

Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District



General Manager's Report – May 2020

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CITIZEN'S OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

A Citizens' Oversight Committee meeting was held via videoconference on Wednesday May 27, at 7:30 am. The meeting was Chaired by Russ Columbo and attended by 9. The meeting involved discussion of two items. First, the future role of the Citizen's Oversight Committee. Committee members discussed and received comment on the COC's role. In general, the discussion centered on the need for the Board of Directors to clarify whether the role of the COC in the future would be to focus only on the Strategic Plan as it has in the past. It was decided at the meeting that Chair Columbo would reach out to Chair Lucan in order to determine next steps for sharing the full comments and thoughts of the Committee.

Information and previous meetings from the Citizen's Oversight Committee can be found online at SonomaMarinTrain.org/citizens-oversight-committee.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MARKETING

The Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District and its Board of Directors are in the process of analyzing several strategies to reduce expenses that will have a direct impact on train service. As a part of this process, the SMART Board asked the Communications and Marketing department to create a community survey in order to seek valuable input from the communities we serve in Sonoma and Marin counties. In just a few short days, the team put together an eleven-question survey that assessed the impact of several potential reductions, including eliminating all weekend service, reducing the level of weekday service, and suspending free onboard WiFi service.

3,281 responses were collected from the survey, which was available for seven days, from Monday, May 11 through Sunday, May 17. The community outreach team distributed the survey through SMART's communication channels, as well as through 65 public and private agencies. The majority of responses were received through SMART's e-newsletter and social media channels. Another significant portion of responses were collected through business and community leaders.

The information gathered through the survey was presented to the Board of Directors during the public meeting on May 20, 2020. You can view the detailed results on SMART's website: <https://bit.ly/2TljDVP>



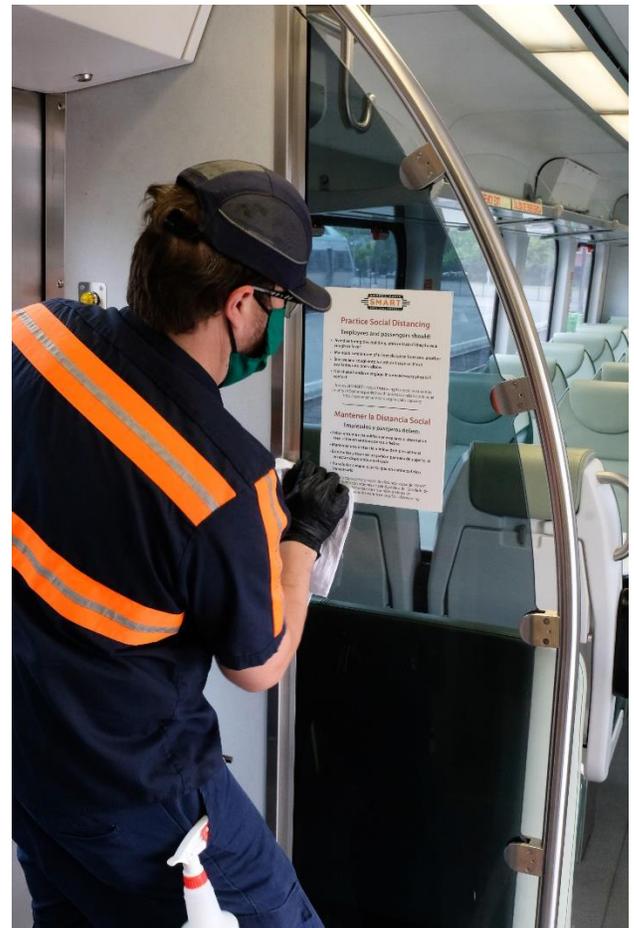
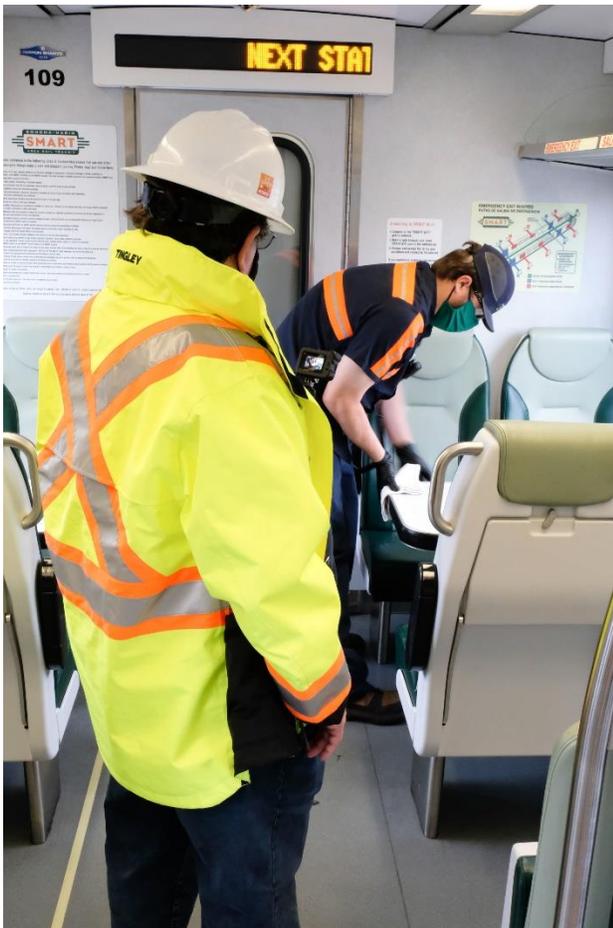
Community Outreach | Safety Education and Awareness

