

# Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District



## General Manager's Report – March 2021

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**SMART**

|| SONOMA-MARIN AREA RAIL TRANSIT

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

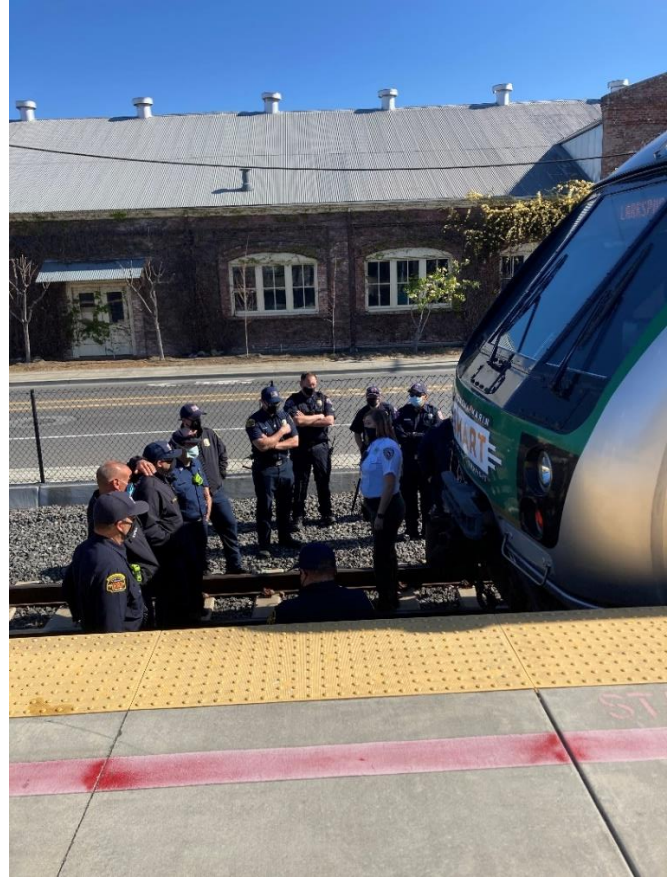
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### TRAINING:

Over the last month, SMART has hosted several trainings for various fire agencies in Sonoma and Marin Counties. Agencies were provided training and familiarization from SMART staff on safety features and train operations. A total of 130 firefighters were trained from 8 agencies. The agencies trained were: CAL FIRE, Gold Ridge, Rohnert Park, Novato, Petaluma, Rancho Adobe, Schell Vista, and Sonoma Valley.













## TRESPASSERS:



9<sup>th</sup> Street- Santa Rosa



Trespasser walking along tracks - Roblar Drive - Novato





Bicyclist on tracks at Guerneville Road - Santa Rosa



Trespasser along track near Caulfield Lane - Petaluma



**For Immediate Release**  
**Contact: Matt Stevens**  
**Direct: 707-794-3074**  
**Cell: 707-328-3046**

**March 16, 2021**

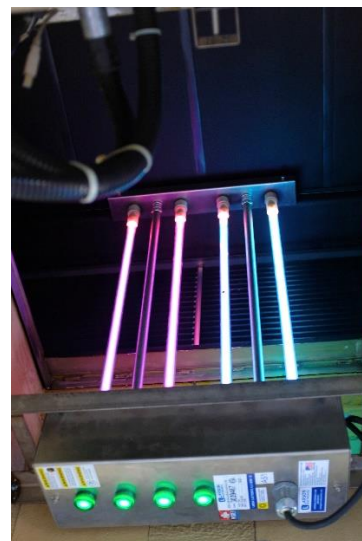
**SMART announces new UV light sterilization upgrades are completed**

Petaluma, CA – Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) announced today that ultraviolet (UV) light sterilization upgrades have been installed on all 18 of its train cars. The UV lights were installed in each train car's heating ventilation/air condition (HVAC) system. The UV light breaks down the DNA within pathogens to keep them from reproducing, effectively killing any pathogens circulating through the HVAC system.

In addition to the new UV light disinfection system, SMART has upgraded its onboard HVAC system with MERV 13 air filters. The new air filters remove bacteria, virus particles, allergens, mold, dust, and smoke. Tests show that the MERV 13 filters provides a 67 percent improvement over the old filters.

To round out these safety efforts, hand sanitizers have been installed in each train car, and each train car is cleaned twice daily with maintenance crews utilizing electrostatic sprayers to disinfect the train cars. Train engineers are also supplied with extra masks and hand sanitizing wipes in case passengers do not have a mask and or want to wipe down a hand railing or table before use.

