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Introduction

SMART conducted extensive community outreach during the development process of the updated Strategic Plan. Below is a summary of the community input received by SMART during this process.

Virtual Community Workshops

SMART began the strategic plan outreach process with a series of online community workshops, aimed at gathering information from the community around the strategic priorities for the agency. The virtual community workshops were structured around the four focus areas, ridership, pathway, extensions, and freight, as well as a kick-off workshop on an agency-wide SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis.

Workshop 1: SWOT Analysis

On January 31, 2024, SMART conducted its first online community workshop, aimed at gathering community feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the agency. Staff introduced the Strategic Plan update planning process and presented a review of SMART's recent accomplishments, previously stated strategic objectives, and current challenges. Members of the public were then asked to submit their thoughts on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the organization using the Mentimeter software. After community members had given their input on the SWOT Analysis, people had the opportunity for public feedback in a live dialogue section of the workshop.

Input Received

Some of the standout themes from each area of the public SWOT analysis included:

Strengths: Modern and comfortable train and good quality assets, bicycle friendly, affordable, good reliability, and punctuality.

Weaknesses: Pathway gaps, train service gaps, first and last mile connections, public perception, too little advertising.

Opportunities: Promote services for non-commute travel, on-board amenities, increased marketing, first and last mile solutions,

Threats: Sales tax renewal, public perception, first/last mile, remote work, freeway widening.

Mentimeter Results

See below for the full word cloud responses:

Prompt: What are SMART's current strengths?



Workshop 2: Ridership

On February 7, 2024, SMART conducted its second online community workshop, aimed at gathering community feedback on themes related to SMART's ridership. Staff presented the current SMART ridership strategies and highlighted successes. Members of the public were then asked to submit their feedback on ridership strategies using the Mentimeter software. People were asked what strategies SMART should use to increase ridership in an open-answer format, and people were also asked to rank strategies in order of importance.

Input Received

Key themes that emerged from the Mentimeter activity included:

- Focusing on greater off-peak train service,
- Improving first/last mile connections,
- Increasing public awareness of the benefits of SMART,
- More on-board amenities,
- Special event service,
- Ensuring adequate parking, and
- Rail system expansions.

When ranking most to least important ridership strategies, community members ranked **first/last mile connections, local transit connections, and train schedule adjustments** as their top three strategies. **Reasonable fares, system safety, and on-board amenities** were ranked as the least important strategies.

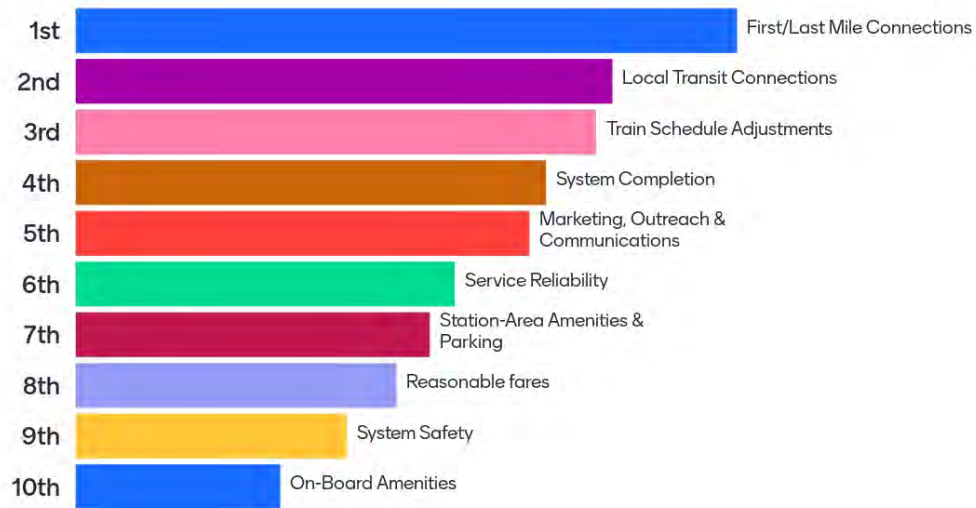
Mentimeter Results

See below for the full word cloud and open-answer responses.

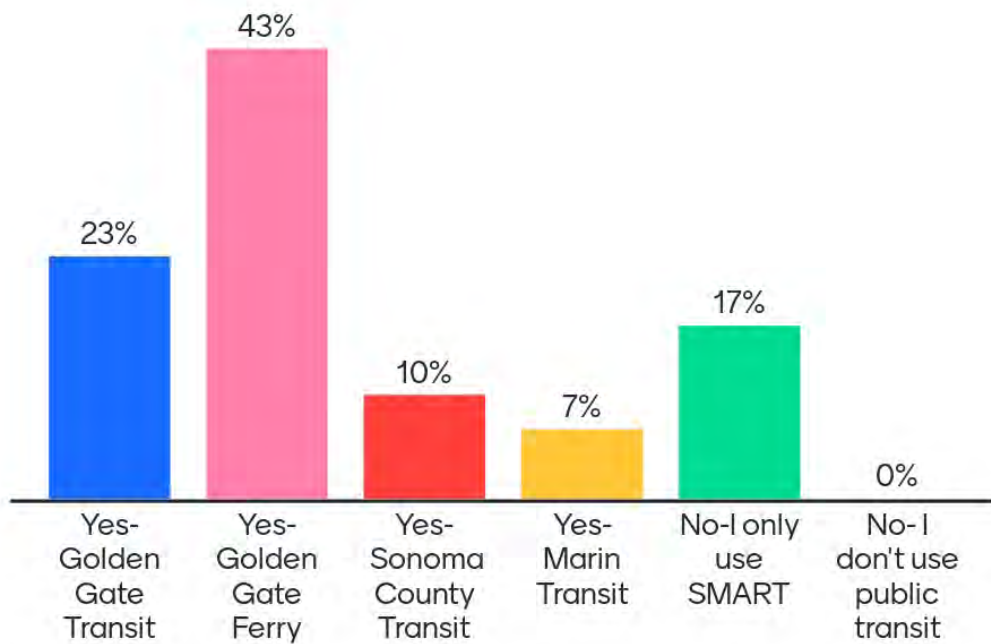
Prompt: What strategies should SMART use to increase ridership?



Prompt: How should SMART prioritize these strategy areas?



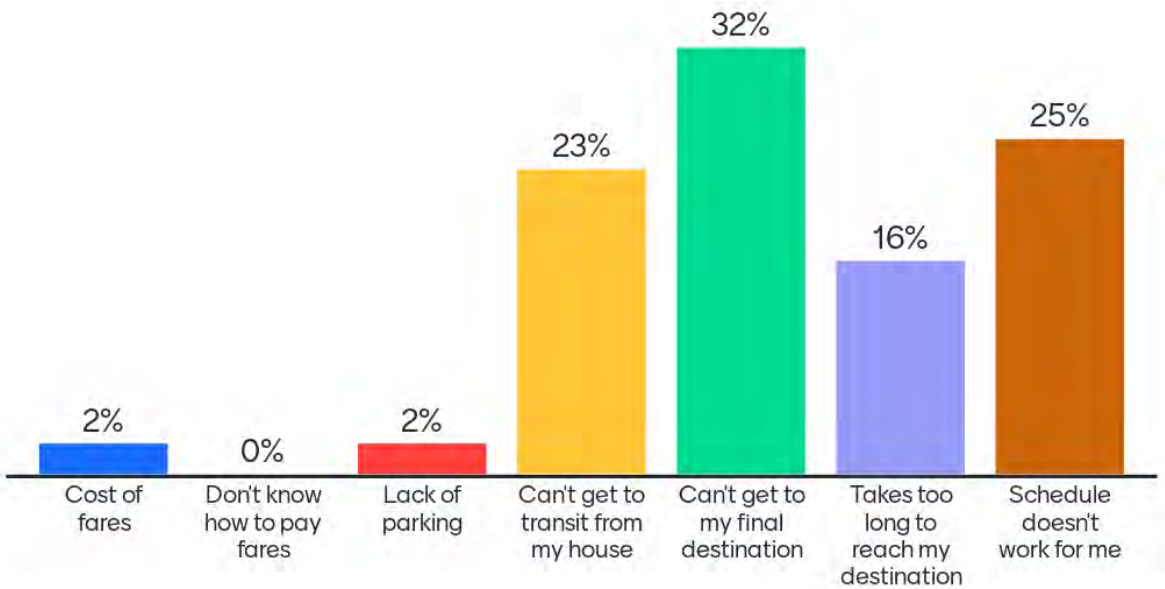
Prompt: Do you use public transit in addition to SMART to travel along Hwy 101



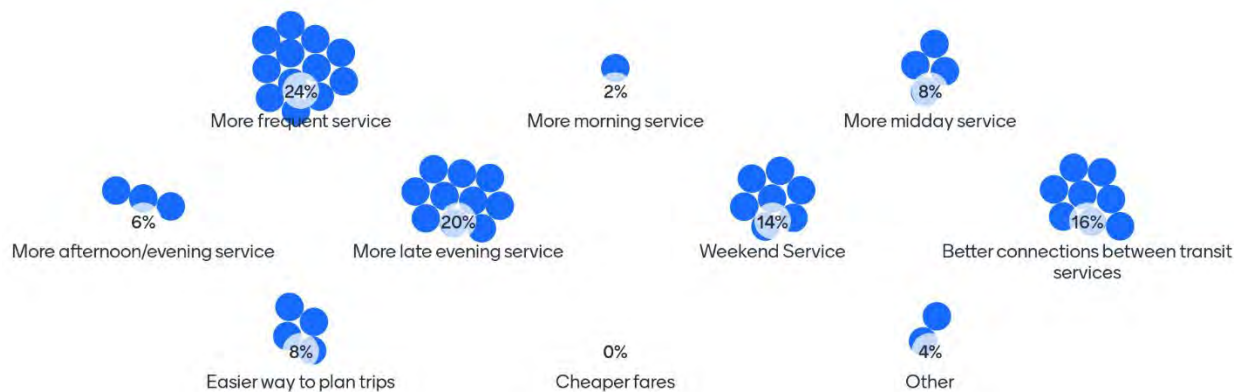
If “yes,” tell us more (route, time of day, trip purpose, etc.)

I use the ferry if the transfer time is good. If not I take GG bus to SF.	Weekend trips, morning southbound, and evening northbound. I ride the train for fun!	Coonect to Ferry during commute hours.	Use ferry for meetings and trips in to SF.
Special events to SF via Ferry	Only if I have to work late - after the last train, and I don't want to cycle ten miles home - do I use the bus	Mostly on weekends. I plan trips around SMART and ferry connections.	GGT to Golden Gate Bridge toll plaza to connect to W. SF
I go to the Larkspur Marin Farmer's Market.	trips from Santa Rosa to SF	Use SMART for leisure and recreation. To visit Sonoma and just ride the train.	Usually weekend use for SF Giants games or just SF visit.
Weekend use for leisure trips, baseball games, day trips to San Francisco, etc. Occasionally will hop on the train just to enjoy the ride, grab a bite and come back.	Southbound to ferry to SF return. Weekday short trips Cotati to Airport. Mostly, special events (Giants) or SF trip on weekends. Would ride more if more event connections.	Petaluma to Larkspur to get to SF. Sometimes have to take GG Transit bus to get home after ferries/trains stop running. Usually for mid-day meetings or evening social events and weekends.	UC Berkeley to Petaluma: BART from Downtown Berkeley to El Cerrito Del Norte, take 580 GGT bus to San Rafael Transit Center, take SMART to Petaluma. OR take BART to SF, ferry to Larkspur, SMART up
Going to San Francisco from Petaluma, especially if needed in the evening, not using the ferry	I take SMART to farmers markets on the weekends	SMART to visit family in WindsorAirporter to SMART to SOnoma airport	I use SMART with my bike if the weather is too cold or wet. For work mostly.
SMART Petaluma to San Rafael	my usual route is cotati to downtown santa rosa, sometimes petaluma	Sometimes from Petaluma to Santa Rosa when schedule makes sense. Often ride bike instead if train schedule doesn't align. I'm always looking for excuses to ride the train as a remote worker!	

Prompt: What are the biggest obstacles to using transit for trips along Hwy 101 (pick top three)



Prompt: What improvements would make transit along the 101 corridor easier to use?



Workshop 3: Pathways

On February 28, 2024, SMART conducted its third online community workshop, themed around the SMART Pathway/Great Redwood Trail. Staff summarized the current state of the Pathway and members of the public were then asked to submit their feedback on pathway strategies, first in an open-answer format, and then by ranking preselected strategies from most to least important.

Members of the public were then asked to submit their feedback on pathway strategies, first in an open-answer format, and then by ranking preselected strategies from most to least important. For the open-answer portion, top responses included: completing pathway gaps, completing the entire Pathway, improved wayfinding, better connectivity, and more Pathway amenities.

Input Received

For the ranked portion, the **top** three priorities that emerged were:

- Construct planned Pathway.
- Complete design and permitting of planned Pathway.
- Pathway wayfinding.

The **bottom** three priorities were:

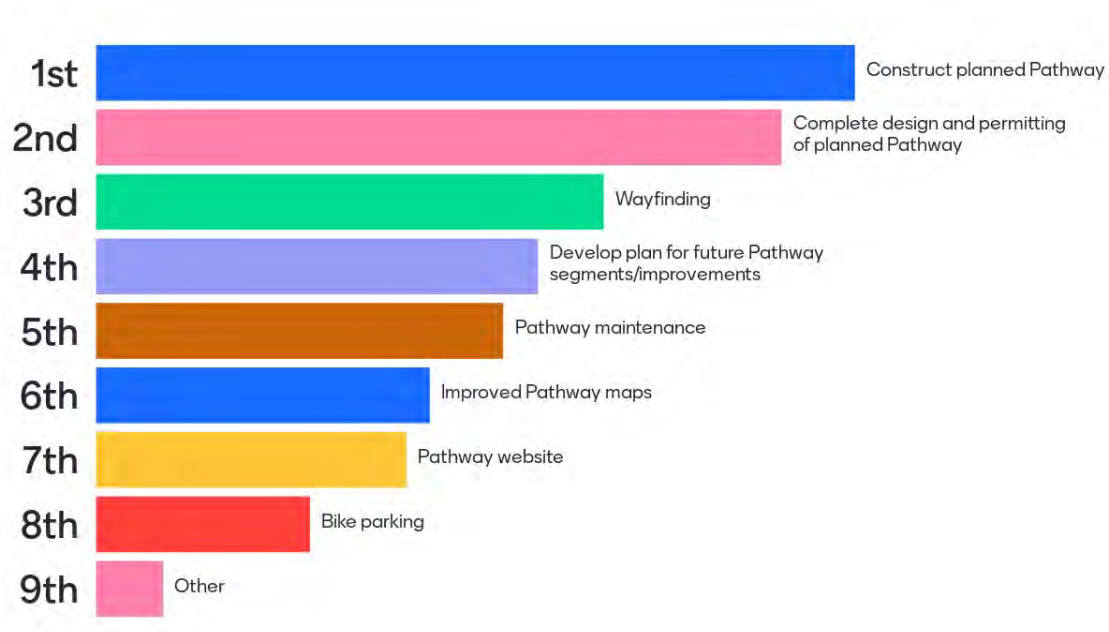
- Improved pathway maps.
- Pathway website.
- Bike parking.

See below for Mentimeter word cloud and ranking-based responses.

Prompt: What strategies should SMART include in the Strategic Plan to complete and improve the Pathway?



Prompt: Of these strategy areas, which should SMART prioritize?



Workshop 4: Extensions

On March 14, 2024, SMART held its fourth community workshop, centered around the SMART rail and Pathway extensions. SMART staff presented an overview of the current system and detailed the Windsor, Healdsburg, and Cloverdale extensions, as well as East-West rail, which is currently under study by Caltrans. For the interactive portion of the workshop, the public was invited to weigh in on a few questions, including: the biggest obstacles to SMART completing extensions, how SMART can best meet passenger needs with extensions of the system, and what benefits SMART extensions will bring to the community.

Input Received

For the interactive portion of the workshop, staff asked the public to weigh in on a few questions. Firstly, a question about the biggest obstacles to SMART completing extensions was asked. The top answers were funding issues, public sentiment, and the sales tax renewal. For the second question, community members were asked how SMART can best meet passenger needs with extensions of the system. The top themes that emerged were local transit connections, planning for commuter and recreational riders, and more outreach to the public. For the third question, the public was asked to rank which benefits will the SMART extensions bring to the community. The top three answers to this question were greenhouse gas emissions reductions, improved mobility and access, and economic vitality.

Mentimeter Results

See below for the word cloud, ranked-choice, and open-ended answers.

Prompt: We want to hear from you about each extension! Tell us about Windsor.

Bus connection to Healdsburg	Town Green	service of bedroom community	Connection to town green events
Lots of commuters down 101	Great place to visit. Exciting.	Getting to the town green!	I'm excited about connection from Windsor to the ferry and points between. I'm hoping for later trains on Thursday nights during Windsor's Summer Nights on the Green concerts!
music on the green	Short answer is very interested! Love this but we will need later trains for special events.	A closer station to board the train from people who live in the north, closer than the airport.	Cloverdale citizens would visit Windsor more often

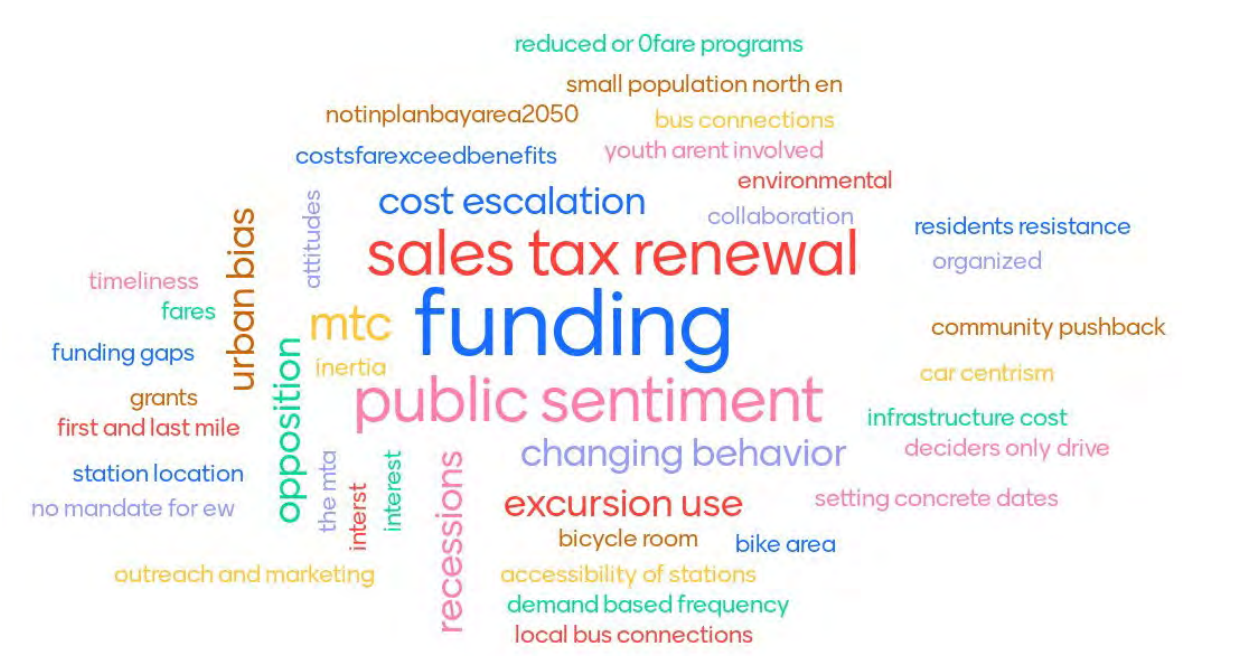
Prompt: We want to hear from you about each extension! Tell us about Healdsburg.