Our community is adjusting to the statewide shelter in place orders, finding safe and creative ways to stay active, which has resulted in an increase in the number of people walking on or along the railroad tracks. To combat the increase in trespassing, SMART has partnered with Operation Lifesaver to create targeted ads to reach identified areas along the right-of-way. SMART is also boosting safety content on Facebook to reach a wider audience. The rail safety video from the Petaluma Police Department has reached over 17,500 people.



Marketing and Digital Programs

SMART has been working closely with the Metropolitan Transportation Committee (MTC) on marketing initiatives to unite transit agencies across the Bay Area. MTC is spearheading a campaign to create a video that highlights the work being done by transportation workers to keep facilities clean and continue to provide transportation during a critical time. SMART's Communications and Marketing team participated in a conference call to discuss marketing objectives and messages for campaigns that will bring together the larger network of Bay Area transportation agencies.



A videographer from MTC films SMART's cleaning process onboard trains, as part of a campaign that includes transportation agencies across the Bay Area.



Media | News Coverage

- May 26, CA: *SMART aims to keep weekend service after public survey* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- May 23, *SMART aims to keep weekend service after public survey* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 21, *SMART approves multimillion-dollar plan to acquire North Bay freight rail service* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 20, *Bay Area's SMART may buy out Northwestern Pacific to gain control of route, freight service* (Trains)
- May 20, *SMART: train service, staff cuts likely needed* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- May 19, *SMART poised to take control of North Bay freight hauling, expanding beyond passenger service* (Napa Valley Register)
- May 19, *SMART poised to take control of North Bay freight hauling, expanding beyond passenger service* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 16, *North Bay train service, staff cuts likely needed* (The Mercury News)
- May 16, *SMART: train service, staff cuts likely needed* (Marin Independent Journal)
- May 14, *SMART seeks input on possible passenger rail service cuts* (Progressive Railroading)
- May 11, CA: *SMART weighs eliminating weekend service, 40% of weekday trains to cut \$6 million from budget* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- May 11, *Survey to get public input on possible SMART train service reductions* (SF Gate)
- May 11, *SMART seeks community input on proposed service reductions* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- May 7, *SMART weighs eliminating weekend service, 40% of weekday trains to cut \$6 million from budget* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- May 7, *SMART to make significant cuts to service* (KSRO Radio)
- May 6, *SMART weighs eliminating weekend service, 40% of weekday trains to cut \$6 million from budget* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- May 6, *Deadline for Petaluma SMART station land seat delayed* (The Bohemian)
- May 6, *SMART board will receive budge report today* (The Bohemian)
- May 6, *SMART board will receive budge report today* (Pacific Sun)
- May 6, *Petaluma sued over Corona project as SMART deal reached* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- May 1, *Construction of SMART Windsor Extension project resuming May 4* (Windsor Times)
- April 29, *Fitch takes rating actions on U.S. local government dedicated tax bond ratings* (Fitch Rating)