"The new UV light sterilization system will provide yet another line of defense in combating this virus and providing additional protection for our passengers & staff," said David Rabbitt, Chair of SMART Board of Directors."



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# OPERATIONS

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## VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Completed installation of Ultra-Violet light sterilization upgrades to our heating ventilation/air condition system on all Diesel Multiple Units. This will provide another line of defense to combat COVID-19.
- Performed field modification upgrade to the Selective Catalytic Reduction brackets on Diesel Multiple Unit 117. This upgrade is performed by lifting the Diesel Multiple Unit and removing the engine and diesel power module. Once the brackets are replaced, the engine and diesel power module were reinstalled.
- Inspected the Communication Control Unit on Diesel Multiple Units 102 and 13. Upon further inspection it was determined the Communication Control Unit was not responding causing interference with the onboard camera system. The Communication Control Unit was changed out and the camera system was working properly.
- Performed annual maintenance on 1 Diesel Multiple Unit
- Performed mid-year maintenance on 2 Diesel Multiple Units
- Performed 500-hour oil change on 4 Diesel Multiple Units
- Automatic Train Control maintenance performed on 5 Diesel Multiple Units. This maintenance keeps us compliant with Federal Regulatory Association regulations, with regards to positive train control
- Performed data downloads on the fleet. The Diesel Multiple Units have many subsystems that are integrated. Downloading the systems data provides SMART an opportunity to investigate different occurrences that may not show during our normal inspections.

## TRANSPORTATION:

- New Engineer-Conductor Training for 3 employees completed.
- Dispatcher/Control Supervisor training continues.

### *SMART Transportation Department Training:*

- Engineer Recertification Rules Class was held in Petaluma Board Room on March 20, 2021.
- Semi-Annual First Aid, CPR, AED and Trauma Bag review for all Transportation employees continues.
- Updating online training programs for year 2021.
- Annual Rules Training has started on SMART's new LMS (Biz-Library) for all Transportation Employees.



### MAINTENANCE OF WAY:

- Federal Railroad administrator inspector was on site this month for Signal inspections. No violations were found, and all inspections went well.
- Two Signal Trainees will start on April 5th.
- Signal team has been working closely with the manager of Train control for audit of documents at all crossing locations.
- Signal team along with the City of Santa Rosa completed the update for traffic preemption at the Hearn crossing pedestrian enhancement project.
- Track team has taken delivery of new track scrubber truck and completed training on the machine.
- Track team supported overnight flagging again this month for Ghilotti construction at Highway 101 bridge in Petaluma.

## **SIGNAL, TRACK AND FACILITIES TEAM**



Track New Scrubber Vehicle



San Rafael Light Repair

# RIDERSHIP INFORMATION

## Passenger Ridership

Daily Riders	Sum of Ridership
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<b>2020</b>	<b>175049</b>
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<b>2021</b>	<b>24061</b>
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<b>Jan</b>	<b>6728</b>
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<b>Feb</b>	<b>7372</b>
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<b>Mar</b>	<b>9961</b>
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1-Mar	394
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2-Mar	419
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3-Mar	431
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4-Mar	431
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5-Mar	500
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6-Mar	0
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7-Mar	0
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8-Mar	405
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9-Mar	350
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10-Mar	337
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11-Mar	432
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12-Mar	457
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13-Mar	0
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14-Mar	0
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15-Mar	457
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16-Mar	433
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17-Mar	436
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18-Mar	429
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19-Mar	410
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20-Mar	0
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21-Mar	0
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22-Mar	410
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23-Mar	399
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24-Mar	499
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25-Mar	450
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26-Mar	446
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27-Mar	0
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28-Mar	0
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29-Mar	447
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30-Mar	516
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31-Mar	473
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<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>200046</b>
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## Bike Ridership

Weekly Riders	Sum of Bike Ridership (Weekly)
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<b>2020</b>	<b>27129</b>
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<b>2021</b>	<b>4876</b>
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<b>Jan</b>	<b>1366</b>
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<b>Feb</b>	<b>1483</b>
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<b>Mar</b>	<b>2027</b>
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1-Mar	434
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8-Mar	324
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15-Mar	373
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22-Mar	394
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29-Mar	502
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<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>32005</b>
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## ADA Ridership

