



For Immediate Release
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SMART “soft launch” to offer preview rides to the public

The Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) District announced today that it is preparing for a "soft launch" with free Preview Rides for the public, as the agency awaits final approval from the Federal Railroad Administration to start full passenger service.

SMART is inviting the public to weigh in on which days of the week they would like to take preview rides, and which stations they think they will use to ride the SMART train. SMART will announce the preview ride schedule upon completion of a Federal Railroad Administration audit next week.

SMART’s General Manager—flanked by more than 100 SMART employees—announced that SMART has reached a milestone and is ready to go: 43 miles of track has been rebuilt; 24 bridges have been replaced or refurbished; 63-at-grade crossings have been rebuilt; and thousands of required tests have been successfully completed.

After next week’s audit, the final piece for federal regulators will be to sign off on SMART’s Positive Train Control System (PTC). Positive Train Control is an enhanced safety feature that prevents trains from exceeding speed limits, for any reason. If operators exceed speed limits, they receive an audible warning. If they do not immediately reduce speeds, the train will safely come to a stop automatically. SMART has completed more than 2,000 PTC tests, and will be among the first passenger rail systems to open with this enhanced safety feature.

SMART is asking people to weigh in on Facebook @SonomaMarinTrain; Twitter @SMARTtrain; or Instagram @SonomaMarinTrain by using #SMARTpreview. People can also email their preferences to SMARTpreview@SonomaMarinTrain.org, or call the SMART hotline at (707) 794-3077.

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