CAPITAL PROJECTS

MULTI USE PATHWAY PROJECTS

Southpoint Boulevard in Petaluma to Main Street in Penngrove and Golf Course Drive in Rohnert Park to West Robles Avenue in Santa Rosa

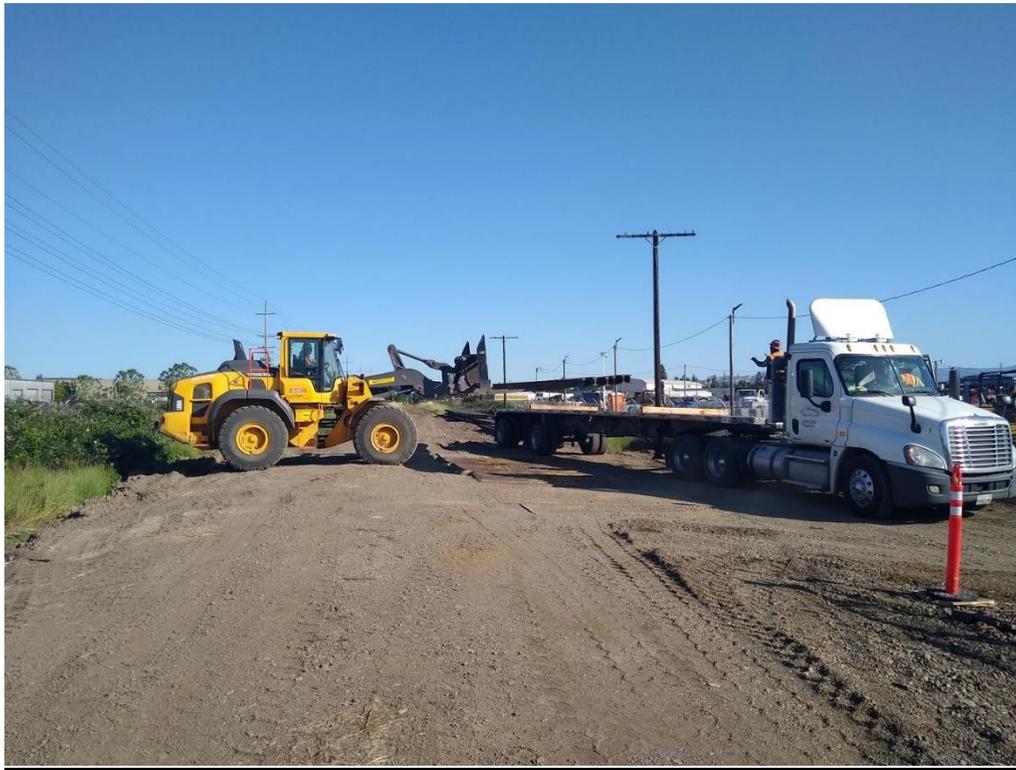
- SMART is planning to award a professional design services contract in June.
- Design is planned to begin in the summer 2020.

WINDSOR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Design work is on-going.
- Removal of the old track began in May.
- Crossing panels, ties, and rail have been delivered.
- Coordination with the Town of Windsor and County of Sonoma is on-going.
- Environmental permitting is on-going.