Weekly Riders	Sum of ADA Ridership Weekly
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<b>2020</b>	<b>679</b>
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<b>2021</b>	<b>37</b>
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<b>Jan</b>	<b>10</b>
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<b>Feb</b>	<b>8</b>
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<b>Mar</b>	<b>19</b>
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1-Mar	7
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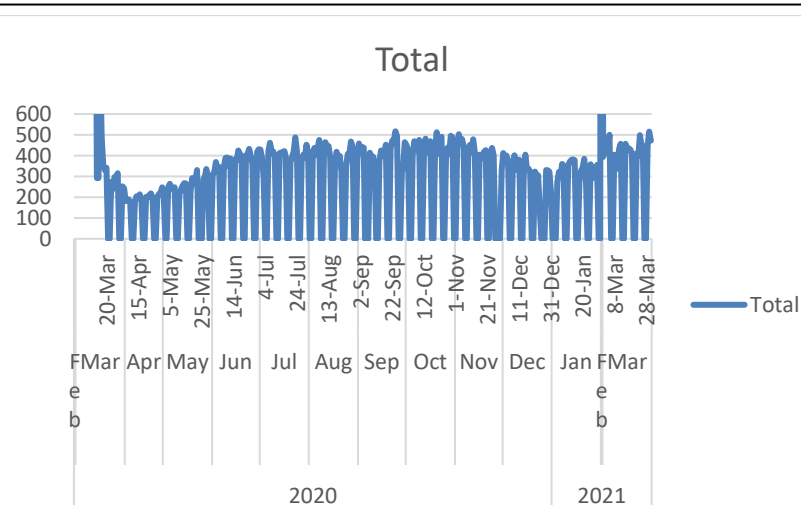
8-Mar	2
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15-Mar	5
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22-Mar	3
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29-Mar	2
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<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>716</b>
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# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MARKETING

## Community Outreach | Free Transportation to Vaccination Sites

SMART has partnered with local transit agencies to provide free transportation to and from all vaccination sites in Marin and Sonoma counties. Riders can tell the conductor they are traveling to a vaccination appointment when asked for payment. SMART is helping to reduce cost barriers and transportation limitations for community members to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Community Outreach | Events

The Communications and Marketing department has recently increased participation in Zoom presentations for local community groups. In March, SMART presented to the following organizations:

**March 30** | Healdsburg Kiwanis Club

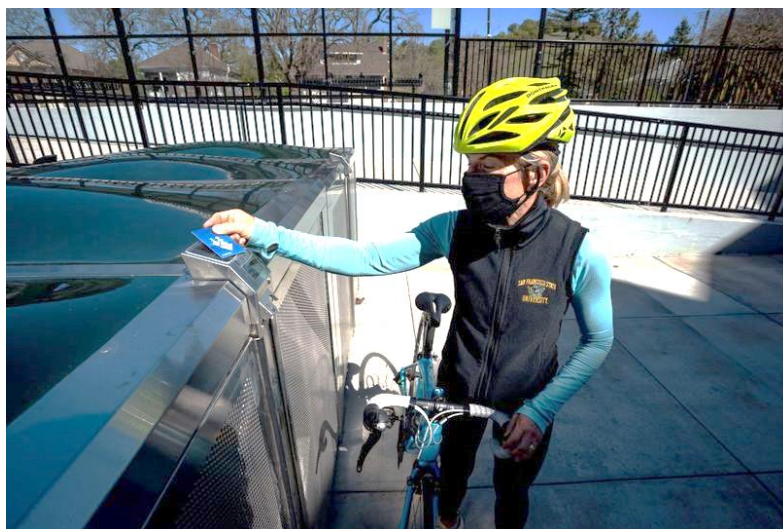
**March 11** | Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce

**March 4** | Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce

## Marketing | Digital Media

Civic Edge Consulting has been collaborating with SMART's Community Outreach team to establish a new narrative on social media and in the public about the benefits of SMART. In March, the Civic Edge team began filming a new video that will highlight SMART's benefit in the region. This video will be especially important as Marin and Sonoma counties open up for more recreational activities and residents return to transportation. Over the next several weeks, the Community Ties campaign will launch on SMART's social media platforms.

New radio ads promoting SMART's cleaning protocols and reliable transportation system started running during the week of March 22. The ads have been airing during peak morning and afternoon commute times on local radio.



