 8th St (Santa Rosa)
8. 7th St (Santa Rosa)
9. 6th St (Santa Rosa)
10. 3rd St (Santa Rosa)
11. Sebastopol Rd (Santa Rosa)
12. Hearn Ave (Santa Rosa)
13. Bellevue Ave (Santa Rosa)
14. Golf Course Dr (Rohnert Park)
15. Southwest Ave (Rohnert Park)
16. East Cotati Ave (Cotati)
17. Southpoint Blvd (Petaluma)
18. W. Payran St (Petaluma)
19. Lakeville Rd (Petaluma)
20. Washington St (Petaluma)
21. Caulfield Ln (Petaluma)
22. Grant Ave (Novato)
23. Roblar Dr (Novato)
24. Civic Center Dr (San Rafael)
25. North San Pedro (San Rafael)
26. 5<sup>th</sup> St (San Rafael)

The following locations are being designed:

27. Main St (Penngrove)
28. North San Pedro Rd (San Rafael)
29. Pacheco St (San Rafael)
30. Paloma Ave (San Rafael)
31. Mission Ave (San Rafael)



5<sup>th</sup> Street, San Rafael - Pedestrian Channelizing Fence



Bellevue Ave, Santa Rosa - Pedestrian Channelizing Fence



College Ave, Santa Rosa- Pedestrian Channelizing Fence

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

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- With the two power shut downs in the same month, the majority of staff time was spent preparing and responding to the power shut downs. Staff was present on both Marin and Sonoma County Emergency Operations Conference calls which occurred several times a day during the fires and shut downs. Information was dynamic and constantly changing resulting in SMART needing to be flexible and available for evacuation and re-entry response for the fires.
- Staff attended Marin and Sonoma fire prevention meetings during the month.
- Staff attended Marin fire chiefs meeting in Novato.
- Staff attending the Sonoma and Marin County Police Chiefs meetings.
- Code Compliance continues to contact trespassers throughout the right of way.

## OPERATIONS

Major preparations and operations response to early October PG&E public safety shutdown. Generators were deployed across Sonoma County to power SMART's crossings effected by the first shut down. Service was uninterrupted due to early deployment of generators and monitoring of the shutdown.

The second shutdown, combined with the Kincade fires posed a more significant and dynamic situation. Over 25 generators were deployed to the field in preparation for the second power shut down. Due to several cities not having back up power at the crossings, it was not safe to have trains travel through crossings.

In response to the Kincade fire evacuations, the Rail Operations Center was evacuated. All trains were moved south to Cotati Station for safekeeping, hi rails were moved from Fulton yard to Petaluma and SMART relocated the dispatch center to Haystack Bridge until regular operations could resume at the Rail Operations Center.

### MAINTENANCE OF WAY:

- Staff has begun winter preparations with vegetation/debris removal from drainage ditches and underneath bridges.
- Facilities team began installation of Suicide Prevention and "LOOK" signs at all pedestrian crossings.
- Track Team provided Employee in Charge flagging protection for SMART projects at: Main St. - Penngrove, Silveira Ranch - San Rafael, Grant St – Novato Downtown, MUP path – Petaluma
- MOW completed inspections at 50% of our facilities in October as required annually by the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Asset Management program
- One of SMART's two authorized Track Maintainer's started work on October 28<sup>th</sup>.

### VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Replaced fairing skirt in front of Diesel Multiple Unit 104. Skirt was damaged from the impact of a wild turkey.
- Performed fly wheel change out on Diesel Multiple Unit 105. This is an engine modification, that is caused by the fatigue level of the metal being low
- Side destination signed was inoperative on Diesel Multiple Unit 107. Inspected and replaced with a new sign and the defective signed was shipped out for warranty
- Inspected close circuit television system and found two (2) cameras not online. Attempted to re-install cameras to network system but that did not work. Replaced network video recorder system and system worked properly
- Performed mid-year maintenance on 2 Diesel Multiple Units
- Performed 500-hour oil change on 9 Diesel Multiple Units
- Automatic Train Control maintenance performed on 10 Diesel Multiple Units. This maintenance keeps us compliant with Federal Regulatory Association regulations in regards to positive train control



- Performed under car inspection on 10 Diesel Multiple Units
- While performing a daily inspection on Diesel Multiple Unit 112 a fault was detected on the air supply unit. The vacuum indicator was replaced and the unit was good for service
- Multiple Units 106 and 109. These fans shorted out on both Diesel Multiple Units

TRANSPORTATION:

*SMART Transportation Department Training:*

- SMART's engineers/conductors have started training on the Larkspur Extension which includes taking a physical characteristics test and a check ride with a Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineer over the new Larkspur Extension.
- Emergency Preparedness Training (DMU Emergency Evacuations Training using the window pulls and ladder placement) and (Fire Extinguishing Training).