Opportunity for SF tourists to visit wineries in Healdsburg without driving on 101.	I see it as the transfer point for private-sector passenger service north to Willits.	Affordable travel option	I can finally ride the train to and from work in downtown Santa Rosa! I know I won't be alone in ditching my car in favor of commuting on SMART from Healdsburg.
I don't believe this is the right location for the station. Parking in that area is already a problem.	Should have put the station closer to downtown.		
wine tasting biking riding boating on the russian river	Wine Country 🍷	Can't wait to have another way to visit family and enjoy Healdsburg, which now feels too far for me to travel to.	Platform should be close to round about, not far away at old depot bldg
O gosh. This will blow it up.	Wine tasting!	Connection for tourists from the bay area and those who travel to S.F. who would love to travel north	Cloverdale citizens would be more apt to visit Healdsburg when all of the extensions are completed.

Prompt: We want to hear from you about each extension! Tell us about Cloverdale.

Bike trips	Great town. More visitors would come to Cloverdale	We'll be on the map, finally!	Connections to express buses to Mendocino
The Cloverdale extension needs MTC support.	It needs to happen. We have a fair amount of housing going in. More people means more riders	citrus fair	It's a great connection for Mendocino and Lake Counties
Access to affordable living	It's very unlikely you'll ever get funding for the Cloverdale extension based on passenger service alone. Freight is much more lucrative. Once you have the track, you can run either passenger or freight	Residents connection to the rest of Sonoma County since they are so far away	Freeing up the 101!
visit friends that live in cloverdale, visit Friday Night Live, regional transit connections	More of a threat. We won't get there. Totally Historical RR	Will likely increase the popularity of Cloverdale as a place to live with better connections to the rest of Sonoma and Marin Co.	if implemented, late (summer) evening train during concerts nights, if they resume in future years.

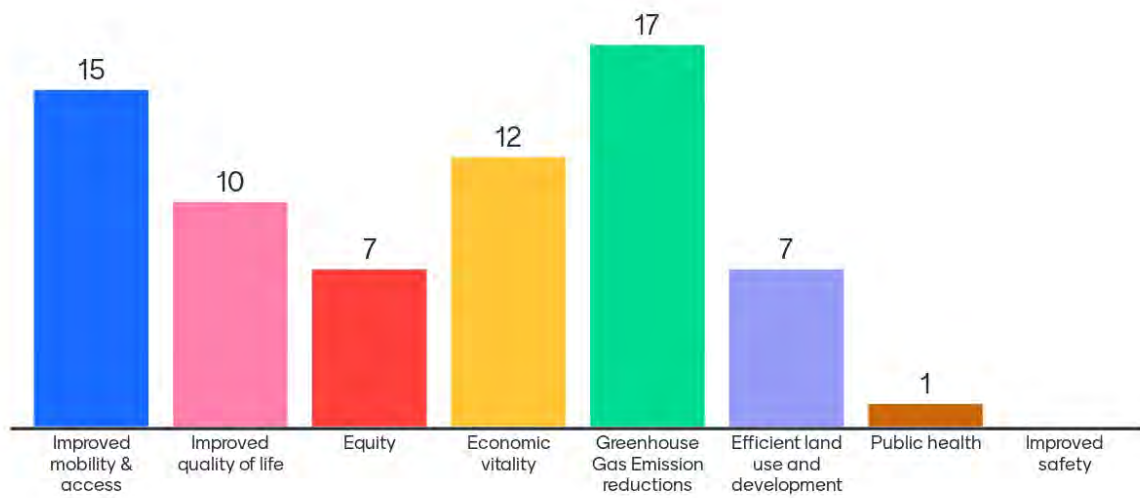
Prompt: What are the biggest obstacles to SMART completing extensions? What challenges should we be aware of?



Prompt: With the opening of extensions, how can we best plan service to meet passenger needs? Train schedule/service hours, frequency, transit connections, etc.

Commuter service between Brazos and Novato to solve the Highway 37 problem	Connections to the north from Cloverdale	Survey potential riders	No idea how to answer this
Transit connections will be key to each community. Making it easier for passengers to get from the stations to the downtown area of each community served.	I want frequent weekend service so leisure trips can be easily planned	Work with Sonoma County transit to sync service with SMART schedule. Survey riders too.	Schedules and frequencies need to serve both commuting and leisure trips. Hours of operations need to be long enough.
It would be great for trains to run more frequently and better connect with transit.	Seamless first/last mile connections	This seems like a logistics issue that can be worked on and solved. This can be worked on while the extensions are being planned and constructed.	Key frequencies to particular community needs
Coordinate with local transit, marketing and outreach, reduced and free fare programs	Ask for community involvement through school districts	Excursion users	

Prompt: Which of the following benefits will the SMART extensions bring to the community? (select your top three)



Workshop 5: Freight

On March 27, 2024, the final virtual community workshop that SMART conducted was centered around the future of SMART's freight service. SMART staff began the workshop by giving a short history and describing the current SMART freight operations. For the interactive portion of the workshop, SMART solicited opinions on its freight strategy using the live-polling service Mentimeter. SMART asked community members three freight-related questions: the biggest challenges facing SMART Freight; how the North Bay can make the most of its existing freight infrastructure; and how SMART should engage businesses to start thinking about freight service.

Input Received

For the interactive portion of the workshop, SMART solicited opinions on its freight strategy using the live-polling service Mentimeter. SMART asked community members three freight-related questions. The first question was about the biggest challenges facing SMART Freight. The top answers were **lack of customers, infrastructure issues, and community opposition**. Next, SMART asked how the North Bay can make the most of its existing freight infrastructure. The top answers to this question included **reconnecting spurs, public education of the benefits and safety of rail freight transportation, and increased marketing to customers**. The final question asked how SMART should engage businesses to start thinking about freight service. Top answers to this question include **transload locations, increased marketing and outreach, and engaging with more local breweries for grain transport**.

Mentimeter Responses

Prompt: What are the biggest challenges facing SMART Freight?



Prompt: How can the North Bay make the most of its existing freight infrastructure?

Acting boldly and intelligently	storage	Approve safe storage	Haul garbage and recycling
Link to national RR and create more spurs as a customer incentive.	Educate public	Maintain and preserve freight system for the future	Pursuing grants
We need to get more loads shifted from trucks onto the rail. Otherwise we are not meeting our potential	Partner with short-line to extend track	Except for Schellville and Burdell there is no Freight infrastructure .	making shipping green with SMART rail COOL for businesses
Serve multiple customers per switch. Revenue split from excursions.	Reconnect existing spurs	Improve infrastructure resiliency	High fees for trucks
Three things:1. Add spurs where there's business2. Approve safe storage of LPGs3. Elevate track	get public agencies to give bonus points for shipping with smart	Educate the public on the value of freight on rails	Partner w existing growth markets
,	Offer them a deal they can't resist	in-person visits	Personal contact
Provide spurs and partner with future freight carriers (Mendocino RR)	Advertise access and value in 21st century	in-person visits	Should first start with the business community leaders- people may not know what SMART can offer
Money from McQuire to underwrite more freight infrastructure	There's no need for B corps if rates are good	Create a task force of citizens to help lobby	

Prompt: How should SMART engage businesses to start thinking about freight service?

Host open house and invite business.	Targeted outreach to B Corp	Targeted meetings with potential or existing freight customers	push transload locations
Combine shipping needs with multiple like businesses	What can SMART offer that truckers cannot	Do a collective with breweries to ship	talk to commercial realtors about opportunities
Partner to construct spurs	Start talking to the B Corp certifiers and B Corp businesses to use freight rail	Aggressive marketing and outreach	Transload facilities
However they learn about other transport options	Learn what the shippers want and need	More Freight for New Breweries and their suppliers	Focus on regional connections - there are businesses that can be connected through just Cal Northern or Napa and SMART.
Leverage transload for common customers. (brewery, recycle, warehousing)			

In-Person Community Workshop

On Wednesday September 25th, SMART conducted an in-person open house public workshop at the Petaluma Arts Center, located adjacent to the SMART Petaluma Downtown Station. The event was well attended, with around 150 participants joining staff for updates on SMART and interactive exhibits related to the Strategic Plan.

SMART presented the strategies and actions from the draft strategic plan for each goal area (Ridership, Pathways, Extensions, Freight) and invited participants to place dots next to their highest priority strategies and actions. Community members could also write comments on sticky notes corresponding to each goal area. SMART staff was available to answer questions regarding the strategic plan and the future of SMART. Community members placed over 700 dots on the various posters and left over 60 comments on sticky notes.

Input Received

Below is a summary of the strategies and actions in each focus area that received the highest amount of public support at the public workshop in Petaluma:

- Ridership
 - Strategies:
 - Increase service levels.
 - Accelerate fleet expansion and zero emission fleet transition.
 - Increase coordination with local transit agencies.
 - Actions:
 - Add additional train service – midday and late evening.
 - Deliver more Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
 - Reopen the onboard snack bar.
- Pathways/Great Redwood Trail
 - Strategies:
 - Continue building pathway with rail extensions
 - Construct funded segments of the SMART Pathway/GRT
 - Develop plan for future pathway segments/enhancements
 - Actions:
 - Complete segments of the SMART Pathway/GRT under construction
 - Continue to perform scheduled weekly cleanup, maintenance, and repairs of the Pathway
 - Implement Pathway Wayfinding Program on the pathway and in surrounding communities
- Extensions
 - Strategies:
 - Aggressively pursue grant funding for the construction of northern extensions and pathway.
 - Continue development of east/west passenger rail project
 - Add double track or sidings to decrease travel time.

- Actions:
 - Complete Healdsburg Extension
 - Seek funding needed for the Cloverdale Extension
 - Participate in Highway 37 coordination efforts and work with partners to incorporate rail into Highway 37 projects.
- Freight
 - Strategies:
 - Increase freight revenue to close funding gap
 - Expand freight territory with northern extensions
 - Market advantages of shipping by rail
 - Actions:
 - Work with the private sector to rehabilitate rail lines for freight
 - Expand service to new and existing customers
 - With Windsor extension, explore new potential customers north of Airport station

Mentimeter Comments

Prompt: What is your priority for SMART over the next five years?

Expanding to healdsburg and, funding and planning to Cloverdale and continued long term operation	To have a connection to Cloverdale.	Increased frequency in trains. If possible, extending train to Sausalito or Marin City.	Complete the train to Cloverdale
More interconnecting lines to other transit.	Extend train across Sir Francis Drake to the Larkspur Ferry Terminal. See 1997 Larkspur Ferry Terminal Access Improvement Plan.	Continue building out the entire rail line towards Cloverdale. Increase weekend service. Continue building out the multi-use path.	Extension to capital corridor and extension to ferry terminal
Connection to the East Bay or Capital Corridor!!!	Remain affordable and expand stops	Fully coordinated system of trains and buses so employees can commute to work throughout the county and beyond at almost all hours thereby cutting our largest GHGs sector as a county!	stay solvent, finish stations and track
Increase ridership, keep fares low	Expand system, zero emission trains (electric, battery electric, green hydrogen)	More bike parking on trains. Longer hours of operation. Extension to Healdsburg.	Improve station times in between some are longer than 32 min wait as expansion grows.

I would like a train stop in Geyserville to be considered.	If it goes through Geyserville it stops in Geyserville	Complete the line north to Healdsburg, Geyserville , and Cloverdale.	A SMART stop in Geyserville. Also allowing RailBikes in Geyserville.
Extend SMART to Geyserville and Cloverdale!	SMART train all the way north to Geyserville and Cloverdale. Thanks!	Smart service will be available in Cloverdale by 2029. Quality travel to healdsburg and Windsor would be a plus for shopping and events	It is vital that SMART be extended to Cloverdale. Do NOT forget about the community that made the train possible.
Extending the train to Geyserville and Cloverdale. Cloverdale already has a train station.	Extend to Cloverdale	I live in Cloverdale and need a better option for public transportation to work and elsewhere. Having SMART locally would help improve the environment and economy for Cloverdale.	Expand going north to Healdsburg and Cloverdale
Finish the buildout so that train service can begin in Cloverdale and Geyserville.	Get the Smart train to Cloverdale	Coming to Cloverdale	Getting to Cloverdale, period.
For the smart train to connect the towns on the 101 freeway together, which will allow access via the Smart train rather than the freeway. We await the day.	Extend smart north to Cloverdale	Geyserville to Cloverdale. We are paying for this also!!!	Extend SMART to Cloverdale, as originally planned!It will create jobs, protect the environment, bring business to Cloverdale, and enhance regional connectivity.
Please make it a priority to get SMART to Geyserville and Cloverdale.	Bring SMART to Cloverdale! We supported it from the beginning. I'd like to see it in my lifetime and we're running out of time!Put the bike and pedestrian trails on hold. Just bring the train!	Extension to Geyserville and Cloverdale.	Bring it to Cloverdale!!!
To cloverdale	To Coverdale	Geyserville to Cloverdale	70 miles of train services from larkspur to Cloverdale
PLEASE go to cloverdale we have one (1) bus that goes out of town and only to downtown Santa Rosa	Get the train to Geyserville and Cloverdale.	I would like for Smart Train to be extended to Geyserville and Cloverdale.	Smart service starting in Windsor followed shortly thereafter to Healdsburg Geyserville and Cloverdale
To have the SMART train make it to Cloverdale!	Stops in cloverdale and Geyserville	The bus should go to cloverdale. It would be so much easier if you didn't have to bus to the train stop	Get it to Cloverdale!
to be in cloverdale			

Sticky Note Comments

Below are transcriptions of the sticky notes that community members submitted during the meeting:

Topic Area/Prompt	Comment
Ridership	Merch Store
Ridership	SMART Connect to Santa Rosa Park and Ride (Highway 12 and GGT)
Ridership	15 min. frequency during commute hours
Ridership	Add Clipper to SMART Connect shuttle
Ridership	"First Ride" stickers for conductors to give to kids
Ridership	We need a 4:30 PM weekday train South from SoCo Airport
Ridership	More seats
Ridership	Have these charette/public meetings in Roseland and other Spanish speaking areas
Ridership	Free rides for students w/ student ID
Ridership	Add Clipper to SMART Connect shuttle
Ridership	San Rafael NB needs more shade on the platform
Ridership	Have the Larkspur shuttle circulate constantly, with time points @ the train and ferry. Paint service map on side of van. It can be its own marketing!
Ridership	15 min. frequency during commute hours
Ridership	Field Trips: Schools, seniors, and affinity groups
Ridership	3 car trains on all commuter/important trips
Ridership	SMART Connect at Downtown Santa Rosa (w/ Clipper)
Ridership	Improve bike racks on train, add stop tags, separate e-scooters
Ridership	SMART to SF! (under GG bridge)
Ridership	Can't use a computer on the train, it shakes too much. Less shaking please
Ridership	Make the website easy to use to plan a trip
Ridership	Buy trains that can be electrified in the future
Ridership	Create parking program through partnerships with underutilized lots adjacent to SMART stations (e.g. SRN and Coddington)
Ridership	Vending machines in place of food service area
Ridership	Hire the web team from bart.gov, tfl.gov.uk, stm.info
Ridership	Bring back hand sanitizer!
Ridership	Less shaking, less squealing
Ridership	Issue tourist 24/48/72 hour ride tickets, will potentially increase ridership further
Ridership	Water bottles, comment cards, free little library on board
Ridership	Free rides for students w/ student ID
Ridership	Pop up cafes - have different vendors one for each month
Ridership	SMART to SF!
Ridership	Bring back hand sanitizer!
Ridership	Tours with: a train engine, construction tours, walking tours of pathway
Ridership	Videos: long-form scenic, how to, trip ideas
Ridership	Pave Petaluma Downtown parking
Ridership	Need more space for bikes on board
Ridership	More outlets/electrical. On-board e-bike charging

Freight	Can you partner with public agencies' procurement process, so that large goods contracts come via rail?
Extensions	Geyeserville! Valerie says so
Extensions	Sebastopol, Sonoma, American Canyon, Napa connections
Extensions	Double track by Vintage Oaks
Extensions	Sonoma!
Extensions	Connect to Amtrak
Extensions	Link to Capital Corridor
Extensions	Nobody likes driving on 37
Pathway	The Pathway is your #1 marketing tool. Treat it as such
Pathway	Fun bike rides and fun runs on Pathway
Pathway	I find that it is difficult to pick up the Pathway. Maps? Wayfinding?
Pathway	Adopt-a-Pathway
Pathway	Please make them as wide as legally possible!
Pathway	I'm happy that the SMART Pathway doesn't seem to have the same # of encampments as other paths in the area (e.g. Joe Rodota)
Pathway	Local artists and murals, street art partners (get in front of graffiti)
Pathway	The Path needs a name!
Pathway	Needs nighttime lighting
Pathway	Google map overlay, make it easy to find pathway online
Pathway	Marathons and bike races
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Commuting via eBike, weekend recreation
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Commute to work
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	School/College work, personal use, very useful on weekends for oktoberfest
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	To SF and San Rafael
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Partial transit to SF
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Visits to town along the corridor - public transit for the win!
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Recreational, especially on weekends (retired)
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Like to get to Santa Rosa Airport from San Rafael

How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Traveling to Novato (FUN!)
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Work and Class
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Exercise on the trail - near my home in San Rafael
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Didn't even know what "Pathway" was until today
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Petaluma Every day to work in San Rafael
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	To get around!
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Commute to work, Petaluma to San Rafael
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Commuting and biking connection
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Weekday commute on train, weekends on the bike path
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Mostly in Petaluma on my bike
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Commute Petaluma to Larkspur
How do you use SMART Rail and/or SMART Pathway?	Ride 6 days a week Petaluma to Santa Rosa
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	The Windsor station!
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	The Healdsburg station!
What are you most excited to see from	More trains, Healdsburg and Cloverdale SOON!