SMART's consultant has been creating fresh digital content for social media. In March, the team took new photos in Larkspur and San Rafael that featured cyclists and the bike facility features at SMART stations, including the BikeLink e-lockers. SMART riders can use their Clipper cards to pay for SMART fares and secured bike parking.

## Media | January News Coverage

- March 26, *Landowners allege SMART improperly took their land for biking, hiking trail* (Pacific Sun)
- March 26, *Landowners sue SMART over land obtained for biking, hiking paths* (KPIX/CBS Channel 5)
- March 26, *Sonoma, Marin landowners sue SMART over biking, hiking trail* (Petaluma Patch)
- March 22, *Digest: Sonoma-Marin rail transit sued by landowners over bike, pedestrian trail* (Trains)
- March 22, *Federal lawsuit targets SMART bike path buildout* (Marin Independent Journal)
- March 19, *SMART sued overuse of right-of-way for bike and pedestrian trail* (The Press Democrat)
- March 18, *Lawsuit challenging Corona Station nears end* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- March 18, *Lawsuit challenging Corona Station nears end* (The North Bay Business Journal)
- March 16, *Dick Spotswood: SMART needs to satisfy multiuse path promise in Novato* (Marin Independent Journal)
- March 14, *Marin transit agencies hope Covid stimulus fuels rebound* (Marin Independent Journal)
- March 6, *Battle over big spending in drive to recall Sonoma County District Attorney Jill Ravitch* (The Press Democrat)
- March 4, *Marin Voice: SMART should spend budget surplus on long promised pathway* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 27, *Editorial: Marin's move to red tier a message to proceed with care* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 24, *Transit agencies offering free rides for residents traveling to, from Covid-19 vaccination* (SF Gate)
- February 24, *Marin Voice: Significant local tax subsidies put SMART train on wrong track* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 22, *Bay Area transit agencies team up to provide free rides to vaccine appointments* (Petaluma Argus Courier)



# WINDSOR EXTENSION PROJECT

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- Coordination with the Town of Windsor and County of Sonoma is on-going.
- Construction has been suspended due to “the Regional Measure 3 (RM3) Bridge Toll funding has not been distributed due to a lawsuit”. The Regional Measure 3 (RM3) Bridge Toll funding has not been distributed due to a lawsuit against the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) questioning whether the toll fee should be treated as a tax, not a user fee. In October of 2020, the State Supreme Court agreed to hear the appeal case, which will continue to delay the funding until the outcome is determined by the court, which could take a year or more.
- Airport Boulevard widening work for the County of Sonoma is close to completion with the installation of traffic signal and grade crossing foundations planned for April 2021.



New Rail stored on site





Windsor Creek – Completed Bridge Abutments Awaiting the Bridge Deck & New Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge in the background



Winterization at Culvert Area





Airport Boulevard pedestrian crossing – Ready for signal installation in April

## MULTI-USE PATHWAY PROJECT



**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Matt Stevens**

**Direct: 707-794-3074**

**Cell: 707-328-3046**

**March 19, 2021**

### **Lawsuit challenges construction or planned construction of the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District's pathways along the railroad right-of-way**

Petaluma, CA – Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) announced today that a new lawsuit filed Monday in the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of California challenges the construction or planned construction of the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District's pathways along the railroad right-of-way. SMART is carefully reviewing and assessing plaintiffs' claims and will evaluate all available options.

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**SMART**

|| SONOMA-MARIN AREA RAIL TRANSIT



## **MULTI-USE PATHWAY PROJECT**

### *Sonoma County Pathway Gap Closure Project - \$13.5M*

- South Point Boulevard in Petaluma to Main Street in Penngrove (2.9 mi)
- Golf Course Drive in Rohnert Park to Bellevue Avenue in Santa Rosa (2.8 mi)

The design team is focusing on:

- Evaluating utility conflicts and impacts to environmental features along the pathway alignment.
- Advancing the design of the pedestrian at-grade crossings in preparation for the field assessment and investigation review meeting
- Finalizing the environmental permit applications to be submitted to the regulatory agencies.
- Advancing the pathway construction documents to 95% design level.



Ely Road Looking South - Future Pathway Location in Petaluma



## CROSSING SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

The Gambini Road railroad crossing was raised and repaved to reduce the potential for vehicles getting stuck on the track.



Adjusting the grade of the Crossing



## CROSSING SAFETY SIGNALIZATION

SMART supported the City of Santa Rosa with the installation of the new signalized pedestrian crossing of Hearn Avenue that connects the bicycle pedestrian pathways. SMART prepared circuit plans for the interconnect between SMART's grade crossing warning system and the new traffic signal installed for the new pathway crosswalk.