Controller Supervisor Ross McLeod providing Diesel Multiple Unit information to newly hired Tyler

## HUMAN RESOURCES

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### CURRENT OPEN RECRUITMENTS:

- Engineer-Conductor
- Controller Supervisor
- Signal Technician
- Rail Information Systems Specialist
- Community Outreach Coordinator
- Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
- Vehicle Maintenance Technician

### INTERVIEWS:

- Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
- Code Compliance Officer
- Vehicle Maintenance Technician

### LABOR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS:

Labor Negotiations with the Operating Engineers Local 3 are ongoing. The contract expired on June 30, 2019.

## GRANTS, LEGISLATION, PLANNING AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

### GRANTS

*California Natural Resources Agency – Recreational Trails and Greenways:* On October 16, 2019, SMART submitted a concept application for funding to construct the SMART Pathway – McInnis Park Connector Project. This project continues a Class 1 and shared use pathway from the end of the McInnis Parkway/San Francisco Bay Trail Pathway across Las Gallinas Creek, along the San Rafael Airport emergency access road, across an existing bridge, per regulatory agency request, over Las Gallinas Creek to Smith Ranch Road and the entrance to McInnis Park. The project closes a significant gap in the SMART Pathway and San Francisco Bay Trail as well as providing critical non-motorized access to nature and recreational opportunities from the Marin Civic Center area, including SMART rail services and Golden Gate and Marin Transit bus services. The project cost estimate is \$2.9 million and the grant request is for \$2.3 million. Applicants from this round will be selected for site visits between January and March 2020, with further supporting documentation due mid-March 2020 and final grant awards announced June 2020.

### LEGISLATION

*SB 742 (Allen):* This legislation makes several changes to existing law related to operation of intercity rail feeder bus service by removing 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, the Amtrak Thruway services can now be opened to all passengers, including those that are connecting to Amtrak train service. 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 it has been signed into law. The operator of the Route 7, the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, is evaluating next steps.

### REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

*Faster Bay Area Technical Advisory Group:* The FASTER Bay Area Steering Committee, comprised of staff from the Bay Area Council, the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group, and SPUR, have established a technical advisory group comprised of each County Transportation Agency, each of the Bay Area’s transit operators, and regional bodies such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, to provide feedback on the FASTER Bay Area proposed voter initiative in support of significant regional transit investments. The FASTER initiative is intended to “make the Bay Area’s transportation system seamless, faster, reliable and predictable.” According to the FASTER Steering Committee, these investments will “help provide more affordable transportation options, reduce climate pollution and improve access to jobs and economic opportunity for low- and middle-income residents.” The FASTER TAG will be meeting every other week until the end of 2019.

*Solano Transportation Authority SMART Station and Solano Express Feasibility Study:* The 2018 California State Rail Plan identifies a 2040 vision that includes new east-west rail service along the Highway 37 and Highway 12 corridors that connects a Solano County hub with the SMART rail line. As a follow up to this Plan, SMART conducted an engineering feasibility study that concluded that the proposed service is feasible. As a follow up to the SMART engineering feasibility study, Solano Transportation Authority issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to conduct the SMART Station and SolanoExpress Feasibility Study in Solano County. This study calls for a consultant to provide a

comprehensive analysis of the existing conditions in Solano County along the SMART corridor, including land-use, rail facility conditions, biological conditions and integration potential for SolanoExpress, regional thru way bus, and active transportation. A consultant has been selected to conduct the study and the first kickoff meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup> at the Solano Transportation Authority's Office. Staff will be in attendance at the kickoff meeting and will provide technical assistance throughout the study.

*Downtown Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):* The City of Santa Rosa is updating their Downtown Santa Rosa Station Area Specific Plan. Staff attended the second of three scheduled TAC meetings held on Wednesday October 2<sup>nd</sup> to provide feedback and technical expertise on the preferred plan and its role in the plan update process.

*Local Planning Department Notification and Coordination Tracking:* SMART Planning staff attends regional planning coordination meetings, including the October 17, 2019, SCTA Planning Advisory Committee. SMART Planning Staff also 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 144 different notices.

#### SYSTEM ACCESS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

##### *Transit Coordination Meetings:*

- Oct. 2, 2019 - Staff attended the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Monthly Transit Finance Working group meeting.
- Oct. 9, 2019 – Sonoma County Transportation Authority's monthly Transit Technical Advisory Committee meeting was canceled due to the PGE Public Safety Power Shutoff.
- Oct. 10, 2019 - Staff attended the North Bay Transportation Officials meeting held at the Water Emergency Transit Authority Office. Topics discussed among the various North Bay transit operators included seamless mobility, funding and procurement updates, regional fare integration, ridership trends and data collection, regional call center and bike share.