SMART in the future?	
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	The extension of the SMART trail for bikes! :)
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	Stations in Cloverdale, Windsor, and Healdsburg
Ridership	More late-night trains on the weekends!
Ridership	Lunchtime trains, wifi, more frequent service
Ridership	More connectors from stops
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	Completion of bike/ped path from McInnis north
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	The bike path complete
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	The Petaluma Downtown parking lot
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	Napa/Sonoma!
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	Connection to Cloverdale
What are you most excited to see from SMART in the future?	Connection to Capitol Corridor
Ridership	15-minute service

Comments during Outreach Period

Throughout the strategic plan process, SMART hosted an online comment form and encouraged community members who were unable to attend our virtual and in-person meetings to submit their comments online. The below table is every comment received by SMART:

Date	Author and Organization (if applicable)	Topic Area	Comment
01/21/2024	Gabriel McKay	Railway Extensions	The only route is North-South and vice versa and expanding that route East-West such as to San Anselmo, Kentfield, Mill Valley, as the only stops still require other forms of transit to complete the route which is not totally bad but some routes have no great access anyway such as the Larkspur stop has no bus stop close but the bike path is nice but quite slow and the ferry goes to San Francisco which is very useful for that. A continuous use of the train would be preferred and there are certain locations where ridership would be high as students may use it to go the various schools, from middle to college, throughout the Kentfield, Ross, Greenbrae area. I am a student advocating for better alternative transit to highly visited areas as there is high amounts of traffic and many people schools funnel onto busy streets making an unfriendly environment.
01/22/2024	Grant Thomas	Ridership	I love the SMART to Larkspur Ferry connection so I appreciate the "connecting time window" to get from one to the other. I would like to see more weekend and weekend evening service from STS Airport since there are very few trains during those times.
01/22/2024	rick brown	Ridership	Ease of getting to station sites is critical to increasing ridership. While there are a number of traditional models out there today...partnering with ride sharing companies or looking other models (West Sacramento) might be a good start
01/22/2024	Matthew Soldati	Snack Bar	Having the snack bar the train would nice have in mid afternoon and evening runs
01/22/2024	Michael Mahon	Ridership	River road is the main road that connects multiple communities along the Russian River. We need a station at River road in Fulton and a bus line connecting all those communities.
01/22/2024	Harry Martin	Railway Extensions	My major concern is the fulfillment of the original promise of SMART to provide passenger rail service from Marin County to Northern Sonoma County. That should be THE priority of SMART. The other parts of SMART are vital. But their benefit is restricted in use. Ridership will grow when all communities are served. Multiuse pathways are a benefit but very limited to younger, fully ambulatory people. Freight service is very much needed as well but the pressing

			<p>need is a passenger rail service, as long promised, for all the communities and areas promised in the beginning. To honor and fulfill that need and promise would also build much-needed credibility and support from the constituency for funding needs. To further delay rail services will only further derail funding. That would not be wise for a rail service.</p>
01/22/2024	L	Railway Extensions	<p>Hello. I live in Ukiah and would like SMART to have a full comprehensive plan for when the SMART train will be being extended to the CLOVERDALE station that has been sitting empty and unused for many years...We need this service !</p>
01/22/2024	Gunnar Henrioulle Tahoe Valley Lines & Historical Interests	Wartime imperative s for rail mode logistics	<p>Eddy Cummins & Board members, please: From Gunnar Henrioulle, Member of Board of Directors Pacific Coast Chapter Railway & Locomotive Historical Society. Sad to say, dictators of China/Iran/North Korea/Russia all state determined intention to use force to eliminate USA world dominant in military and economic sphere. References include think tanks and these dictators' native language speeches and military doctrine papers. Reverie can get S.M.A.R.T. through present peacetime business as usual; Board must face reality and address way & means to prepare ex-NWP rail footprint for existential food distribution role, plus ability to handle evacuation event, at a minimum. Rail operations responsibilities must include container handling locations such as San Rafael, Healdsburg, and Willets Junction. Healdsburg Bridge delays must be put aside by means of rivet replacement with HSS bolts and reinforced gussets. Bureaucracy must heed reality. The lives of millions along the 101 corridor are at risk when EMP and kinetic sabotage events render trucking mode ineffective for food and other necessities of life & commerce (rebuild) role. The rail line in S.M.A.R.T. area of responsibility must be capable of supplanting trucking role through the imminent emergency and beyond. Victor David Hanson at Stanford University Hoover Institution; Institute for Strategic & International Studies Arleigh Burke Strategic Chair Tony Cordesman are important authorities in this discussion. Fort Bragg rail (Maritime Connection) operations as far as Healdsburg can be accommodated with an operable turntable, somehow held over by circumstances not foresight.. The Fort Bragg/Willets rail link is a significant feature of comprehensive North Coast rail infrastructure if wisely integrated. Thank You for distribution. Gunnar Henrioulle</p>
01/22/2024	Bud Arenz	Railway Extensions	<p>Please do as promised and complete extension to Cloverdale. The Cloverdale train station has been completed for many years but no train - hurry hurry !</p>

01/22/2024	Leslie	Ridership	I live in Santa Rosa. The fact that there is no free parking or any parking basically at the railroad square station makes the "Smart Train" completely useless to me. Fix the parking and rider numbers will skyrocket.
01/22/2024	Alan Zahradnik	Upgrades	Like Caltrain, and as an element of its Strategic Plan, SMART should study and consider upgrading the existing and planned extension of passengers rail service to electrify and grade separate the tracks as a means of reducing negative air quality impact of the current diesel powered trains and the negative impact associated with delaying high volume vehicular traffic at grade crossings such as in Downtown San Rafael.
01/22/2024	Alan Zahradnik	Freight Services	Freight service should have a lower priority than passengers rail service and should not draw down funds that can be used to support passengers rail service.
01/22/2024	Alan Zahradnik	Railway Extensions	SMART should clarify and prioritize its commitment to extending rail service to Cloverdale in the context of considering extension along the Highway 37 corridor to Napa and Solano counties. Also, before SMART funds are used to further study and implement an Highway 37 extension, SMART should obtain written commitments from those counties to join SMART and financially contribute to such an extension.
01/22/2024	Dick Butler	Railway Extensions	I had hoped to be able to ride the train to work in Santa Rosa from Cloverdale before I retired. I have been retired for ten years now and still no train. Cloverdale is a "bedroom" community; most residents work somewhere else and could become smart train riders if there were a train. SMART should make extending service to Cloverdale its highest priority.
01/22/2024	Francesca Smith	Ridership	I'd like to see the vacant lot adjacent to the Corona station developed into a mixed use (retail, restaurants, housing) to attract visitors as its own destination on the route.
01/22/2024	Dan Bell	Ridership	Amtrak has a dedicated and timed Connecting Bus service to serve cities/towns without rail. SMART should implement a similar bus service to connect SMART's Larkspur Station to downtown San Francisco/Salesforce Center. The bus should be rapid with only limited stops on #101 and routed via Fishersman's Wharf/North Point Street, not via Van Ness Avenue and Mission Street.
01/22/2024	Dan Bell	Multiuse Pathway	Pathway buildout seems to be progressing well, thank you. Although, the unbuilt/unfunded section between Smith Ranch Road and the Novato Hamilton Station is a lengthy and important section that will be very expensive and likely not to occur for many years. SMART should approach the two property owners abutting the ROW (Silveria Ranch and

			Saint Vincent's) and ask for voluntary easements on their property to allow pathway construction.
01/22/2024	Dan Bell	TOD at SMART's Petaluma Station	SMART owns an ideal TOD site adjacent to the Petaluma Station. Presently there is surface parking on portions of the site, but a majority remains vacant and unsightly. SMART should immediately issue an RFP for residential development on the site. The more walkable residents close to SMART Stations, the easier it will be to approve the extension of the Sales Tax.
01/23/2024	Ricky Soldavini	Railway Extensions	I would like to see the rail line go as far as Willits.
01/23/2024	Ricky Soldavini	Freight Services	It would be great to have freight service up to Willits. To get trucks off the road and have cleaner air.
01/23/2024	Ricky Soldavini	Ridership	The further you go north the more riders you will have. This will take time but it will work.
01/23/2024	Carol Eber	Ridership	Once a week I Volunteer at Hamilton School in the afternoon. I come from Petaluma. I wish I could take SMART but the schedule does not offer enough trains. I would've to wait one hour for a ride back to Petaluma. I understand you are thing trains for commute hours, but there are those of us who would use the train at other times.
01/25/2024	Carsten Andersen	Freight Services	The acquisition of the freight line was just another BAD idea. SMART is already deep in financial trouble, with this losing operation you will add to the deficit and divert attention from the basic operation.
02/01/2024		Railway Extensions	While I do understand that expanding service to the east has many advantages, and that it wouldn't be funded by Measure Q, I don't believe that voters will be inclined to pass an extension to the tax if it looks as though SMART will go east before it finishes going north!
02/01/2024		Fairbox Recovery and Cost of Providing Service	Why is there appears to be no words to address SMART's high cost per passenger? Why is the Board thinks Fairbox Recovery is "irrelevant?"
02/01/2024	Lisa Brinkmann	Ridership	I have wanted to use the SMART train a few times, to go to Cotati and/or Santa Rosa. There is a 2 hour gap in service in the middle of the day, making it difficult to go up in the morning for lunch and come back afterwards, without having to wait an additional hour...Please put together a regular hourly schedule that people can depend on, and keep running until 8 or 9 in the evening, going South
02/03/2024	Concerned Citizen MarinInfo.org	Ridership	Is it true that: SMART's Sales Tax has subsidized SMART ridership, \$128 in 2019, \$168 in 2020, \$518 in 2021, \$240 in 2022 per ROUNDTrip. (When including DEBT SERVICE) ? As explained here:

			https://marininfo.org/SMART/Latest/SMART_at_a_CROSSROADS-Marin_Grand_Jury_2023.htm
02/05/2024	Brian Lamoreaux	Multiuse Pathway	<p>I am very concerned about the location and alignment of the section of bike path between Penngrove to the Corona Rd. Station. I feel very strongly that this pathway should be on the west side of the tracks so that it can provide access to/from the food, drink, business and commerce which are all located to the west of the tracks. Also Penngrove Park is an important feature to connect with. If the path goes on the east side of the tracks, it will be isolated, get significantly less use, and only be useful for up-and-back longer distance rides, and not for everyday use. Not everyone wants to take longer distance rides and walks, and people much prefer making circular routes and prefer to have options with the routes they choose, not be forced to go a couple miles before being able to turn.</p> <p>Everywhere you look public agencies are trying to meet climate goals, and are making efforts to encourage people to get out of their cars and walk or ride their bikes. We want to encourage people to make trips to shopping areas, including the one on the north end of McDowell on bike, not in a car - in order to do that, they need to have the option. Same goes for the restaurants, and breweries, including Lagunitas Hen House and the Twin Oaks Roadhouse. There is no good bike access to these areas, even with the new bike lane, people don't like riding alongside loud, smelly, dangerous cars. People would prefer riding on a fully separated path where cars are far away; then as a second choice onto the back streets and busier streets when they have to. Also, in looking at Petaluma's plans to eventually build a trail along the river going to the north end of town, arcing from the outlet mall all the way north and turning east under 101 and to the north side of Old Redwood Highway, it would be foolish to have these trails not interconnect. We need them to connect, so it gives the opportunity for walkers and bikers to make different routes and loops. People much prefer loops and circles to up-and-back routes. These pathways should be designed in consideration of one another. Putting a SMART path in complete isolation along the east corridor of this stretch will be a waste of money and effort, and it will take that much more money and effort to fix it once the public becomes aware of the mistake. We have to get this right.</p> <p>The list of amenities the SMART pathway could help service and provide connection to via trail intersections include the US post office, redwood business park, Kohl's, Michaels, Active Wellness Center gym and over 1/2 dozen places to eat in that mall, the Wilco Farm Store shopping center,</p>

			which includes nearly a dozen places to eat, the UPS store, and other shop, and the commercial area at Harmony Farm Supply. And to the north of Ely Rd there is a neighborhood at Hatchery Court that would be well served having pathway access, which includes the Twin Oaks area. There is very little on the east side of the tracks to connect with. Our chance to get this right is now, as it will be very difficult to fix later if it is done incorrectly.
02/06/2024	John Denigris Santa Venitia Neighborhood Association	Multiuse Pathway	when will the pathway bridge be completed over the north fork of Gallinas creek
02/06/2024	Jillian Metz	Walkway from train to ferry	I rode SMART a number of times before the pandemic. It was when there was a shuttle bus from San Rafael to the ferry. I was in good health then and when the train stopped in Larkspur I could easily walk fast enough to get to the ferry. Now I am unable to accomplish that walk so I cant take the train to SF. Can this be addressed in some way?
02/07/2024	Linda Daniels	Railway Extensions	As a member of the public living in Ukiah. I would like to know a current timeline for the SMART train extension to Cloverdale. We have had a train station sitting in Cloverdale unused for many many years. When will the SMART train provisionally be running to /from Cloverdale ? When will work begin to get this line opened up ? Thank You.
02/07/2024	Christine Aslin	Ridership	i would like a more supportive policy for being able to bring my dog with me . Maybe one car devoted to pets?
02/08/2024	Dan Bell	Ridership	Bay Area transit agencies could all hit a financial cliff w/o public's approval of tax measures. Agencies need to partner to provide connectivity between systems and provide reliable, safe, clean systems to gain public support and get people out of cars. Rail systems need Express Bus Routes to connect to other rail systems. SMART and BART should partner to provide such Express Bus Route between San Rafael Transit Center and Montgomery BART Station and continue on to the Sales Force Center for future connections to Caltrain.
02/11/2024	Andy Howard	Multiuse Pathway	I would like to see a small part of the multi-use pathway (at least the parts that have yet to be built) be dirt or crushed brick, or similar. Then it would be a better running surface than pavement. The width of this running surface could be as little as 18 inches or so. Thanks
02/24/2024	Daniel Bell	Multiuse Pathway	For the 2/28/24 meeting, please specifically list on a slide the 4 pathways under construction AND the 10 pathways under design. Also, distinguish which of the 10 pathways are currently “funded” and which are only in the “planned” stage. This will facilitate discussion. Thank you

02/27/2024	Trae Sebastian	Ridership	To increase ridership, SMART should focus on increasing frequency & better optimized connections with other transit agencies. Connection times at San Rafael transit center & larkspur ferry are way too long (30 min from train to ferry!? That's just crazy
02/27/2024	Trae Sebastian	Railway Extensions	SMART should focus capital & effort on improving frequency on existing network. Extensions from Healdsburg to Cloverdale and along Hwy 37 would not drive ridership sufficient to warrant increased operating costs. Any system capital investment should focus on the core network: grade change through San Rafael, bringing train all the way to ferry terminal, infill stations, and strategic double tracking
02/28/2024	Michael Alexin	Ridership	The number one strategic goal for SMART should be to finish the rail link all the way to the Larkspur Ferry Terminal. The extra time and hassle for commuters to walk from the current station to the ferry is one of the main reasons that SMART is not time-practical for commuting. Ideally the train would even connect to Sausalito or in an ideal world, San Francisco directly. Barring that possibility, it must go directly to the Ferry Terminal. Otherwise, it will continue being the "train to nowhere", and mostly a "novelty" tourist train.
02/28/2024	Tim Carroll	Ridership	Work with large employers and other organizations such as Kaiser and Marin Co. to have more employees, patients and customers ride on the trains, and have convenient transportation to connect riders with each final destination. Working with large organizations could potentially increase ridership for SMART as well as for other transportation organizations.
02/28/2024	Dani Sheehan-Meyer Friends of SMART	Multiuse Pathway	Completion of the 'gaps' is ever more important. Working with the local biking communities will ensure their support come tax renewal time.
02/28/2024	Rick Coates EcoRing	Multiuse Pathway	Completing the pathway ASAP is important both to the ridership of the SMART train and for reducing GHGs. The pathway is important as a scaffold for a County wide bicycle network.
02/28/2024	Rick Coates EcoRing	Railway Extensions	Extending to Cloverdale is, of course, important. In the meantime convenient bus service should link Windsor SMART to Cloverdale. A bus should meet each train as it arrives or departs. Also, an on-demand shuttle should meet that bus at the Cloverdale station.
02/28/2024	Rick Coates EcoRing	Freight Services	Freight service is exceedingly important for getting large trucks off Highway 101. Please prioritize making it easier for potential shippers to get sidings.

02/28/2024	Susan Nawbary	Multiuse Pathway	You haven't addressed a blaring, gaping hole in the Pathway, which is through downtown San Rafael, especially 4th to Mission.
02/28/2024	Jon Pittmn	Multiuse Pathway	While I support SMART in general, I voted for the tax supporting SMART because of the as yet unfulfilled promise of a bikeway along the right of way. To continue to garner my and others support we need completion of the pathway, filling ALL gaps, and ensuring it is a real pathway, not just some markings on the berm of busy roadways.
02/28/2024	Jon Pittman	Connection to the Golden Gate Ferry	While I no longer commute to the city, when I did, I did not take SMART. The reason is that there is not a direct connection to the Larkspur Ferry. Whoever planned the Larkspur connection must have realized that a 10-minute walk across a large, uncovered, and soul-less parking lot was inadequate. The line needs to be extended to the Ferry Terminal and schedules and fares coordinates. Trying to solve transit problems piecemeal rather than in an integrated fashion is irresponsible and a waste of taxpayer resources.
02/28/2024	Jon Pittman	Railway Extensions	I eagerly await completion of SMART to Healdsburg. I am now retired but would take the train to Healdsburg when i go biking or to restaurants up there. I also think connecting to the Amtrak corridor in Solano County is a good idea.
02/28/2024	Dan Leaverton	Multiuse Pathway	I'm Hopeful the Ped/bike path from central to southern Marin will be included in the upcoming 5-year plan to ensure it survives and continues to provide such tremendous benefit to the community.
02/28/2024		Continued funding of SMART	SMART was created by a majority of Sonoma voters and a minority of Marin voters. South of Larkspur, it is useless. Public transit advocates continue to push such services in spite of evidence that such services are a last century solution that is useless in today's world. This is true even more today with many working from home or commuting to odd locations all over the Bay Area. Given a determination to push public transit, the best solution would have been continued bus service — easy to add new routes and easy to close low use routes. Adding capacity is the cost of a bus, not an expensive train set. I've studied rail services for many years and am thoroughly convinced SMART is not "smart".
02/28/2024		Resilience to rising seas.	When I ride SMART, particularly in the winter, the vulnerability to sea level rise is obvious in a few locations. Shouldn't those segments be protected/raised/realigned before spending money to expand? If the impacts aren't until later, the agency should have these costs built into a strategic plan for funding in 2030 and beyond. The strategic