Rail Demolition at Shiloh Road, Windsor



Loading old rail to remove from the project site



Delivery of new rail in Windsor

OPERATIONS

MAINTENANCE OF WAY:

- SMART Maintenance of Way completed fence repairs at 5 locations that had been cut by trespassers.
- Facilities team completed a project to re-stencil the “Stand Back” in white on the red stripes at all station platforms.
- Facilities team installed a rolling ladder at the Rail Operation Center shop pit to enable more efficient ingress and egress.
- SMART Maintenance of Way completed a cleanup of the yard Petaluma. All SMART owned materials were removed and relocated to Fulton.
- Track and signal teams worked together to replace an insulated rail joint that was failing and allowing low voltage current to leak through.
- Signal and Facilities teams supported SMART contractor work at the Airport Control point that is part of the Windsor extension. We had to remove/reinstall 3 sections of fencing and locate existing signal cables.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Changed out air spring on Diesel Multiple Unit 105 due to a defect found.
- Changed out fire suppression extinguisher’s on Diesel Multiple Units 102 and 102.
- Changed out the auxiliary power supply battery charger on Diesel Multiple Unit 117.
- Performed mid-year maintenance on 4 Diesel Multiple Units.
- Performed 500 -hour oil change on 1 Diesel Multiple Units.
- Automatic Train Control maintenance performed on 12 Diesel Multiple Units. This maintenance keeps us compliant with Federal Regulatory Association regulations in regards to positive train control.
- Performed annual inspection on 1 Diesel Multiple Units.

TRANSPORTATION:

- Updating E-Path online training for year 2020.
- Engineer-Conductor training class is being held for two employees.
- SMART’s Engineers-Conductors finished eight weeks of the new Revised Train Schedule during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Public safety participates in ongoing conference calls with Metropolitan Transportation Commission for regional updates. SMART provides updates on practices and policies as well as ridership information.

Public safety participates in Emergency Operations Center calls County-wide, to receive up to date information on health orders and policy decisions that will affect ridership.

Public safety participates in County Police Chiefs calls several times a week. These calls highlight issues happening in the public safety environment in both counties.

During the month of May, Code Compliance Officers had 59 activity reports. These reports ranged from trespassers, vehicles on SMART pathway, and sleeping on the platform.



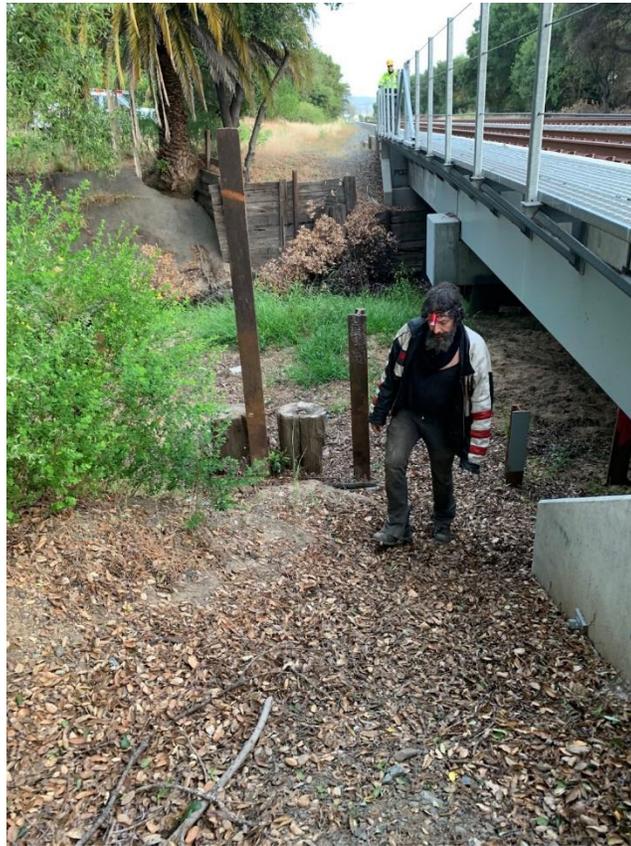
Below image is from the Cotati Station when a truck drove onto our path.



Trespasser near River Road in Santa Rosa



Trespasser under the bridge at Piner Road Code Compliance made contact and moved him along.



This trespasser in Petaluma was contacted and moved along. As you can see the location where he was walking was extremely dangerous.