Hearn Avenue crossing, Santa Rosa

## FREIGHT SERVICE

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On February 2, 2021 SMART, filed a Verified Notice of Exemption before the Surface Transportation Board to acquire the right-of-way and freight rail operating easement from North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) – from the Mendocino/Sonoma County line (at MP 89) to the freight interchange junction in Napa (The Line).

On February 18, 2021, the Surface Transportation Board indicated that SMART and NCRA could consummate the transaction and SMART could acquire The Line on or after March 4, 2021 (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

On February 22, 2021, Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company (NWPCo) Petitioned the Surface Transportation Board for Discontinuance of Service Exemption (requesting authority to cease being the freight rail operator / provider in Napa, Marin, and Sonoma Counties). The Surface Transportation Board instituted an exemption proceeding and set June 11, 2021 for the Final decision.



# REAL ESTATE

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## PRIVATE CROSSINGS

Staff has finished a Private Crossing Agreement with a property owner that is immediately adjacent to the tracks on the Brazos Branch.

## PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS

*Windsor Extension Project:* Staff is continuing to work on the transfer of property to the County for the redesigned and rebuilt bus pullout on Airport Boulevard in Santa Rosa. Staff is finishing the research property rights that were granted to third parties on or along the new extension. Staff is finalizing work with utility companies on a variety of tasks on the new extension property.

*North Coast Rail Authority (NCRA):* Staff is reviewing documents from NCRA on the properties to be transferred if the agreement is approved by all the authorizing agencies.

*Pathway:* Coordinating with the adjacent property owners and local municipalities regarding securing any necessary land rights to accommodate the construction of the pathways and interim access and laydown area needs.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Staff is continuing to research SMART's ownership, property rights of ingress and egress easements and current and necessary agreements along the Brazos Branch.

Staff is continuing the title work for the proposed Multi-Use Path Project and continuing to address a variety of requests from adjacent property owners. Staff is also managing leases, licensing agreements, easements, and/or current Master agreements for utility and telecommunications companies that are crossing SMART property.

## Special Event Requests:

- Bike Monkey- Levi's GranFondo Bike Ride/Race, Windsor/Healdsburg/Cloverdale- May 29, 2021 – *cancelled as of March 29, 2021.*
- Multiple Sclerosis Society- Waves to Wine Bike Ride, Rohnert Park/Santa Rosa- September 18-19, 2021

## Right of Entry Permits Issued:

- PG&E- Electrical Pole Maintenance- Greenbrae Boardwalk- Larkspur
- PG&E- Electrical Pole Maintenance – Railroad Avenue- Brazos Branch
- PG&E- Electrical Pole Maintenance – Rush Landing Road- Novato

Staff is continuing working on issuing Right of Entry Permits/License with:

PG&E- Electrical Pole Maintenance- St. Vincent Drive- San Rafael

Cats 4u Inc.- Las Gallinas Sanitary District- Sewer Regulator Maintenance- San Rafael

PG&E- Gas Pipeline Maintenance- Manuel Drive- Novato

PG&E- Gas Regulator/Pipeline Installation/Easement- Fulton Yard- Santa Rosa/Fulton

PG&E- Yearly Vegetation Management for Electrical Division

PG&E- Gas Regulator Installation- Hart Lane- Santa Rosa/Fulton

Phoenix Development Company of Minneapolis, LLC- Pullman Lofts Project- Santa Rosa

Danco Group of Companies- 80 College Avenue- Santa Rosa

County of Marin- Simmons Slough Water Management System

Fredric C. Divine Associates- 826 State Access Road/ 1385 N. Hamilton Pkwy- Novato

Marin County Flood Control – Installation of 3 pumps – Hwy 37

Sonoma Land Trust- Erosion Control and Dirt hauling on Brazos branch- Sonoma

West Coast Solar Company – Solar Project – Lagunitas Brewing – Petaluma

Sonic – Numerous Access Permits issued for work on fiber optics lines.

Metro-MCI – request to connect to Sonic fiber line

COMCAST – Staff is still working to finalize outstanding license agreement fees. Fiber Optic installation verifications in 7 locations. Agreements to be revised.



# FINANCE

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## Coronavirus Response and Relief Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) Funds

On Wednesday, March 24, 2021, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Board approved the second allocation of CRRSSA funds. Of the \$802,669,615 allocation, SMART received \$1,789,716.

## Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

In 2015, SMART became a Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”) direct grantee. To receive federal assistance, SMART must have a DBE program which addresses the requirements of 49 CFR Part 26. SMART’s plan was last updated in 2017 and is currently due to be updated.

SMART’s new DBE plan was transmitted for approval to FTA on February 26, 2021. The analysis for the updated plan was based on the amount of federal funds we anticipate receiving between Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021 – 2024 and the availability of DBE’s to perform that work. The project will allow SMART to achieve its goal by using race neutral efforts. The goal for FFY 2021-2024 is .03%. The full plan can be found on our website at:

<https://sonomamarintrain.org/sites/default/files/Procurement/SMART%20DBE%20Program%20Plan%202021-2023.pdf>

# HUMAN RESOURCE

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## CURRENT OPEN RECRUITMENTS:

- Track Supervisor
- Conductor Trainee
- Engineer Conductor
- Real Estate Manager

## NEW PROMOTIONS/HIRES

- Track Maintainer II employee was promoted to Track Supervisor.
- Track Maintainer employee was promoted to Track Maintainer II.
- The Security and Safety Division hired Safety and Compliance Officer.

## INTERVIEWS

The District held interviews for the following positions:

- Controller Supervisor
- Administrative Assistant



## GRANTS, LEGISLATION, PLANNING AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

### REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

*Local Planning Department Notification and Coordination Tracking:* SMART Planning Staff also tracks and reviews all notices sent by local jurisdictions for projects occurring adjacent to or nearby the railroad tracks. In 2020 staff received and reviewed 38 different notices through February and in 2021 SMART has received and reviewed **16** different notices.

#### *State Route 37 – Planning Processes Underway:*

- SR37 Policy Committee (Resilient SR37);
- SR37 Caltrans Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (SR37 PEL Study);
- SR37 Caltrans Comprehensive Multi-Modal Corridor Plan
- US 101 TO SR 121 Environmental & Design Alternative Analysis;
- Sears Point to Mare Island (Congestion Relief) – Environmental Impact Report Scoping.

The most recent SR37 activities included SMART staff participating in a one-on-one meeting with Caltrans staff on February 10 & March 19 regarding their SR37 Comprehensive Multi-Modal Corridor Plan (CMCP) process underway. A public workshop hosted by Senators McGuire and Dodd will be hosted on April 15 from 6-7:30pm and details can be found here: [www.scta.ca.gov/highway37](http://www.scta.ca.gov/highway37). This CMCP plan is a required pre-requisite for applications for state SB1 Solutions for Congested Corridors funding.

The policy Committee (Resilient 37) took place on January 7, 2021, and the SR37 PEL Study meetings are taking place approximately quarterly, with a Stakeholder meeting, online survey and staff interview occurring in late 2020, a PEL multi-jurisdictional meeting on March 26, 2021. The US101 to SR121 environmental and design process meetings scheduled as Technical Advisory Committee meetings through Summer 2021. SMART staff attends and participates in these meetings as staffing levels allow.

*Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan:* SMART participates in a coordinated effort related to the Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan. The plan reporting dashboard can be found here: <http://dashboard.healthytransitplan.com/>. The regional page has a direct link to SMART's COVID Response web location here: <http://www.sonomamarintrain.org/Covid-19>

### SYSTEM ACCESS PLANNING ACTIVITIES:

*Bike Share:* The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) are implementing a Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)-funded bike share system around several SMART stations as a First/Last-Mile access solution. SCTA and TAM have selected Bolt Mobility (formerly known as Gotcha Mobility) as the operator of the Bike Share Pilot Program. The pilot program will roll-out 300 GPS-enabled electric bicycles for three years centered around SMART stations. Due to COVID-19, the program implementation timeline has been impacted by community outreach and manufacturing limitations, with launch anticipated in Summer or Fall 2021.