			plan SWOT should acknowledge this threat and call out resilience as a strategic priority in the next 5 year plan.
02/28/2024		Railway Extensions	Would love a faster transfer between SMART and the ferry. The current transfer makes that combined trip so much longer than it needs to be. A quarter mile rail extension would be ideal but other options could surely work to fill the gap. Isn't this the perfect place for av micro transit? Would save 40+ minutes on a round trip.
02/28/2024	Brian Lamoreaux	Multiuse Pathway	Route finding is important to incorporate, especially for SMART to working with each city to implement signage plan for signs all over town to point bikers toward where the SMART path is. And along this topic it would be great for someone at SMART to reach out to both Apple and Google to see if these (local, lol) companies can incorporate features to make it easier for bikers to locate pedestrian pathways such as SMART but also all pedestrian and paved bike pathways across the USA. These apps do already have bike features but they lack the obvious (and hopefully) simple feature of highlighting a bike path or suggested route. These would be great improvements to their existing navigation apps. (only a matter of a year or two before we see unmanned robo self-driving e-bikes riding up and down paths up and down the state to gather data on existing pathway conditions, lol). But most importantly, and the reason for my comment and joining the zoom call is to encourage SMART to consider realigning the pathway segment from North Petaluma station at Corona to Penngrove to be along the WEST side of the tracks to better interface/integrate with commerce, realistic population patterns, and future paths planned for the area. Having the track on the east side of the tracks isolates it from most people who would want to use it and greatly reduces and limits its utility. We ideally want all paths to not only serve as recreation but as a useful, safe and viable way to get from home (or the station) to work, to where we want to eat and shop. We want numerous ways to get on and off the trail and putting it on the west side of the tracks enables people to do this in a safe and logical way. There is also more room on the west side of the tracks in this location.
02/29/2024	Helen Bradley	Ridership	I'm concerned that there are great gaps in the current timetable. The fact that you cannot get a train over lunchtime is a real negative. Also the weekend train timetable is extremely limited so that, traveling northbound, I wasn't able to get to a class in Santa Rosa by 10 o'clock in the morning on a Saturday. It's like stopping people riding the train because the service is so fractured. Filling in those gaps would be a step towards increasing ridership. If I can't get on a train to go to a class then I'm not going to be taking

			a train to get home. By having such big gaps in the timetable you're preventing people from using the train who might otherwise do so.
02/29/2024	Erich Strydom	Railway Extensions	Extend rail connections into Richmond BART station, and down to Sausalito and Tiburon.
02/29/2024	Dan Bell	Multiuse Pathway	I often ride the train imagining the future bike path in the SMART ROW between Smith Ranch Road and Main Gate Hamilton, unquestionably an expensive and complex project. The development of the VINE trail in Napa along Highway 29 involves numerous private property owners granting easements for easier construction. Has SMART approached the two property owners (Catholic Archdiocese of SF and Silveria Ranch) to see if they are amenable to similar easements to facilitate this important gap in the Pathways project?
02/29/2024	David Seltzer	Multiuse Pathway	I just wanted to weigh in and state that the multiuse path is a really important component of SMART, and I just want to see the path continue to improve and especially the current gaps to be addressed. Especially the gaps from 4th to Mission in San Rafael, downtown Petaluma, and the Marin Narrows. Continuing to improve the path also serves the train side as well, in the form that increased bicycle and pedestrian access to the various stations makes the train that much more usable to more people. I'm a regular commuter to San Francisco from San Rafael, and a big reason why I use the Ferry instead of driving is because there is the Cal Park tunnel that allows me to easily bike to the ferry terminal. Bicycles and transit are a perfect pairing, so I just want to urge you to continue improving the path, filling the gaps in the path, and improving bicycle and pedestrian access to SMART. Good regional paths really address the "last mile" challenge of transit! Thank you!
03/02/2024	Gilberto	Ridership	I'll try to mention ideas not brought up during the community workshop. I hope the city of Santa Rosa and SMART and others could advocate to bring the Amtrak Thruway Bus and the Sonoma County Airport Express / Groome Bus to downtown Santa Rosa. I notice when there are shuttle like the Russian River Bus during the summer or the Napa Bottle Rock shuttle in May they don't go to downtown Santa Rosa but to some other part of the city which doesn't seem to make sense to me. I don't know but maybe some of the land in railroad square could be turned in a transit drop off / pick area in the future. There also should be some standard walkway / main walkway to the Santa Rosa Transit Mall and to the SMART Train station especially at night and early morning the mall is not open. I personally go down 4th st walkway of the mall then walk down A St. then 1st, then B st to get to 2nd St. I don't know if they could leave the mall

			<p>doors open for people to pass through or a long term plan of opening and ripping the mall open floor level to make it into a walkway would be great but I know that is kind of a wish / dream. I try to ride the train whenever possible. Don't currently own a car. I'm about a 10 walk from downtown SR station. I take my shopping cart on board to get groceries and to just shop in general. Last year I took the airport shuttle once to catch a flight at the Sonoma County Airport. To the Marin County Fair. I sometimes go to San Francisco, with train then get on GG ferry or GGT bus 101. I think highlighting destinations is important like connections or future connection to regional parks and other large recreational areas. I still haven't and want to take the train then bus to the Presidio Tunnel Tops. Another thing would be to go down to Larkspur then get on Muir Woods shuttle but I don't know a lot about that connection; I'm sure I'm not the only one. Longest day trip I've ever done was to Oakland Zoo in 2019 which I'm not sure I would do again but it was possible. I took SMART then GGT bus then two AC transit buses and reverse to come back home.</p>
03/03/2024	Gilberto	Multiuse Pathway	<p>I'll try not to mention things already brought up during the pathway community workshop. Its was good to hear about the pathways that are or are going to start construction. I on occasion will walk from the Rohnert Park SMART Station up to Golf Course Dr to go to the Shopping Center where Walmart is at. I hope the walkway north of Golf Course Drive makes it that much easier to get to the shopping Center. Other place I go more often to is the Rohnert Park shopping area on Commerce Blvd., there is a Raleys, Safeway, CVS, Ross, and a Grocery Outlet all fairly close to one another. Also good to see that 6th street to the downtown Santa Rosa Station is being planned and designed. I hope this pathway gets prioritized. Along with the 3rd street to Joe Rodota Trail. I feel like there would have to be an actual red stop light like there is at the College Ave crosswalk otherwise I wouldn't feel safe crossing 3rd street as is. Just realizing that these two segments could potentially make it more pleasant to walk to downtown Santa Rosa because I could avoid a lot of cars and stop lights; especially during the hours the mall is not open at. I think as some people mentioned during the community workshop, it really comes down to how safe people are; since there are many transients and homeless people often blocking and taking up the actual pathways. Along this thought there has to be an official walkway / pathway to the Santa Rosa transit center and Old Courthouse Square / Downtown area. I know this doesn't directly have to do with SMART but there was no mention of the progress of the</p>

			<p>Edwards Ave Elliott Ave hwy 101 overcross I feel like this is a very important connection and one I would use whenever needed. Lastly I think focusing on and making the pathway connect with other trails and to other walkways that take you to open spaces, plazas, community parks, regional or even state parks if possible I think people would like to know about this; including me.</p>
03/08/2024	Mark Thayer	Railway Extensions	<p>Make getting to Cloverdale your Number One priority. Cloverdale voters overwhelming supported the measure in 2008. I cringe when I see additional stations along the way and talk of extending eastward. All for that AFTER you reach Cloverdale. Also important is extending into the Larkspur ferry Terminal.</p>
03/11/2024	Gunnar Henrioulle Member Pacific Coast Chapt. R & LHS.	Freight Services	<p>Not politically correct to suggest S.M.A.R.T. shift planning emphasis at earliest time to assure ability to accommodate container/perishable movement across River into Healdsburg for break bulk mode transfer. Railway & Locomotive Society historian concerned with Geopolitical and natural disaster threats including AI Trucking difficulties, food distribution requisites and 101 Corridor peninsula evacuations. These never mentioned at planning sessions? Healdsburg Bridge requires rivet replacement with High Strength Bolts & gusset thickening. Common practice bridge upgrades saves years and millions... OES and Homeland Security/DOD collaboration brings connection to Ft Bragg & ability to interface with ocean borne transport. This writer witnessed steam power on Santa Rosa segment during 1950's and hopes planners recognize how serious our national peril... NWP corridor corresponds with crucial Bay Area evacuation route! Again, rebuild of the Dumbarton Crossing is germane to emergency rail route planning. Planners, please do your homework, contact strategic sources such as Anthony Cordesman & Victor Davis Hansen. See Richard Clarke writings on Cyber Warfare, also Peter Vincent Pry narrative to the US Congress on impacts to US trucking/food distribution. You did not sign up to serve in WWII, but events catching up fast! Gunnar Henrioulle will answer ??? by request. 530-847-8156</p>
03/11/2024	Fred Van Patten	Railway Extensions	<p>I have worked at Marin General Hospital (Marin Health Medical Center) since 2005 and have commuted from Vallejo to work and back on California state route # 37. I would suggest that the Smart Train parallel the new elevated state sponsored and financed improvement of route # 37, all the way from Novato to Mare Island to connect with Vallejo ferry and bus terminal and then northward from there, on tracks that are already being used, to Suisun City. This will allow traffic to get off interstate #80</p>

			<p>in both directions as it will provide the option of taking the Vallejo ferry to San Francisco and significantly reduce the congestion on route # 37, At the Soscol Ferry road interchange of state routes #12, #121, and # 221, where the currently used tracks from Vallejo turn east toward Suisun City, there would be significant parking space to allow commuters along busy California state route # 29, from Calistoga, St Helena and Napa, to park and take the Smart Train to the Vallejo ferry to travel to San Francisco, instead of taking state route #12 and interstate #80, thereby significantly reducing congestion. A Smart Train spur at Sears Point, from the tracks along route # 37 from Novato to Mare Island, would provide services to the town of Sonoma. This plan will strategically manage anticipated Bay Area growth by reducing traffic congestion, since it will inter-connect with other major transportations hubs, to offer alternatives. The more crucial factor is that it will also entice commuters to get out of their vehicles, and improve their quality of life, which will be quite lucrative and a big draw for Smart Train.</p>
03/11/2024	Mike Silva	Railway Extensions	What will the actual plan to reach Cloverdale. Thank you
03/13/2024	Michael D. Setty, President Train Riders Association of California	Railway Extensions	<p>Since SMART is now losing taxpayer money on limited freight service between American Canyon and Santa Rosa, NOW is the time to think of what partnerships may be possible with private freight operators. It is clear that spending \$150 million+ on upgrading the tracks between Healdsburg and Cloverdale is not feasible, given the small population served directly (<10,000) and modest ridership potential from Cloverdale. The Train Riders Association of California (TRAC) does not see how SMART will be able to obtain grants of the above magnitude, with ridership estimates of 200/day+/- to/from Cloverdale. A better idea is to put together a plan to rehabilitate the tracks to FRA Class II and reestablish freight service between Santa Rosa, Windsor, Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Ukiah and Willits. While the "Great Redwood Trail Agency" wants to abandon the line claiming there is no freight traffic, TRAC strongly disagrees. We're not aware of any actual studies of this issue, and in the longer run, it makes no sense to preclude the rail option forever in far north Sonoma County and Mendocino County, in light of climate change. In addition, trails have already been built alongside the tracks in Ukiah and Willits; the tourism potential relative to the cost of converting the railroad to a trail between cities is very small compared to reviving tourist and intercity passenger rail. For example, the trail alongside the Wine Train tracks between Napa and Yountville (in an area with nearly 4 million visitors</p>

			<p>per year) attracts around 1,000 users per day in the rural section. It defies credulity that the GRTA expects rural trail usage in this same range between Cloverdale, Ukiah, and Willits. In our view, GRTA trail use estimates outside the cities is pure, unsupported hype. We believe the freight potential is somewhere around 5,000-10,000 annual carloads, plus potential for reloads from trucks in Willits from Northern Mendocino and Humboldt Counties. Numerous federal grants are available for rehabilitating and upgrading freight lines, including re-connections of out-of-service freight spurs to potential shippers. Within a few years, TRAC believes that reestablishment of visitor-oriented passenger service services from Healdsburg to Willits via Cloverdale and Ukiah, with a Skunk Train connection in Willits, could contribute substantially to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the route. Prior to the FRA-ordered shutdown of the line, a tourist operator was operating weekend summer excursions from Healdsburg to Willits that typically attracted 500-600 passengers per trip. With more regular and consistent service, we think a significant portion of Mendocino County's visitors could be attracted to service from the Bay Area.</p>
03/14/2024	Kurt Kelder	Railway Extensions	<p>For Railway extensions, the Strategic Plan Update needs to prioritize extending the railway north. Concrete dates should be set for segments of the extension: Windsor to Healdsburg, Healdsburg to Geyserville, and Geyserville to Cloverdale. The residents of North Sonoma County have been paying and continue to pay their fair share of the taxes for SMART. Establishing timelines for each segment will provide measurable goals that can be monitored and tracked.</p>
03/19/2024	Bryan Rengel	Multiuise Pathway	<p>I live in Rohnert Park and love using the pathway to drop my son off at daycare in Cotati and then biking to work at OLD CAZ. I wish the bike path connected to Petaluma and Santa Rosa because, even though the on road bike lanes are sizable, it's still very unsafe, especially with a baby on the bike. With the beautiful weather and increased use of e-bikes, the SMART path would allow us to meet with friends/family in Petaluma and ride all the way to Forrestville without hardly any on-road riding. This is INCREDIBLE! PLEASE! Push through and finish the connections between Petaluma and Santa Rosa ASAP! We need safe city-to-city bike lanes!</p>
03/22/2024		Railway Extensions	<p>Looking forward to expansion to Cloverdale!</p>

03/26/2024	John Savage	Freight Services	Very concerned about what type of freight could be transported. The tracks run right through neighboring yards and sensitive water ways.
03/28/2024	Daniel Bell	Freight Services	Allow LPG storage after open public hearings revealing all possible evidence of the safety records of such storage.
03/29/2024	Gilberto	Railway Extensions	<p>This was kind of brought up and mentioned in the extension listening session, but having all the available public transportation buses in the area stop at or near walking distances to the SMART Train Stations. For instance north of Santa Rosa there is no Groome / Sonoma County Airport Bus and there is also no Golden Gate Transit Bus service. Also Greyhound doesn't have any stop north of Santa Rosa in Sonoma County. So It would be really important to work with the buses services that do have stops north of Santa Rosa in Sonoma County like: Amtrak Thruway Bus Route 7, Sonoma County Transit Bus, Mendocino Transit Authority Bus. Also encourage and work with other transit agencies like I could imagine Lake County Transit Authority would maybe want a bus stop at Cloverdale Depot. Along of the lines of the direction of North I feel like as someone mentioned the rail line right of way should remain intact to at least Willits, CA for potential population growth / future passenger rail service in Mendocino County. I wasn't aware that the people in Geyserville are interested in a train station, so I think that would be good for them and for Sonoma County overall. Something I have read about before in the newspaper is the idea of building a 3rd Santa Rosa Train Station. Seems like the place for that would be near Hearn Ave because that's the only place with a pedestrian overpass going east to the shopping centers on Santa Rosa Ave. Also just thinking about the Latino population in the area. Otherwise another spot would be somewhere between Hopper Ave. and Piner Rd. I know the article mentions Fulton but a train station there doesn't seem like a good idea to me. I hope its the Smart Train that someday runs east to Suisun City, but having the Amtrak Train go west to Novato would also be a win. Lastly, and however unlikely, if the opportunity were ever created to have the train run further South then that should certainly be looked into. Probably not via the Golden Gate Bridge, but perhaps if a new San Rafael-Richmond Bridge with standard rail built into it.</p>
04/05/2024	Alex Backalbassis	Freight Services	I just viewed your freight strategic plan update conference. When I voted for the tax bond for Smart Rail my intention for voting for it was to reestablish a viable freight connection. If you want to make freight viable you have to sell it. You are in stiff competition with the trucking industry. It is imperative that you provide team/house tracks in every city along the

			line so potential shippers have a location to ship from. Also remember you have to educate potential shippers to the benefits of freight by rail. I know most of you weren't living in this area when Southern Pacific ran the freight in this area, so I will inform you that the SP did everything they could do to run customers off. So if you want success in the freight field you have to prove you want a client's business. I hope you can make freight a viable business. Just remember you have to sell it.
04/16/2024	Pam Rivas Petaluma River Park Foundation	Ridership	The Petaluma station between Washington and D Streets is in a great, centralized location. Being able to provide free transit fare and carpool parking would support field trips for students to Petaluma River Park and other centrally-located areas that could host educational programming. I urge SMART Train to consider the possibility of free fare and carpool parking at the stations to support field trips and outdoor education.
05/07/2024	Wendy beck	Information about businesses, cafés, hotels, etc. surrounding each station.	I would love to have information about the businesses, cafés, hotels, etc. surrounding each station, so that I can explore and possibly stay overnight. Then I would have a perfect map for staycations without a car.
05/07/2024	Gunnar Henrioulle Railway Historical Society	Freight Services	101 Railway Corridor Food Distribution when EMP/HAMP events impact electronic controls on trucking. Submitted several times without feedback: Expedite Healdsburg rail bridge using High Strength Bolts in place of rivets - including thicker section on new gussets at high load structural joints. Your engineering dept can verify this approach. Foreign threats on communication satellites and driveline control satellites are well known. Please call and discuss. Gunnar Henrioulle
05/08/2024	LD	Railway Extensions	Clovedale station: What is the timeline for the SMART train to go to Cloverdale for use by passengers in that area, Ukiah etc ? WE NEED AN UPDATE on this !!
05/08/2024	LD	BUS from downtown SR Smart train stop to BUS STATION	Why oh why is there still NO no bus/shuttle service to/from the downtown SR smart train stop to the SR bus station?? Looks like you have a funky little electric trolley that does NO go to/from the bus station - why is that ?You want more people to use the SMART train but no bus/shuttle to the MAIN transit hub in Santa Rosa - kind of stupid you think ??????????
05/09/2024	Aaron Elrod	Railway Extensions	There was talk of extending SMART through sonoma and napa with the goal being connecting to Amtrak in Vacaville. What about eliminating the walking path on the richmond

			bridge and have SMRAR cross the richmond bridge and connect with both Amtrak and BART at the Richmond station?
05/09/2024	Fritz Scholten	Railway Extensions	Extend rail system as far north as possible. Unfortunately Larkspur is the furthest possibility south.
05/09/2024	Brian Beggs	Electrifying the trains	SMART is a great service and I enjoy riding it frequently. Are there any plans to electrify the trains l to help reduce emissions even more? ! It would be amazing to have a zero emission train that could lower our carbon footprint even more than the current trains. Keep up the great work
05/12/2024		Multiuse Pathway	Please continue building the path
05/13/2024	Aracely	Railway Extensions	Please consider extending SMART to Napa as well! There are limited public transport options for us here, I would absolutely love to have Napa be a part of the SMART route!
05/16/2024	andy	Multiuse Pathway	Finish the bike paths! New stations should not be a higher priority than the bike paths.
05/22/2024	Rick Weeks	Ridership	Run late trains.
05/22/2024	David Thompson	Request the SMART negotiate with College of Marin for reduced rates for students.	Request that SMART negotiate with College of Marin for reduced rates for students.
05/22/2024	Sandy	Ridership	Please consider adding a NB train between Larkspur and SR at the 1:00 pm hour on weekdays. Thank you
05/22/2024		Ridership	SMART should run later on weekends.
05/22/2024	Davin Leong	Ridership	Please bring back later evening service (Starlighter).
05/22/2024	Dayna Gottlies	Ridership	I would like a later train for my son to take to school from Petaluma to Credo. Current time is 7:15 am for 8:30 am start time.
05/22/2024	Paul Leja	Ridership	Add more cars on Giants home games.
05/22/2024	Brian	Electrification of trains	It would be amazing if we could remove the Diesel engines from the SMART trains and replace them with electric propulsion. I noticed that the DMUs SMART has have been designed to to be able to be converted to EMUs. I am guessing it would save SMART money in the long run (especially if SMART installed solar on its properties) and would eliminate the air pollution caused by the Diesel engines.
05/25/2024	Odin Palen	Ridership	SMART should focus on greatly improving weekend frequency, as the trains every two hours or so make it difficult to plan around the schedule. Service should be hourly (or better) on weekends.