HUMAN RESOURCES

RECRUITMENT:

There are no open recruitments at this time.

HIRES:

The District has not hired any new staff in this month.

MISCELLANEOUS:

SMART's labor negotiations team will be met with our three labor Unions, Operating Engineers Local 3, Teamsters Local 665 and Machinists Lodge 1414 to discuss opportunities for budget savings in the areas of salaries and benefits. To date, the unions have not been agreeable to deferring the cost of living adjustment scheduled for July 1, 2020.



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 2019 staff received and reviewed 171 different notices, with 71 notices by June 2019. To date in 2020, SMART has received and reviewed 55 different notices.

Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – On May 20, staff participated in the third meeting of the TAC to discuss the status of the Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Plan. The Santa Rosa City Council expressed broad support for the preferred plan concept that seeks to promote a vibrant big city core centered on Courthouse Square and network of mixed-use village centers in other parts of the plan area. The TAC then discussed and brainstormed parking strategies & community benefits that could be included in the plan. Staff will continue to attend these meetings since the Santa Rosa Downtown SMART station is included within the plan.

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 in close proximity to the SMART stations as a First/Last-Mile access solution. SCTA and TAM have selected 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. The Bicycle Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which is comprised of representatives from each jurisdiction along the SMART line, including SMART, met remotely on Wednesday May 27, 2020. Due to COVID-19, the program implementation timeline has been impacted by community outreach and manufacturing limitations. Additional program modifications regarding COVID related protocols are under development and will be discussed in future TAC meetings.

Clipper START Program: 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 Clipper START Program, with monthly meetings and a recent launch of a Clipper-based means-based fare pilot program on selected regional transit operators, which include BART, SFMTA, Caltrain and Golden Gate Bus and Ferry. At the February 5, 2020 meeting, your Board unanimously approved Resolution Number 2020-05 which authorized SMART's formal request to participate in the regional Clipper START Low Income Fare Program. Staff participated in the most recent technical advisory meeting, which was held on April 14, 2020.



MTC has not recommended funding from the Low Carbon Transit Operating Program (LCTOP) funds to pay for the necessary software and hardware programming to allow SMART to participate in the Clipper START Program. No formal response has been received from MTC regarding the SMART Board request to become a participating agency in the Clipper START Program.

Transit Coordination Meetings:

- May 6, 2020 - Staff participated in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) monthly **Transit Finance Working Group** meeting. The eight substantive agenda items included funding and legislative items, including State Senate Bill 1, State Cap and Trade, and State Transit Assistance fund estimate updates (decreases) given the COVID-19 pandemic economic responses.
- May 13, 2020 – Sonoma County Transportation Authority’s monthly **Transit Technical Advisory Committee** meeting. Discussions included Sonoma County 2018 Greenhouse Gas Inventory update, Measure M Project presentations status and schedule for next fiscal year, regional funding updates, COVID-19 coordination and transit operator updates.
- **COVID-19 Transit Coordination Phone Calls** – Staff is calling into biweekly phone meetings with Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa City Bus, Petaluma Transit, and Golden Gate Transit to discuss how transit services are being affected by COVID-19.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities: The State of California has created the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program with the fifth cycle of programming underway for \$550 million available statewide. SMART submitted as a joint applicant with MidPen Housing and the City of Santa Rosa for the Roseland Village Project, to construct 75 affordable housing units and a series of transportation investments. If successful, SMART and the City of Santa Rosa would receive resources to complete the SMART Pathway from Joe Rodota Trail across 3rd Street, connecting to the Downtown Santa Rosa Station. SMART would also receive necessary funding towards the completion of the Windsor extension project. The State will conduct technical reviews in April and announce awards June 25, 2020.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act: The Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) provides funding to public transit agencies to support operations retro-active to January 20, 2020. SMART received a first grant on May 18 totaling \$10,375,471 from the Federal Transit Administration, as concurred to by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. A subsequent programming of CARES Act funding of a yet undetermined amount will be programmed later in 2020.