SMART staff participates in a Bikeshare Working Group. The most recent meeting took place March 24, 2021, covering an inter-agency coordination agreement and a coordinated Board/Council package for upcoming operational approval. An online survey was completed March 19, 2021, by SCTA and TAM to collect public feedback on possible bike share pod locations for this initial pilot program and beyond in

#### TRANSIT COORDINATION MEETINGS:

- **March 3, 2021** - Staff participated in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) monthly **Transit Finance Working Group** meeting. Discussions included several standing item updates: legislative updates, funding notices, Transportation Improvement Program update, Cap and Trade Update, Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC) grants, Regional Transit Capital Priorities process, and Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force.
- **March 10, 2021** – Staff participated in Sonoma County Transportation Authority’s monthly **Transit Technical Advisory Committee** meeting. Standing items were discussed including transit operator updates, Sonoma County’s Future of Transit Ad Hoc Committee status, the Blue Ribbon Transit Task Force updates, and the annual Coordinated Claim for transit operator funding (Transportation Development Act and State Transit Assistance).
- **March 22, 2021** – Staff attended the **Blue-Ribbon Transit Task Force** meeting virtually. The agenda included detailed discussions on transit **Network Management Goals** and a presentation by California State Transportation Agency on **CalSTA initiatives**.
- **March 9 & 23, 2021** – Staff attended the **Blue-Ribbon Transit Task Force Transit Caucus – Planning and Operations Subcommittee** meetings virtually. The agenda included preparation of presentations on Network coordination for the Blue Ribbon Transit Task Force and discussions of Regional Hub Transfer Coordination, Paratransit Coordination, Bus Shelter/Street Furniture Program, and a coordinated approach to adapting physical distancing guidelines as counties revise their COVID ratings due to improved outcomes.
- **March 2, 9, 16, 23 & 29 - 2021** – Bay Area Transit Operator ongoing coordination meetings. SMART staff met with the Bay Area’s smaller transit operators, defined as any except the seven largest transit operators, weekly to coordinate comments and activities associated with COVID-19 response, the MTC Blue Ribbon Transit Task Force Public Transit Transformation Action Plan, Clipper 2.0, and other topics of regional significance.

#### GRANT ACTIVITIES:

*Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSSA):* The Federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 was passed on December 27, 2020. The Federal Transit Administration posted the apportionment table for the Section 5307 funds for distribution to Urbanized Areas across the nation for transit use. The Bay Area will receive \$802,669,615 from CRRSSA, directed to the multiple urbanized areas that comprise the Bay Area, of which \$15,435,820 is appropriated to the Santa Rosa Urbanized Area, where SMART reports the bulk of its annual service statistics and from which SMART receives nearly all its federal formula funding.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) fully programmed these funds to operators in March, with 67% of the Santa Rosa UZA funds (\$10.3 million) going to the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD), \$1.9 million to Santa Rosa CityBus, \$1.8 million to SMART, and \$1.4 million to Sonoma County Transit. SMART co-signed a letter to MTC regarding this topic (*attached*).

*American Rescue Plan (ARP):* The Federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) was passed on March 11, 2021. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) posted the apportionment table on March 29, 2021, for the Section 5307 funds for distribution to Urbanized Areas across the nation for transit use. The Bay Area will receive \$1.7 billion, directed to the multiple urbanized areas that comprise the Bay Area, of which \$1.3 billion will be directed to transit operators reporting to the San Francisco-Oakland urbanized area and \$27 million will come to transit operators reporting to the Santa Rosa urbanized area, including SMART.

MTC will commence its process to re-distribute the FTA apportionments in the coming weeks and months.

*Metropolitan Transportation Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick Strike Program (Quick Strike):* The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has established a one-time grant program of approximately \$50 million in federal funds region-wide to fund Safe and Seamless Mobility projects. Projects funded with these grants must have funding obligated by September 2022 and are focused on bicycle/pedestrian safety and mobility, connections to transit, and projects that advance equitable mobility.

MTC has requested county-level transportation agencies, Transportation Authority of Marin, and Sonoma County Transportation Authority in SMART's case, receive initial application submissions with an eye towards county-level programming targets. MTC will consider regional and multi-county priorities for the final program of projects, possibly resulting in the adjustment of county-level programming targets.

SMART submitted two SMART Pathway projects as part of this Quick Strike program:

- The Payran to Lakeville SMART Pathway segment in Central Petaluma was submitted to SCTA seeking \$806,000 in Quick Strike funds to complete construction of this segment.
- The McInnis to Smith Ranch SMART Pathway segment in San Rafael, connecting between the Marin Civic Center and McInnis Regional Park over Las Gallinas Creek, was submitted to TAM seeking \$2.16 million in Quick Strike federal funds to complete the construction of this segment.

TAM and SCTA have recommended each project to MTC as part of their project endorsements for Quick Strike funding.

MTC staff recommendations will be presented to their Partnership Board on April 23 and the Commission will consider adoption of an approved program at their June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.



### LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES:

*State Assembly Bill 629 (CHIU):* Assembly member Chiu has introduced AB629 to improve regional transit through all transportation agencies in the Bay Area. The bill is in development and will be amended through the legislative process, but its stated purpose is to make improvements across fare coordination, real time transit schedules, and regional coordination on transit wayfinding. The improvements will require coordination between the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), county-level transportation agencies and transit agencies with the goals of:

- (a) Integrating all transit in the region to operate as one seamless, easy-to-use, multimodal transit system from the perspective of the user.
- (b) Equitably expand and improve access to high-quality, reliable, and affordable public transportation.
- (c) Prioritize institutional reforms that support the creation of a more seamless and resilient public transportation network.



March 5, 2021

Commissioner Nick Josefowitz, Chair  
Programming & Allocations Committee  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

RE: Agenda Item 4a, Programming and Allocations Committee, March 10, 2021

Dear Chair Josefowitz,

As the three transit agencies reporting service data to the Santa Rosa Urbanized Area, we support the proposed distribution of transit emergency relief funds from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) prepared by MTC Staff and encourage you to refer the proposal to the Commission for adoption at your meeting on March 10, 2021. However, future rounds of emergency funding should be used to begin transitioning our transit services to the new post-pandemic normal and not be shifted away from our service area.

These CRRSSA funds are urgently needed to continue providing transit service to our region's frontline workers and people making essential trips and we agree taking a regional approach is critical to ensuring the recovery of the transit network overall. We understand that the proposal before you will result in \$10.3 million of these CRRSSA funds, or 67% of the Santa Rosa Urbanized Area appropriation, being allocated to Golden Gate Transit to provide relief for their Fiscal Year 2021 budget. We believe Golden Gate Transit is an important provider in Sonoma County's transit network, as evidenced by Sonoma County supporting Golden Gate Transit by allocating 25% of its Transportation Development Act funds off-the-top for the past 25 years, per MTC Resolution 2858. We look forward to working with Golden Gate Transit going forward to ensure that these funds will be used to maintain or restore service to the Santa Rosa Urbanized Area, which encompasses Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Sebastopol, Windsor, Healdsburg and other communities in Sonoma County.

While we support the distribution of 75% of the remaining CRRSAA funds on the basis of expected revenue losses from January to June 2021, we believe that beginning with Fiscal Year 2022, all transit operators will need to begin adapting to the 'new normal' the pandemic conditions have created, even if all the outcomes are not fully known yet.

For us that has meant tackling budget concerns, reducing staff and service through the most critical phases of the pandemic and preparing for service expansion that may look dramatically different going forward. Unfortunately, these strategies are familiar to us as we have navigated them through many community-altering fire disasters over the past three years.



**SMART**

|| SONOMA-MARIN AREA RAIL TRANSIT



In the coming year, Santa Rosa Urbanized Area transit providers will be asked to

- provide additional service hours to cover our higher demand corridors and times of day, including a return of our school-related service demands, all while maintaining COVID-related capacity constraints,
- expand services in support of our riders, of which our systems' pre-pandemic ridership composed of between 26% and 86% low income,
- hire new operators to compensate for pandemic-related attrition, and
- serve the Sonoma County and the North Bay's transit needs to restart the economy and provide all people in our communities with equitable access to economic opportunity.

Like all transit operators in the region, we eagerly anticipate Congress approving the proposed American Rescue Plan Act, which would provide yet more critically needed transit relief funding to the region. We look forward to these new funds providing us the resources we desperately need to begin pivoting our systems and services into a 'new normal', post-pandemic transportation network for Sonoma County and the greater North Bay. For Sonoma County, this includes continuing the work of the Sonoma County Transportation Authority's Future of Transit Ad Hoc Committee, which has set forth the goal of increasing transit ridership in Sonoma County by integrating our local transit systems to enhance the customer experience and improve service quality.

We agree with our fellow transit operators in the Bay Area that the CRRSSA proposal before you is an important component of solving current budget year challenges for all the region's transit operators. We look forward to continuing to work together to ensure the viability of transit in the region, and in particular on behalf of our communities and riders in the North Bay.


Sincerely,



Sean McGlynn  
City Manager  
City of Santa Rosa



Bryan Albee  
Transit Systems Manager  
Sonoma County Transit



Farhad Mansourian  
General Manager  
Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit  
District (SMART)