06/19/2024	David Liebman	Railway Extensions	Hello I would like to see in SMARTS long range plan rail service out to Sebastopol using HWY 12 right away. Continue up to Cloverdale and then plan to connect up as far as Willist, CA. This would help Mendocino County significantly and ideally they would provide a measure Tax base to then become a part of SMART. I would like the plan to include the future connection to Cordelia for Capital Corridor Connection and then serve Sonoma, and Napa. Can SMART in the long range plan utilize HWY 12 right away to go out to Sonoma. Lastly can SMART utilize the old right of way to expand service down to Marin City where the original Rail right of way is.
06/21/2024	Patricia Britton	Multiuse Pathway	As a senior ebike rider I look forward to the pathway completion
07/05/2024	Chels Meyer	Scheduling	I just wanted to comment that I live in Petaluma and often do weeknight events in Santa Rosa. I would love it if the smart ran later on weeknights, because I would absolutely take it to and from Santa Rosa (and would prefer to over driving) but it doesn't run late enough for me to get home. I would think there are other people in the same situation, and figured I would write in to express the need.
07/10/2024	Karen Giovannini	Ridership	Standing room only on train south for Giants game. Will need another car for the return trip. Us + commuters. Thanks
07/13/2024	Rene	Ridership	Opening the snack bar would provide customers with a way to get a light snack. If, working, they didn't have time to get something to eat. Provides another incentive for using public transit. Appeals to kids as well as adults.
07/20/2024	Jordan Bowen	Ridership	I live in San Francisco and work in Marin. 1) The ferry and SMART schedules are so poorly aligned that commuting is impossible. 2) The transit agencies should get together and have an integrated zone-based system so that I only have to pay one fare to go any distance, no matter what mode of transit I take.
07/26/2024	Steve Birdlebough Transportation and Land-Use Coalition	Freight Services	The focus should be on local producers, such as wineries and lumber mills that can ship products to other places. Some means is needed to find capital investors willing to build the sidings and switches. Most candidates are likely to be north of Santa Rosa.
7/29/2024	Steve S.	Multiuse Pathway	I am an avid recreational cyclist and very much appreciate the multiuse pathways that SMART has already provided. But the system is still a patchwork and getting from one end to the other remains confusing and risky for many cyclists. I urge SMART to rededicate to completing an end-to-end pathway that allows cyclists (and walkers) to travel anywhere they can get to or from on the train.

07/29/2024	William Steiger	Railway Extensions	Hwy 37 is top of mind for both commuters and daily drivers going east or west. The cost and time required to fix hwy 37 will take years to plan and build. Is it possible to make an extension from Marin to the east? Upgrading the existing rail line for commuter service to the east connecting to other north,south rail service.
08/09/2024		Multiuse Pathway	The entrance/exits to many (if not most) of the SMART multiuse pathways are actively hostile to cyclists. To <i>*encourage*</i> rather than discourage cyclists, these need to be made much much easier to enter and exist. Fencing, bollards, and other obstacles that force cyclists to stop and dismount at every entrance/exit completely discourages cycling.
08/13/2024	Kim You g	Ridership	I have two wheelchair bound people who rode the train with me. There are no windows at the wheelchair seating area. They were disappointed at not being able to look out the windows on our trip. Please consider adding windows to the wheelchair seating areas of the trains.
08/15/2024	Grayson Chu	Ridership	More 3 Car Trains Because More And More People Are Riding The Train.
08/20/2024	Rrichard Tait	Freight Services	Smart should not get into the freight business until it has the ridership problem solved.
08/20/2024	Mark Birnbaum	Multiuse Pathway	I urge SMART to work with Caltrans and the City of Novato to rehabilitate the orphan path which runs between Bel Marin Keys and Hwy 37/Hanna Ranch Rd. rehabilitations to this path, in combination with the pathway now being planned and funded (?) between Vintage Oaks Shopping Center and Hanna Ranch Rd. will create a useable, easily findable route for cyclists from Downtown Novato SMART station to the major employment area of Bel Marin Keys, generating more riders as well as connecting Bel Marin Keys to the rest of Novato.
08/20/2024	Patrick Carter	Multiuse Pathway	The path from the north end to south of Rohnert Park is great! Please continue that path all the way south to Petaluma. Marin County has so much connectivity in their paths and rail connections, we need some love in Sonoma County.
08/21/2024	Jean Severinghaus	Multiuse Pathway	When am I going to be able to ride my bike from the Hamilton Station north to businesses in Bell Marin Keys on an All Ages and Abilities pathway? Taking TOO LONG! When continue northon the Hanna Ranch pathway to the Village Oaks Mall? We need both asap. When will I be able to ride north from the Civic Center station to Smith Ranch Road? Where is the bridge stalled out? TAKING TOO LONG. I need the pathways to use the bike and leave my car behind and we are killing the climate driving.

08/21/2024	Jean Severinghaus	Ridership	Riding from Larkspur to Santa Rosa is great!! Thank you. I just need the pathways to go 1.5 miles minimum from each and every station so I can take a bike to use the train more.
08/21/2024	Andrew Barnhart	Ridership	<p>I do not currently commute on SMART, but am eager to. I am very disappointed by the schedule's large gap during the peak evening commute-- namely, the gap of over an hour between the "34" and "36" northbound trains. I generally take the ferry that arrives in Larkspur at 5:55, and would love to take the train home to northern Novato.</p> <p>Frustratingly, the "connecting" train does not leave for 44 minutes. (By the time this train departs Larkspur, that boat is already back in San Francisco.) I'm sure there are a variety of reasons for this, but I would just like to share my personal testimony that I would take the SMART train every morning and evening, if this connection was 20 minutes shorter, like most of the others are. The schedule in the morning would work for me, but I need to take the same transit system home so I can get to my car at the SMART station. Thanks, Andrew</p>
08/23/2024	Fred Van Patten	Railway Extensions	<p>I have traveled California state route #37 from Marin Health Medical Center where I was employed to Vallejo for 17 years and I am suggesting that the east bound extension travel down the middle of the newly proposed, elevated highway to Mare Island, to connect to the Vallejo Ferry and Sol Trans bus terminal before it heads north to Suisun City. In developing your strategic plan with Cal Trans to manage traffic flow issues into the future, Smart Train would serve as an alternative to reduce traffic congestion not only along state route #37 but also on interstate #80. For any Bay Area comprehensive transportation plan to be effective and to remain financially viable, it needs to connect to all major transportation hubs to entice commuters out of their cars and to provide options. This would decrease traffic congestion and serve as an alternative that would become a big draw, and in this case quite lucrative for SMART Train. Everyone wants to live in the Bay Area, and if they were able to travel to work without driving, which could include both working or relaxing, they would jump on the SMART Train in Suisun City, for example, and travel to the Vallejo Ferry terminal or beyond, and have the option of going to San Francisco without any freeway congestion, All of those commuters from Fairfield or beyond would have the option of taking SMART Train and willing to pay a lucrative fare,</p>
09/03/2024	Andrew Decker	Ridership	<p>I would love to see an evening train that focuses on nightlife. As a Santa Rosa Resident that likes to go to concerts at Mystic Theatre in Petaluma, I can't even consider the smart train an option as concerts don't wrap up until about 11pm. That's for both Weekdays and</p>

			weekends. An 11 o'clock train and a midnight train out of Petaluma would be game changers for commuting during nightlife hours.
09/03/2024	Andrew Decker	Multiuse Pathway	I fully support and love the existing multi use pathway. It is the safest and most enjoyable way to ride my bike for commuting. I would like to see more priority put on completing the Guerneville to Sonoma Airport section sooner than later. Plans show construction starting in 2026, sadly means cyclists and pedestrians will be dealing with unsafe roads to commute for at least 2 more years. Cycling in SR is unsafe, and SMART could help be a solution by prioritizing this section, creating a safety corridor for commuters.
09/04/2024		Traffic	While I support public transit and the overall concept of the train, it causes extreme traffic blockages in downtown San Rafael and 101 Southbound during rush hour and other times. There are certain times the road is closed for over 5 minutes (to let 2 trans pass, one in each direction, without opening between). This causes really large delays on Mission and other streets, and can cause the right lane on 101 south to be backed up almost stopped for 0.75 miles. While this might be worth it if ridership were high, for the few that do ride I don't know if it makes sense.
09/04/2024	Allen Noren	Ridership	I love SMART. I participated in the two campaigns to get SMART started, and I've been commuting on it since its inception. I mention this to signal my dedication. But I must say that riding the train is often unpleasant due to the number of passengers who don't use headphones when having conversation or watching videos. They seem to think it's fine to blare the noise over their speakers. I often ask passengers to turn the volume down or use headphones, but I'd rather not have to do this, and yesterday there were two public and loud phone conversations over speakers taking place at the same time, along with a video watcher who turned up his volume so he could hear over the calls. Could you please, please post something about using headphones, and ask the conductors to enforce it?
09/04/2024	Patrick Carter	Ridership	I think it might be time to revisit a three car train during commute times, or consider more options for cyclists. Now that school is back in, there have been times where both cars have been full up on bike spots.
09/04/2024	Sean Camden	Multiuse Pathway	I'd like to ride my bike. Please accelerate the build out of multiuse paths. They are essential to getting people out of their cars.
09/04/2024	david a carlson	coordinati on between	It seems to me that there has been absolutely no attempt to coordinate-mesh bus/transit service with Smart. This is a big inter-agency communication failure in my opinion.

		public transport agencies	Here's two examples: 1. The County?City/ bus in Petaluma drops a block away from the Smart station! nonsense! drop at the train station. 2. the County bus from Marin to Rohnert Park drops (or used to) at the Rohnert Park Safeway, a half mile from the Smart station.....Ridiculous. A Little thought, and really not much work, would fix these glaring gaps. Don't you agencies talk to each other? ...seems not.
09/04/2024	James Karabochoos P.O.S.T. (People of Sonoma for Transit)	Railway Extensions	We need service in Sonoma Valley and the tracks do go to 8th Street East.
09/04/2024	Andrew Smith	Ridership	While it is good to see more people using the SMART train, too many are not paying anything for it. Not a good idea for finances. There is nothing wrong with giving discounts to certain groups for a limited time frame like Monday-Friday. Or just Saturday-Sunday. Too much of SMART's finances come from Federal and State Grants per your financial statements. Without these grants, SMART is running in the negative. Not good if you want the sales tax extended.
09/04/2024	Rose Lamanna	Ridership	I am a senior and enjoy riding the Smart train to Larkspur, then ferry over to the city. I would like to see more day trips offered for seniors and some overnight trips to the city with instructions or guides to assist with directions for public transportation.
09/04/2024	Dan Bell	Ridership	Trains are becoming more and more crowded with passengers and bicycles. It is time to introduce a third car to the train set.
09/04/2024	Fred Van Patten	Railway Extensions	For the last seventeen years I made use of California state route #37 to work at Marin Health Medical Center from Vallejo and then return home and now with the proposed elevated improvement on state route # 37, I am suggesting that Smart Train run a line down the middle of the new roadway to the Mare Island ferry terminal, so that Smart Train links in to all major Bay Area transportation hubs. and then continue on to Suisun City Amtrak. Travel time between Novato and Mare Island would take 15 minutes! This would provide alternatives to reduce congestion on both interstate # 80 but also on state route #37, pull traffic off interstate # 80 for those commuting to San Francisco who could then take the Vallejo ferry. This approach seems to fit the Cal Trans strategic plan which will have to accommodate for Bay Area increased traffic congestion as we go forward. Thank you, Fred Van Patten.

09/04/2024	Samantha	Multiuse Pathway	Please prioritize completing the bike path! More and more businesses/offices seem to be moving up to the airport boulevard area (including my own office with the the County of Sonoma) bringing more cars and traffic and the lack of a complete bike path is disappointing.
09/04/2024	Joni	Station at Vintage Oaks Shopping Center Novato	I think that if there was a station at the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center in Novato, many more people would use the train. Avoiding traffic mess and gas usage are great incentives.
09/05/2024		Railway Extensions	We need to fulfill the promise made when SMRR started to extend it to Healdsburg & Cloverdale
09/06/2024	LD	Railway Extensions	Could we please have a public comment from SMART about the line running to Cloverdale ? What is the projected time line for this now that the work is being done on the line to Windsor ?
09/06/2024	Terry Hull	Railway Extensions	Please don't forget Cloverdale! Would love to take advantage of the train but parking is difficult at the Sonoma County airport station - the closest one to us.
09/06/2024		Ridership	You might extend night services later going south. Recently I wanted to go to an event in Santa Rosa but the last train on Saturday left too early to get back home. I noticed that you had a later train going north but not south.
09/06/2024		Ridership	Increasing ridership is an important goal. Since a growing percentage of riders bring bikes on board, it is ESSENTIAL that you begin NOW to strategize making more space for bikes on the train. Already there are times the train is full to bursting, with staff prohibiting a cyclist from boarding. If this starts happening more often, guess what, people will stop riding if they can't be sure they can get on with their bike! The coming e-bike share will NOT take care of this, if someone's destination is farther from the station than the bikes are allowed to go. Plus, no one's going to be happy paying to rent a bike when they already own one!
09/06/2024	James Libby	Railway Extensions	The most important issue to me is making it easier to travel to the East Bay. There needs to be more convenient transfer options to places like Oakland and Berkeley, places where people from the North Bay would love to take public transit to, but it is currently too cumbersome to get to via public transit.
09/09/2024		Railway Extensions	I was extremely disappointed to learn that the extension to Cloverdale is no longer included in the MTA 2050 plan. This is a slap in the face to all Cloverdale residents who have been paying for this extension through their taxes. Cloverdale has almost two hundred affordable housing units under construction that are being built under the

			<p>assumption that public transportation would be an option. Current bus transportation is woefully inadequate. Cloverdale is willing to be the northernmost hub of the SMART train, allowing access for our neighbors in Mendocino and Lake Counties. I sincerely hope that the leadership of SMART will fight for the opportunity to serve our community.</p>
09/11/2024	Adriane Garayalde	Please consider a stop in Geyserville	Geyserville is small with limited parking. It would be great if tourists could ride the train to come wine tasting or enjoy the local food.
09/12/2024	Mark Thayer	Railway Extensions	Focus on getting to Cloverdale. No new stations or added routes until the full basic line is complete.
09/13/2024	Susanne	Transit connections	When you get to your destination there is no information on where to get buses and the stops are not always near the train station this is a huge hardship for elders and disabled persons
09/13/2024	Gabe Pattee	Railway Extensions	As the rail comes closer to reality in Northern Sonoma County, particularly to Cloverdale, it is the desire of many Geyserville residents to have a stop.
09/14/2024	Jefferson Reyes Diaz	Ridership	<p>Hello! Thank you for providing a survey to collect feedback. I think one way to increase ridership would be to host an event similar to an "art walk" across the various SMART station parking lots. They could be used to host food trucks, local vendors, and business stands. Folks could then travel from station to station on SMART for different foods and shopping options. I think this could be a great opportunity to introduce folks to SMART that otherwise do not use or consider public transit. Businesses could serve as informal "advertising partners" to help spread the word to their customers, thereby reducing the burden on SMART itself to attract attention. If the event is scheduled for later in the day, SMART can reduce the impact to service for frequent users and increase attendance from folks that will have already returned home from their workday. The day of the event could see much higher ridership and could present another revenue source from businesses paying to set up their food truck or tent/stall. This event could be a regular event, such as monthly, that would probably not increase daily ridership much, but could go very far towards improving residents' perception of SMART ahead of future ballot measures to continue funding SMART. Thank you again for providing the survey!</p>
09/16/2024	Fredrick Schermer	Ridership	While Caltrain is distinct from SMART, they were able to double their ridership (and then some) through implementing the baby bullet service. By skipping stations in a very smart manner (all stations are still served, but

			<p>each in their own baby bullet version), the passengers flocked to the faster Caltrain service. Time is not just money but also a very important value in people's minds in every other way. At Caltrain, they realized that and now have ridership levels everyone is jealous of. Every additional stop the train makes will actively make people think about using their own car next time. Every stop reduces the attraction of the rail line. The goal is to optimize what fastest service can be provided to all passengers. For instance, two separate trains each going in the same direction, minutes apart (or whatever safety requires), skipping some stations but with all stations served nevertheless by at least one train, these two trains can each travel faster than both trains if they stopped at every station. Even arriving two or three minutes faster at one's destination automatically translates into more passengers using the service. Either through attracting more passengers or through avoiding people to end up driving in their own cars. Particularly in light of the Novato Narrows being widened up in the coming year, SMART should offer faster service, no matter how fast you think it is today. By not having a streamlined transit environment (because people are waiting for connecting buses, are walking to the ferry), SMART must maximize what it can because the race is mostly won by the car, so grab and keep those passengers where you can.</p>
09/16/2024	Alejandro reyes	Multiuse Pathway	i would like to see a multi-use path along all of the smart train rails.
09/17/2024	Father Karl A Claver	Railway Extensions	I wish the train line began in Sausalito. It is a faster ferry ride to there, plus the freeway is always crowded. The line should also be extended at least to Ukiah.
09/17/2024	Donald F Robertson	Railway Extensions	Almost half of all public transit users in the entire Bay Area live in San Francisco, and more work there. It is very poor planning to have such a poor connection to the ferry. Extensions further north would be good for me, but extending the tracks into the ferry terminal should be the highest priority.
09/17/2024	Jillian Metz	Ridership	used to ride the train to SF. Now I have Congestive Heart Failure and am unable to walk from the train to the ferry. I wish there was some form of transport.
09/17/2024	Fred Van Patten	Railway Extensions	I have Smart Train's fiscal objective in mind when I suggest that ridership needs to be the focus of attention when addressing strategic planning. For over 17 years I commuted on California state route #37 to Marin Health Medical Center to work and then return home to Vallejo. Now with the proposed and soon to be constructed elevated highway, Smart Train can coordinate with Cal

			<p>Trans to run a line down the middle from Novato to Mare Island and then on to Suisun City Amtrak, It would relieve traffic congestion on both route #37 and interstate #80 and provide alternatives because it would connect to all major transportation hubs, like the Vallejo Ferry and adjacent Sol Trans terminal. The ridership on Smart Train would be a huge draw and lucrative, as commuters from Fairfield and beyond would make use of Smart Train to the Vallejo ferry as an alternative to San Francisco. There is now significant tourist development on Mare Island and plenty of available parking. Speed and convenience would entice commuters to get out of their cars and this would be consistent over time and as noted, lucrative for Smart Train</p>
09/18/2024	Ann Hutchinson	onboard wifi	<p>I don't understand why onboard WiFi was discontinued. For a form of transit that caters mostly to commuters, this makes no sense to me. There's no explanation on the SMART site.</p>
09/18/2024	Roy Redlich	Multiuse Pathway	<p>I would like SMART to prioritize completing pathways that make intercity travel by bicycle possible. A bicycle path from Petaluma (Corona Road) to Penngrove (Railroad Avenue) would make traveling between Petaluma and Santa Rosa a safe travel option.</p>
09/19/2024	Keith Korbel	Ridership	<p>If the train ran later I would use it more often. I live in Rohnert Park and take the train to Santa Rosa 2-3x a week. However, since I work evenings and get off around 11pm I have to ride my bicycle home those nights. If you had a later running train I would consider riding the train 5 days a week both ways. Thank you.</p>
09/23/2024	Patrick Seidler WTB-TAM	Multiuse Pathway	<p>"Our public comments include an Appendix. Because this comment form does not allow us to attach the Appendix, we will submit our comments separately by email. September 23, 2024 Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District 5401 Old Redwood Hwy. Suite 200 Petaluma, CA 94954 Re: SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan Dear Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District, Thank you for the open and transparent process that has characterized the development of the SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan to date. It is a significant improvement over previous SMART Strategic Plans. WTB-TAM commends SMART for the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan's focus on ridership, first-and-last-mile connections, and completing the SMART Pathway. In that spirit, we offer the below recommendations. SMART PATHWAY In the section of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan laying out SMART's strategies for the SMART Pathway, WTB-TAM recommends that SMART define both a Short-Term Strategy and Long-Term Strategy for completing the SMART Pathway. Short-Term Strategy: WTB-TAM recommends that SMART complete construction by no later than 2029 of</p>

the 13 SMART Pathway segments which are currently in design or which have upcoming RFPs for design work:

Marin County Segments

1. Top of Puerto Suello Hill to North San Pedro Road (San Rafael)
2. Smith Ranch Road to Main Gate Road (San Rafael, Unincorporated Marin County, Novato)
3. State Access Road to Frosty Lane (Novato)
4. Hanna Ranch Road to Vintage Way (Novato)
5. Vintage Way (north) to North side Novato Creek (Novato)
6. Grant Avenue to Olive Avenue (Novato)
7. Olive Avenue to Rush Creek Place (Novato)

Sonoma County Segments

8. Main Street to East Railroad Avenue (Unincorporated Sonoma County)
9. Prince Memorial Greenway to Third Street (Santa Rosa)
10. Downtown Santa Rosa Station to Sixth Street (Santa Rosa)
11. Guerneville Road to West Steele Lane (Santa Rosa)
12. West Steele Lane to San Miguel Road (Santa Rosa)
13. San Miguel Road to Airport Boulevard (Santa Rosa, Unincorporated Sonoma County)

Long-Term Strategy: WTB-TAM recommends that SMART pursue a multi-faceted Long-Term Strategy consisting of different strategies for different pathway segments, including feasibility studies, shovel-ready, and construction concurrent with future rail extensions:

Feasibility Study

1. Conduct a Feasibility Study no later than 2029 for the segment between Novato San Marin Station and Haystack Bridge. This study should examine different alternatives, including an alignment immediately adjacent to the SMART railway as well as alignments that make use of existing ranch roads and levees that run roughly parallel to but not necessarily immediately adjacent to the SMART railway.

Shovel-Ready

2. Bring to shovel-ready status (environmental permits, environmental clearances, and at least 30% design) no later than 2029 the unbuilt SMART Pathway segments between Haystack Bridge and Lakeville Street in the City of Petaluma.

Construction Concurrent With Rail Extensions

3. Windsor Station to Healdsburg Station (Windsor, Unincorporated Sonoma County, Healdsburg)
4. Healdsburg Station to Cloverdale Station (Healdsburg, Unincorporated Sonoma County, Cloverdale)

Together, these recommended Short-Term and Long-Term Strategies encompass all of the SMART Pathway segments which were laid out in the October 2003 SMART document “Working Paper No. 5” and promised to Marin and Sonoma County voters in SMART’s enabling legislation, 2008’s Measure Q. We understand that SMART’s current priority is completing the design and construction of a particular subset of SMART Pathway segments, which is why we recommend phasing

completion of the SMART Pathway with separate Short-Term and Long-Term Strategies. We understand that construction by 2029 of the Long-Term Pathway segments is not realistic. Nevertheless, we believe it is essential that the Long-Term Pathway segments are at least acknowledged in the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, and addressed either by Feasibility Study, shovel-ready status, or concurrent with future rail extensions. These strategies will help maximize support at the ballot box by delivering on SMART promise to the voters in 2008's Measure Q to construct a pathway parallel to the SMART railway for the entire 71-mile length between Larkspur Station and Cloverdale Station.

FIRST-AND-LAST-MILE NETWORK One of the most prominent themes to emerge from the SMART 2024-2029 Strategic Plan workshops is the significance of first-and-last-mile connections. First-and-last-mile is fundamental to multiple pillars of the "SMART house." It is important for the SMART Pathway, since most users of the SMART Pathway do not live immediately along the SMART Pathway itself and thus need safe, connected, and high-quality pathways, bike lanes, and sidewalks with which to access the SMART Pathway from their neighborhoods. The first-and-last-mile network is crucial to SMART's number one goal of increasing ridership. Most trips do not begin and end next to a SMART station. A strong first-and-last-mile multi-modal network serving bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users and connecting residential neighborhoods and employment centers to SMART stations is essential. Only then will SMART be able to realize its potential as a practical and convenient substitute for car trips and its goal of significantly shifting modal share away from cars and reducing traffic and pollution. There are two scales at which we can analyze the effectiveness of first-and-last-mile connections. The first is the station area scale, or the immediate surroundings of each SMART station. This is where SMART has the most direct control since it falls within SMART's physical right-of-way. At this scale, the focus of first-and-last-mile connectivity is on physical planning and urban design that stitches multi-modal infrastructure as seamlessly as possible to the train station platform. This includes parking, bus stops, clearly-signed paths of pedestrian travel, and safe, secure, and easy-to-use bicycle parking. It means seamless transition between modes: shuttle stops, rideshare pick-up and drop-off zones, and micromobility hubs. The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and its consultant Kimley Horn have just begun a year-long process to plan and design Mobility Hubs at each of the six SMART stations in Marin

County. This Mobility Hub Plan will directly address the station area scale of SMART's first-and-last-mile network. SMART is a key stakeholder in this process and is already working closely with TAM on the Mobility Hub Plan. In addition to the six stations in Marin County, WTB-TAM recommends that SMART in conjunction with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) undertake an equivalent project to develop Mobility Hubs for the ten existing and future SMART stations in Sonoma County. The second scale at which to analyze first-and-last-mile connectivity is larger than the station area scale, encompassing the entirety of the 1-mile radius (and beyond) surrounding each station. As most of this 1-mile radius lies outside of SMART's right-of-way and thus outside of SMART's direct jurisdiction and sphere of operations, it will require cross-jurisdictional coordination, funding, and cooperation between SMART and other agencies including cities, towns, counties, and other special districts. This level of first-and-last-mile connectivity is what matters most for increasing SMART ridership, for it is here that the vast majority of SMART's potential new riders are to be found. If every person who lives and works within the 1-mile radius (and beyond) of each SMART station is able to access a safe, connected, and convenient first-and-last-mile multi-modal network of pathways, walkways, bikeways, and bus routes, the benefits to SMART in terms of increased ridership (and increased revenue) will be substantial. For that reason, WTB-TAM recommends that the SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan explicitly lay out a strategy for upcoming SMART sales tax extension measure to invest a strategic portion of future sales tax revenues to help SMART's local agency partners build out the network of first-and-last-mile pathways in the 1-mile (and beyond) radius of each SMART station by providing a local match. WTB-TAM has prepared a series of maps to help SMART better understand the existing conditions and needs within its first-and-last-mile network. The maps are divided into two sets and can be found in the Appendix to this letter. •

The first set shows the Active Transportation first-and-last-mile network, with all existing pathways and bike lanes. • The second set shows the Transit first-and-last-mile network, with all Marin Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Sonoma County Transit, and Santa Rosa City Bus routes. Both sets of maps also show the distribution of population and jobs within the 1-mile radius of each SMART station, as derived from the latest US census data. This data provides invaluable context for SMART's first-and-last-mile planning purposes by showing where potential SMART

			<p>riders actually live and work and how those patterns of residential and job density relate to the first-and-last-mile network. SMART has proven itself time and again to be exceptionally skilled at pathway design and construction, as well as in leveraging its resources to obtain federal, state, and regional grants to advance its pathway construction projects. These are areas where SMART possesses skills and resources that go above and beyond those of many of the local agencies whose jurisdictions overlap with the SMART first-and-last-mile network. This demonstrates a strong rationale for SMART to commit a small portion of its future sales tax revenues to first-and-last-mile network completion. SMART is a direct beneficiary of such work, and SMART has unique capacity to convert such resources to implementable projects. SMART need not commit to fully funding any of the first-and-last-mile network improvements outside its right-of-way. A partial commitment, such as providing local agencies with grant writing assistance and covering the local match requirement of any grants awarded, should suffice.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Seidler WTB-TAM President Director of Planning "</p> <p>Patrick Matthew Hartzell WTB-TAM</p>
09/24/2024	richard brand	Freight Services	<p>For the building of the SMART Freight business, sales tax funds need to be allocated to that business. While Measure Q specifies that tax funds are to be used for passenger service, it also specifies that those funds are to be used for "other purposes". Freight trains have provided rail transit for the two counties for decades. SMART has inherited the precedent to provide this service as a legal common carrier including via a Calif. State Bill making them THE rail common carrier.</p>
09/25/2024	Rosemary Hart Petaluma Woman's Club	Railway Extensions	<p>SMART owns the Petaluma Trestle that has deteriorated immensely and is in the heart of our downtown. Don't just focus on what is new, but take responsibility for the mess left behind. Please finalize an agreement with the city of Petaluma soon. Grantors (the SCC) will not grant money to a project without a single owner.</p>
09/25/2024	A George Beeler AIM Associates, architects	Ridership	<p>It is great to see the large numbers of senior riding the trains</p>
09/25/2024	A George Beeler AIM Associates	Train fuel	<p>The fuel used to power the trains is an important environmental issue. Why not use restaurant waste oil bio diesel like San Francisco uses for its buses?</p>

09/26/2024	Katherine Rinehart	Ridership	Looking forward to more bike parking on the trains. Longer hours. I'd love to be able to go from Petaluma to Santa Rosa to attend night time performances at 6th Street Playhouse and meet friends for dinner.
09/26/2024	Katherine Rinehart	Bike lanes to and from the Petaluma downtown station	I ride my bike to the Petaluma downtown station and there is no real safe way to travel there on D, Washington or Lakeville Street. Please work with the City of Petaluma to remedy this situation.
10/01/2024	Nicholas J. Maurer	Ridership	Bike Ridership has been rising. In addition, ebikes brought onto trains are bigger than pedal bikes. There is a need for more bicycle parking on trains. In addition, all trains have a small store that has not been in service for the past several years. I think the stores should be removed to allow for more seating and bicycle parking.
10/02/2024	Andrea Casali	Ridership	According to myself, and many other young people who care about the environment and accesible transportation, ridership would increase if the hours were extended until midnight, at least on the weekends. It would be nice to be able to go out with friends in another city and be able to travel safely in between! I personally live and work in Petaluma, but go to Santa Rosa a few times a week after work to go climbing. I would love to take the smart train instead of driving, but unfortunately, I would barely get into Santa Rosa not long before the last Southbound train is heading back to Petaluma. Even if it was extended until 9pm during the weekday that would be better than what is offered now.
10/15/2024	Rosemary Hart Petaluma Woman's Club	Railway Extensions	SMART owns the Petaluma Trestle that has deteriorated immensely and is in the heart of our downtown. Don't just focus on what is new, but take responsibility for the mess left behind. Please finalize an agreement with the city of Petaluma soon. Grantors (the SCC) will not grant money to a project without a single owner.

Community Partner/Organization Responses

Please see the following pages for detailed comments on SMART's Strategic Plan received by community partners in PDF form:

Letter from David Schonbrunn, Vice President Train Riders Association of California

From: David Schonbrunn <david@Schonbrunn.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 4:01 PM

To: Leticia Rosas <lrosas@sonomamarintrain.org>

Subject: Comments for Community Workshop for SMART's Strategic Plan

Please share these two contributions with the appropriate staff.

I've previously offered these to SMART, but never received any feedback from staff or heard that movement towards implementation of either was underway. They are still valid today.

Fulton Transload Plan

Here's the satellite view of the site:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@38.4958001,-122.7716717,215m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu>

This plan has the following elements:

- There is a switch to the mainline which I believe is PTC equipped, since SMART stores MOW cars there. (There are 2 cars in the satellite view.)
- The site can be accessed from River Road via Hart Lane.
- There is enough trackage to be able to load maybe a dozen cars.
- It seems likely this transload plan could be implemented without laying out any cash, other than for promotion. (SMART probably has a front-end loader, to which forks could be attached. Alternatively, a fork lift could be rented.)
- This plan would be an easy step for SMART. Successful implementation would help the Board gain confidence in the freight business, allowing the business to build momentum.
- If there is enough business, SMART could seek to buy the triangular lot to the west of the tracks, for additional storage and possibly more tracks.

Here's a ground-level view of the spurs from the River Road crossing:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@38.4965128,-122.7724494,3a,75y,182.74h,91.93t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1s57ZUGf-DFhSgDI5TJqH91A!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?entry=ttu>

Public-Private Partnership to restore the tracks to Willits.

Recognizing that MTC is unlikely to include funding for further extensions because of the low potential ridership north of Windsor, here is an idea that would make it possible to provide passenger service not only to Cloverdale, but also to Willits:

The RFEI that SMART issued for a contractor to handle interim freight service identified a group of freight operators that could be approached as potential partners in freight service. SMART should invite

them to submit proposals on restoring the tracks to Cloverdale, with a further extension to Willits as an option. Find out what terms they would want (confidentially, of course) in terms of the capital to be invested and the length of freight rights they would need to make the transaction feasible. TRAC expects the cost of restoration to be in the vicinity of \$1 million/mile, plus grade crossings. PTC would not be needed initially.

Note that TRAC fully expects the restoration of service to be done using the existing rails, including where jointed rail is in use. That's all that's needed for freight. It will keep the costs low, and make the project conceivably feasible. This is how railroads operate. They only upgrade when necessary to meet service objectives.

The operator could contract with SMART to offer passenger service on a cost plus an add-on profit basis. Having passenger equipment could be a potential profit center, if excursion service was offered, which had been very popular back in the 90s. See attached history of NWP tourist trains.

This proposal is innovative and out-of-the-box. It is not aligned with current agency thinking. In order to actually get its objectives met, TRAC urges SMART staff to get creative in its use of available resources instead of waiting for money to fall from the sky.

As someone that has worked for 35 years to restore passenger rail to the NWP, I've been looking for--and haven't found--any evidence that SMART actually wants its freight business to succeed. Judging by its past few years of operations, it is pretty clear now that SMART is unlikely to make a go of its freight business.

Part of the problem seems to be a deep resistance to partnering with the kind of competent private sector rail operator who would make the business successful. Is this a covert conflict of interest about the ultimate scheduling of traffic? SMART should discuss publicly what appears to be an unwritten policy. I'm being deliberately provocative here in an effort to try to prevent the freight business from failing from benign neglect.

Thank you for your attention to these thoughts. I would be pleased to discuss any of these ideas in depth, at the phone number below.

--David

David Schonbrunn, Vice President
Train Riders Association of California (TRAC)
P.O. Box 151439
San Rafael, CA 94915-1439

415-370-7250 cell & office
President@calrailnews.org
www.calrailnews.org

NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD TOURIST TRAIN HISTORY
The Northwestern Pacific Railroad and its predecessor railroads all ran excursion

passenger trains over mainline and branch lines from the 1920s thru 1968. Earlier operators referred to these non-regular trains as tourist trains. Regular passenger train service on the NWPRR ceased on April 30, 1971.

Following the ownership change from Southern Pacific Transportation Co. to Eureka Southern Railroad in 1984, regularized excursion service commenced on the "North End" Eureka to Willits segment with periodic excursions on the Eureka-Samoa and Eureka-Carlotta segments. Following the ownership change from Eureka Southern Railroad to North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) in 1992, periodic excursion trains were operated Eureka to Willits and Willits to Outlet.

Following the June 1996 ownership change from Southern Pacific Transportation Co. to NCRA for the remainder of the Willits to Schellville "South End" mainline, NCRA established a "Director of Passenger Train Operation". The Director contracted with two agencies to market and supervise on-board services for six excursion/tourist trains operating between Healdsburg and Willits. Those six trains commenced on October 5, 1996 and operated through October 20, 1996. Two levels of service including dining and lounge service were offered with total ridership exceeding 2000.

Following the successful demonstration of tourist trains in the fall of 1996, the NCRA issued an RFP for an operator to initiate weekend tourist trains. California Redwood Coast Company (CRCC) was awarded the contract in December 1996 and commenced operations in March 1997. A total of twenty tourist trains were operated between Healdsburg and Willits and Santa Rosa & Healdsburg. Booking were robust with several trains sold-out in the first-class accommodations. Train consists included former Amtrak rolling stock that allowed capacity increases in excess of 300 passengers. CRCC initiated contracts with passenger train rolling stock owners for delivery of rail diesel cars (RDC) for subsequent seasons.

On June 11, 1997, NCRA, FRA and CPUC signed a safety compliance agreement with 11 action items relating to track defect repair, locomotive air brake testing and other areas. The agreement referenced previous non-compliance with federal safety statutes and regulations based on FRA-CPUC inspections. As a result of this agreement NCRA issued an order to California Redwood Coast Company (CRCC) to cease tourist trains operations pending reinstatement after repairs were made. The last CRCC train operated on June 7, 1997. Bookings for trains through summer 1997 numbered approximately 2000.

Sources:

The Northwestern Pacific Railroad – Boom & Bust. Angelo Figone, 1997
CRCC archives, San Francisco

Letter from WTB-TAM



September 23, 2024

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District
5401 Old Redwood Hwy. Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954

Re: SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Dear Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District,

Thank you for the open and transparent process that has characterized the development of the SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan to date. It is a significant improvement over previous SMART Strategic Plans. WTB-TAM commends SMART for the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan's focus on ridership, first-and-last-mile connections, and completing the SMART Pathway. In that spirit, we offer the below recommendations:

SMART PATHWAY

In the section of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan laying out SMART's strategies for the SMART Pathway, WTB-TAM recommends that SMART define both a **Short-Term Strategy** and **Long-Term Strategy** for completing the SMART Pathway.

Short-Term Strategy: WTB-TAM recommends that SMART complete construction by no later than 2029 of the 13 SMART Pathway segments which are currently in design or which have upcoming RFPs for design work:

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Long-Term Strategy: WTB-TAM recommends that SMART pursue a multi-faceted **Long-Term Strategy** consisting of different strategies for different pathway segments, including feasibility studies, shovel-ready, and construction concurrent with future rail extensions:

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1. Conduct a Feasibility Study no later than 2029 for the segment between Novato San Marin Station and Haystack Bridge. This study should examine different alternatives, including an alignment immediately



adjacent to the SMART railway as well as alignments that make use of existing ranch roads and levees that run roughly parallel to but not necessarily immediately adjacent to the SMART railway.

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3. Windsor Station to Healdsburg Station (Windsor, Unincorporated Sonoma County, Healdsburg)
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Together, these recommended Short-Term and Long-Term Strategies encompass all of the SMART Pathway segments which were laid out in the October 2003 SMART document "Working Paper No. 5" and promised to Marin and Sonoma County voters in SMART's enabling legislation, 2008's Measure Q.

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FIRST-AND-LAST-MILE NETWORK

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A strong first-and-last-mile multi-modal network serving bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users and connecting residential neighborhoods and employment centers to SMART stations is essential. Only then will SMART be able to realize its potential as a practical and convenient substitute for car trips and its goal of significantly shifting modal share away from cars and reducing traffic and pollution.

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six SMART stations in Marin County. This **Mobility Hub Plan** will directly address the station area scale of SMART's first-and-last-mile network. SMART is a key stakeholder in this process and is already working closely with TAM on the **Mobility Hub Plan**. In addition to the six stations in Marin County, WTB-TAM recommends that SMART in conjunction with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) undertake an equivalent project to develop Mobility Hubs for the ten existing and future SMART stations in Sonoma County.

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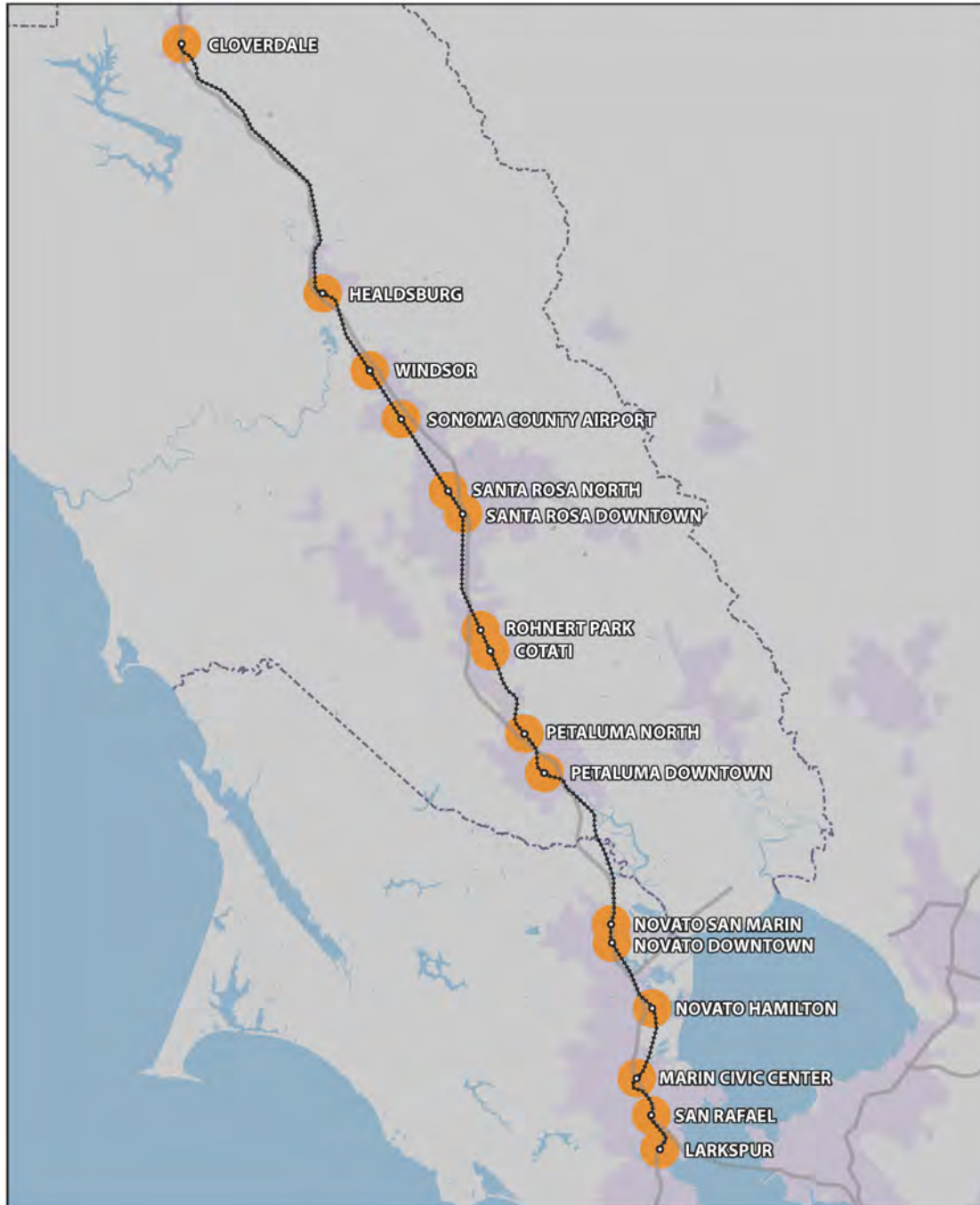
Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Seidler
WTB-TAM President

Matthew Hartzell
WTB-TAM Director of Planning



First-and-Last-Mile Network



Larkspur Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

- Cal Park Hill Tunnel
- Bon Air Center
- Marin Country Mart
- Larkspur Ferry Terminal
- Hall Middle School
- Redwood High School
- The Village

- 1
- 2
- 3
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First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Doherty Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Andersen Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Install Class IV protected bike lanes on Larkspur Landing Circle
- Install Class IV protected bike lanes on Lucky Dr. and Fifer Ave.



San Rafael Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

- Puerto Suello Tunnel
- Dominican University
- Coleman Elementary School
- San Rafael City Hall
- San Rafael High School
- Montecito Plaza
- Davidson Middle School
- Laurel Dell Elementary School

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First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Andersen Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Conduct feasibility study for new bicycle facilities on Fourth St.
- Conduct feasibility study for new bicycle facilities on Canal St., Medway Rd., and Kerner Blvd.
- Conduct feasibility study for grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossing of Hwy. 101 near Harbor Dr. or Medway Rd.



Marin Civic Center Station First-and-Last Active Transportation Mile-Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing Planned

— — — — —

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Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

Vallecito Elementary School

Kaiser Permanente Hospital

Northgate Town Square

Terra Linda High School

Marin County Fairgrounds

Veneta Valley K-8 School

Marin County Civic Center

Puerto Suello Tunnel

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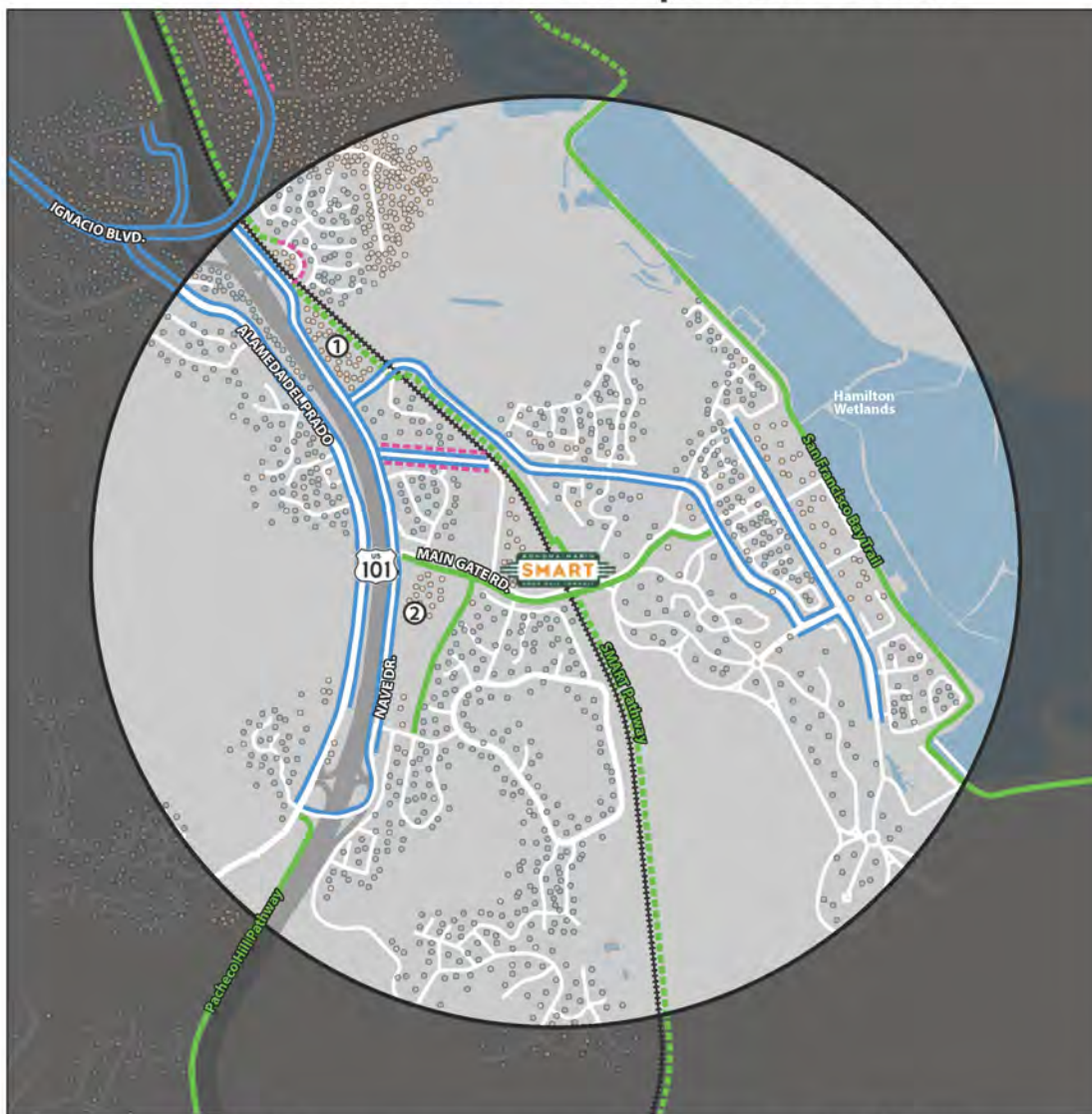
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First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Install parking and pick-up/drop-off zone at the SMART station on Civic Center Dr.
- Close the gaps in the planned Class IV protected bike lanes on Nova Albion Way
- Upgrade Class II bike lanes on Civic Center Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes

Novato Hamilton Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing

Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

Hamilton Square

Hamilton K-8 School

①

②

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Alameda del Prado, Enfrete Dr., and Entrada Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Extend the Pacheco Hill Pathway through the Nave Dr./Hwy. 101 interchange with a grade-separated undercrossing under the southbound freeway ramps



Novato Downtown Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned
—	- - -
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Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

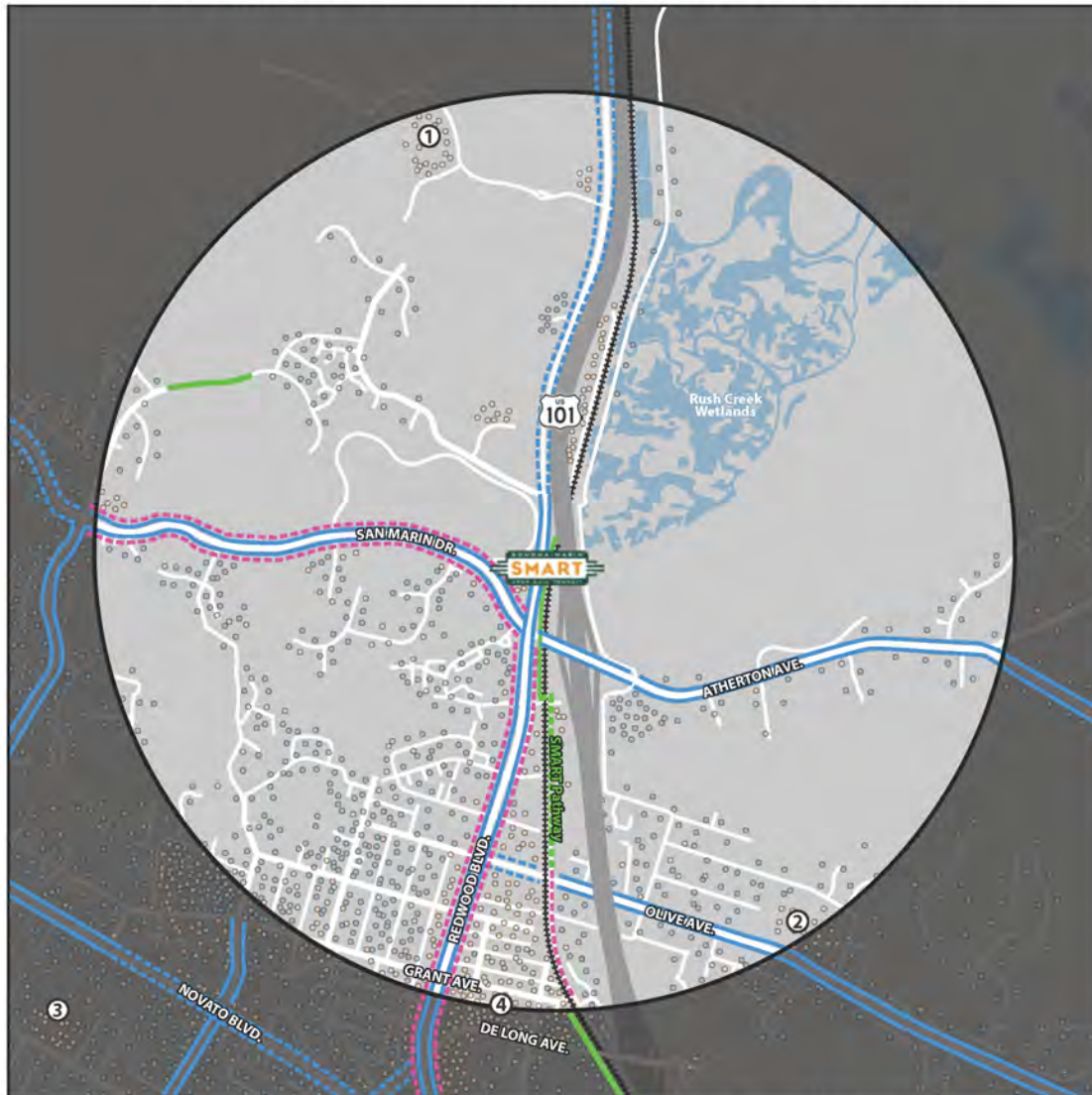
- ① Olive Elementary School
- ② Lu Sutton Elementary School
- ③ Novato City Hall
- ④ Novato Community Hospital
- ⑤ Novato High School
- ⑥ Vintage Oaks

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Improve the aging segments of the SMART Pathway which predate SMART between Novato Creek and Lamont Ave.
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Novato Blvd. to Class IV protected bike lanes



Novato San Marin Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing

Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

Buck Center

Olive Elementary School

Lu Sutton Elementary School

Novato City Hall

①

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First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on San Marin Dr. Highway 101 overcrossing to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Restore to the SMART Pathway Long-Range Plan the segment of the SMART Pathway alongside the SMART Railway between Novato San Marin Station and Petaluma



Petaluma Downtown Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

- ① Petaluma Valley Hospital
- ② McDowell Elementary School
- ③ Washington Place
- ④ McKinley Elementary School
- ⑤ Valley Vista Elementary School
- ⑥ Petaluma City Hall
- ⑦ Petaluma High School
- ⑧ McNear Elementary School

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Petaluma Blvd. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Install Class IV protected bike lanes encircling the SMART-owned block south of the Petaluma Downtown SMART Station
- Install Class IV protected bike lanes on Copeland St. and E. Washington St.
- Install Class I multi-use path adjacent to the railroad spur between Lakeville St. and Water St.



Petaluma North Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing

Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

Corona Creek Elementary School ①

Kenilworth Junior High School ②

Lagunitas Brewing Company ③

Santa Rosa Junior College ④

Meadow Elementary School ⑤

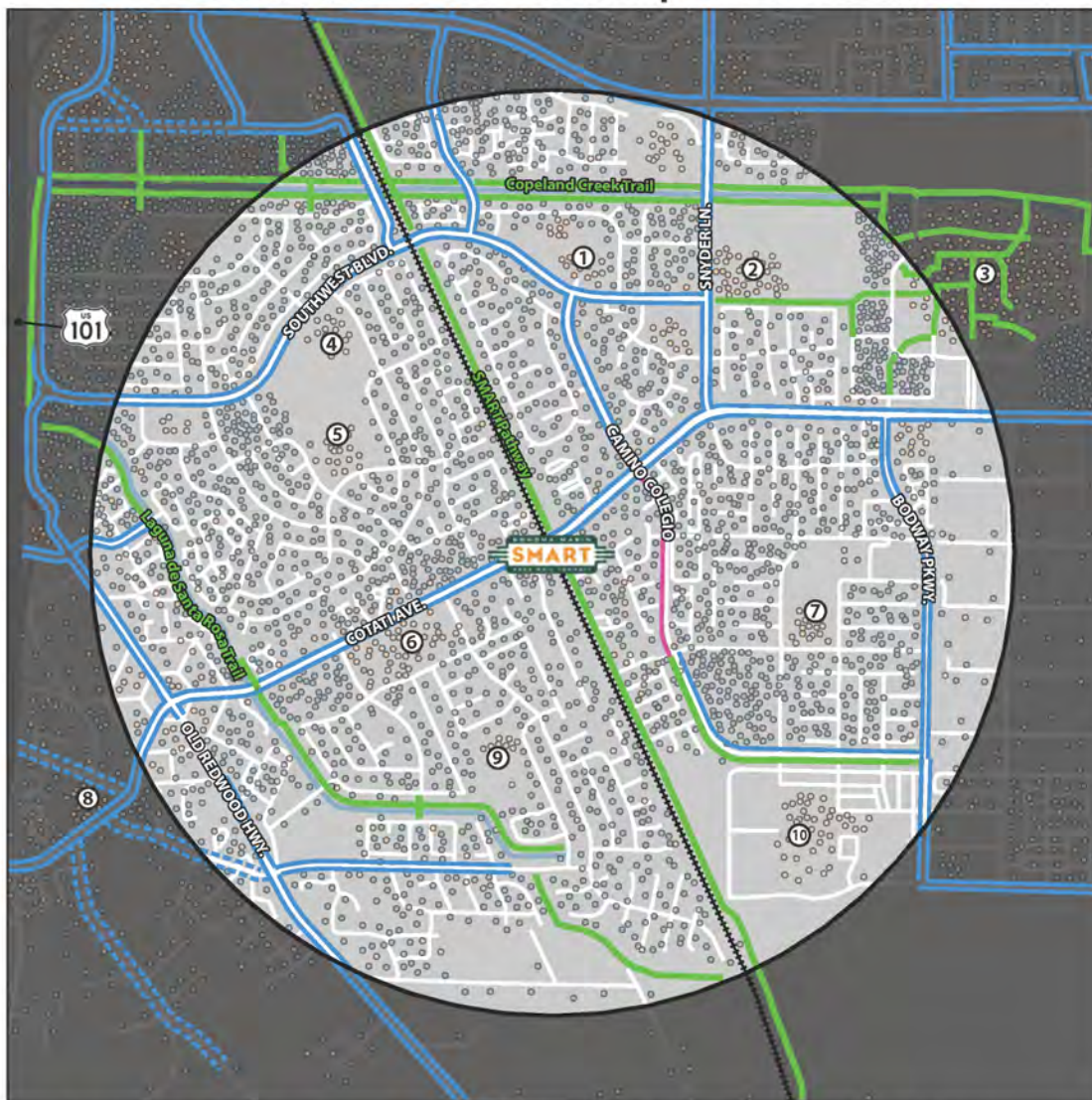
Petaluma Factory Outlets ⑥

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Extend the Class IV protected bike lanes on N. McDowell Blvd. south of Southpoint Blvd.
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Petaluma Blvd. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Corona Rd. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Sonoma Mountain Pkwy. to Class IV protected bike lanes



Cotati Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned
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Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

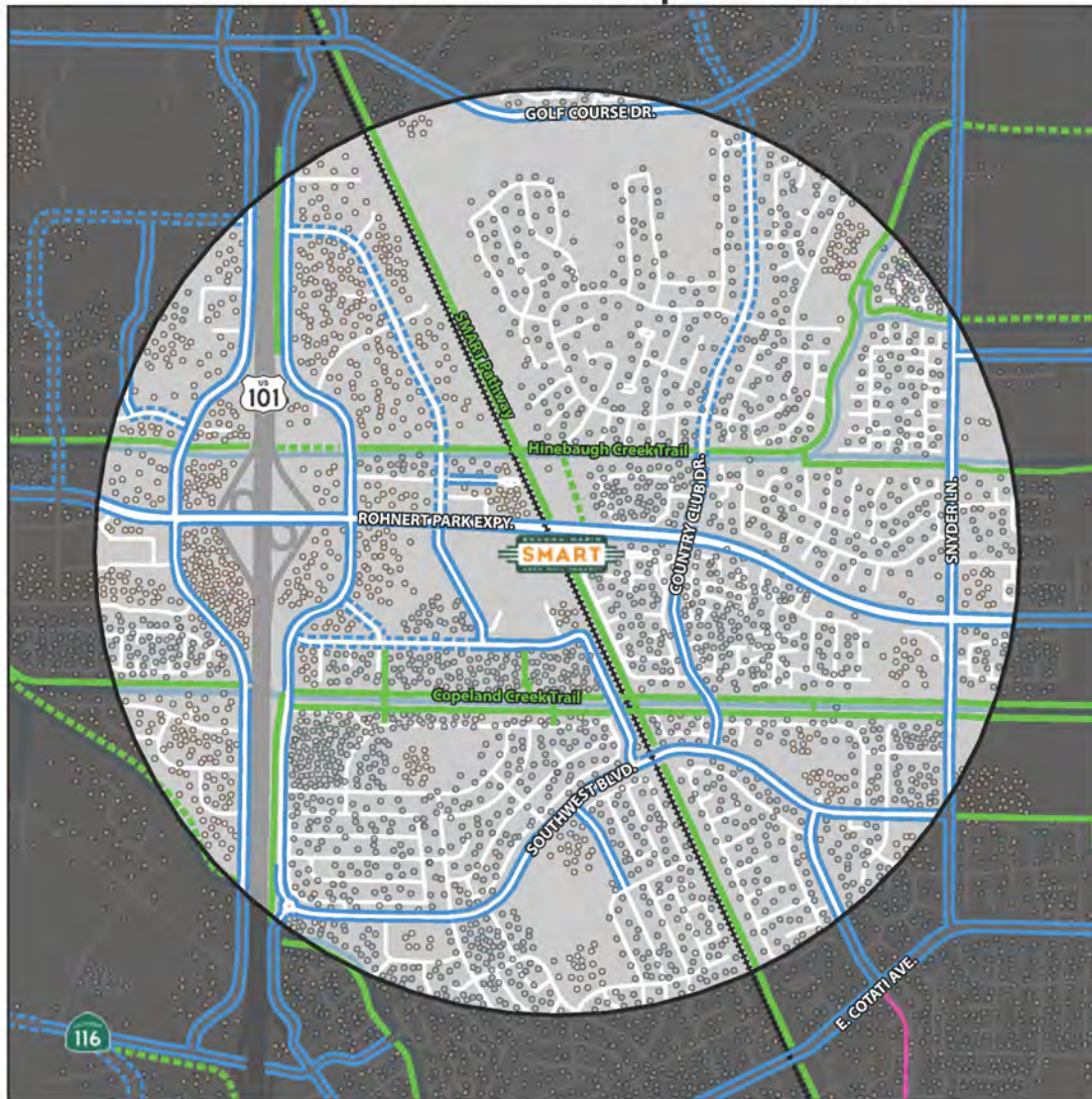
- ① Richard Crane Elementary School
- ② Rancho Cotati High School
- ③ Sonoma State University
- ④ Technology Middle School
- ⑤ Technology High School
- ⑥ Rancho Cotati
- ⑦ Monte Vista Elementary School
- ⑧ Cotati City Hall
- ⑨ University Elementary School
- ⑩ SOMO Village

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Cotati Ave. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Camino Coleto to Class IV protected bike lanes



Rohnert Park Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

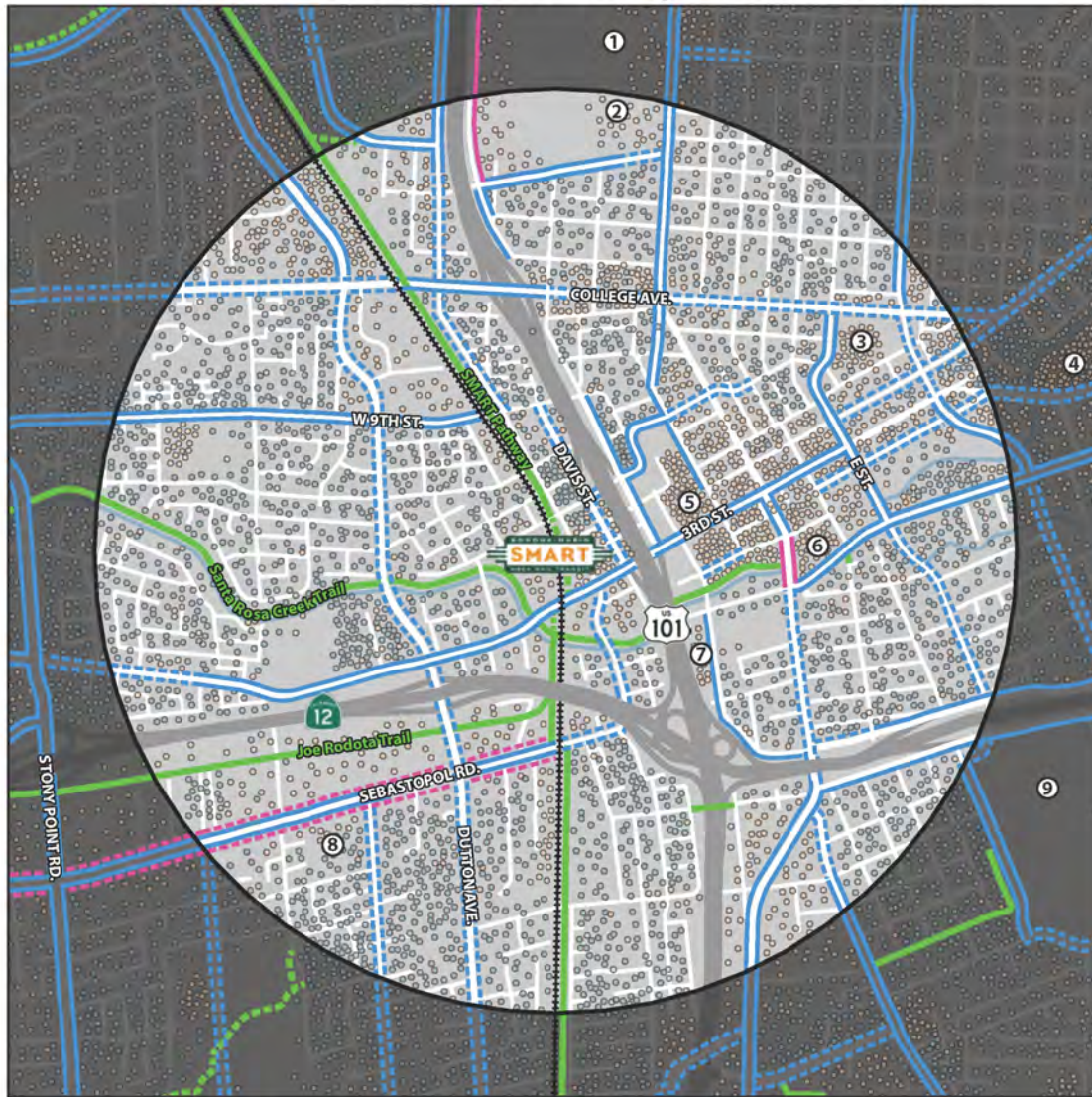
Major Facilities

- ① Graton Resort and Casino
- ② Kaiser Permanente
- ③ Rohnert Park City Hall
- ④ Park Plaza Shopping Center
- ⑤ John Reed Elementary School
- ⑥ Richard Crane Elementary School
- ⑦ Rancho Cotate High School
- ⑧ Technology Middle School
- ⑨ Technology High School

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Rohnert Park Expy. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Southwest Blvd. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on Country Club Dr. to Class IV protected bike lanes

Santa Rosa Downtown Station First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network



Active Transportation Network

Multi-Use Paths (Class I)

Bike Lanes (Class II)

Separated Bikeways (Class IV)

Existing	Planned

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)

Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

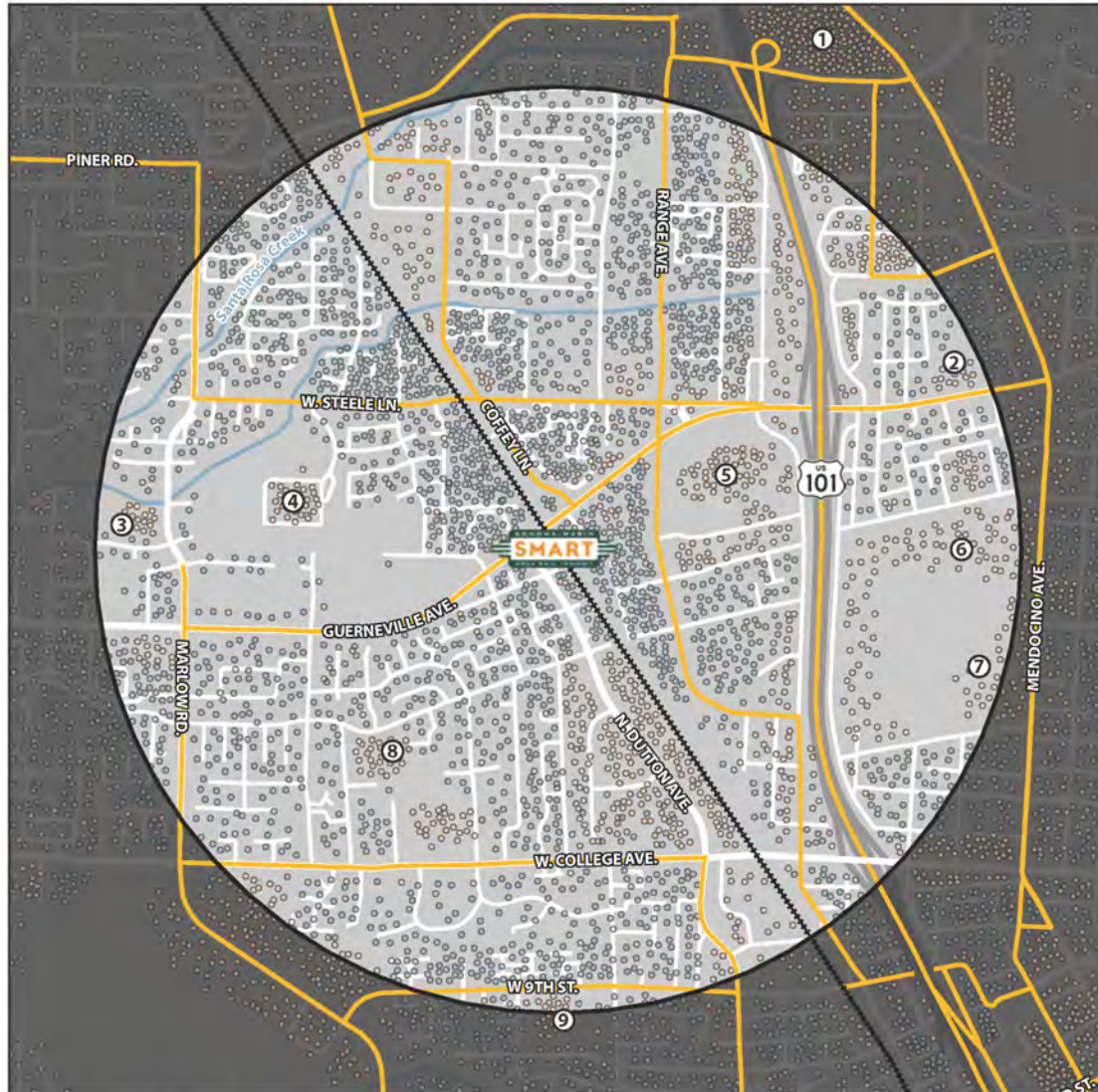
- ① Santa Rosa Junior College
- ② Santa Rosa High School
- ③ Santa Rosa Middle School
- ④ Providence Santa Rosa Hospital
- ⑤ Santa Rosa Plaza
- ⑥ Santa Rosa City Hall
- ⑦ Luther Burbank Elementary School
- ⑧ Roseland Elementary School
- ⑨ Sonoma County Fairgrounds

First-and-Last-Mile Active Transportation Network Recommendations

- Complete all unbuilt segments of planned active transportation network
 - Upgrade the Class II bike lanes on 3rd St. to Class IV protected bike lanes
 - Upgrade the planned Class II bike lanes on Davis St. to Class IV protected bike lanes
- SMART Station



Santa Rosa North Station First-and-Last-Mile Transit Network



Transit Network

SMART Railway
Bus Routes
Ferry Routes

Transit Network consists of:

- Golden Gate Transit
- Sonoma County Transit
- Santa Rosa CityBus

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)
Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

- Kaiser Permanente Hospital
- Steele Lane Elementary School
- James Monroe Elementary School
- Hilliard Comstock Middle School
- Coddington Center
- Santa Rosa Junior College
- Santa Rosa High School
- Helen Lehman Elementary School
- Abraham Lincoln Elementary School

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Sonoma County Airport Station First-and-Last-Mile Transit Network



Transit Network

SMART Railway +-----+
 Bus Routes —————
 Ferry Routes - - - - -

Transit Network consists of:
 • Sonoma County Transit
 • SMART Connect

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people) ●
 Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs) ○

Major Facilities

SRJC Public Safety Campus ①
 Sonoma Country Day School ②
 Sonoma County Airport ③
 Kendall Jackson Winery ④



Windsor Station First-and-Last-Mile Transit Network



Transit Network

SMART Railway
Bus Routes
Ferry Routes

Transit Network consists of:
• Sonoma County Transit

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)
Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

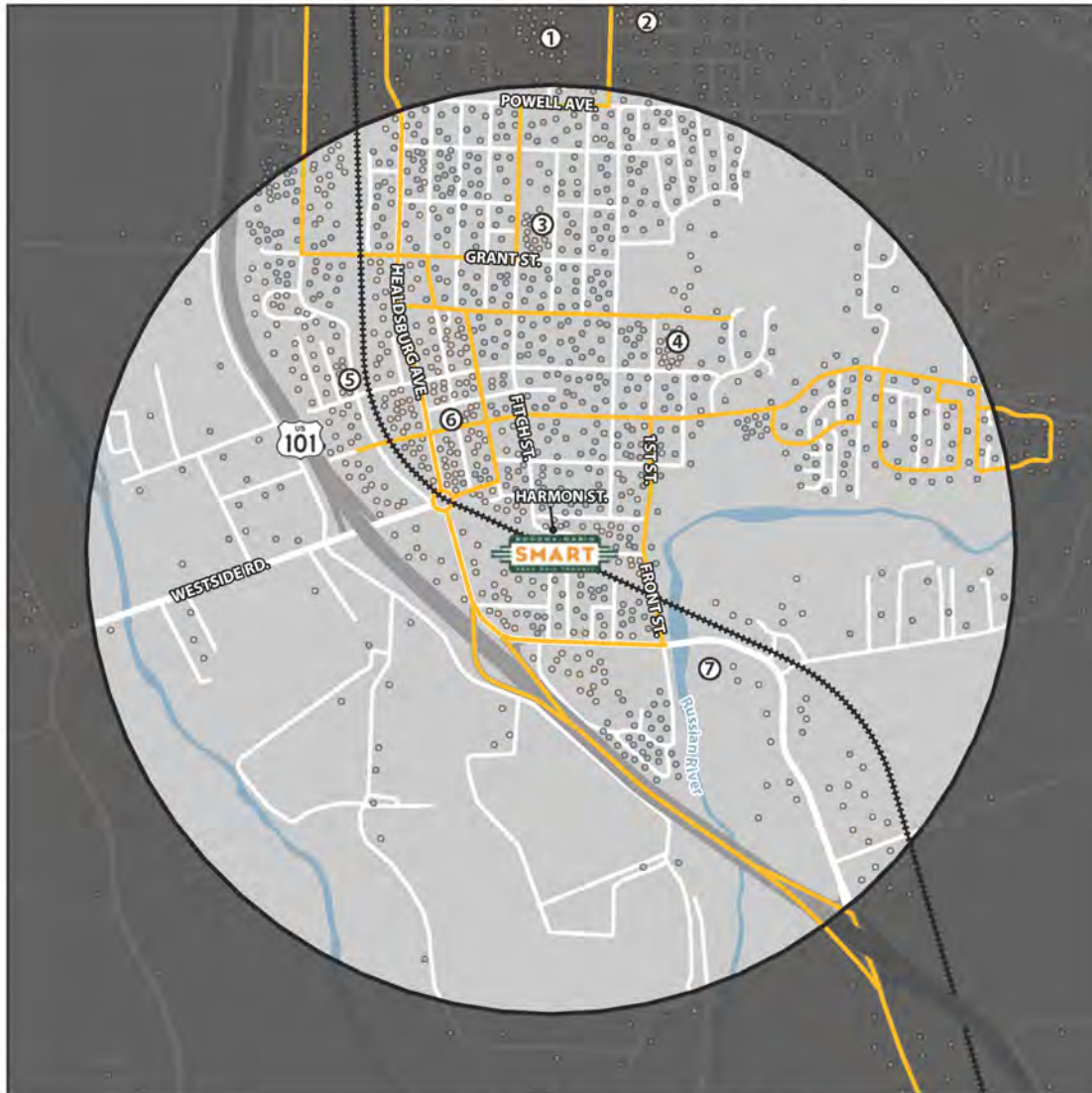
Major Facilities

Brooks Elementary School
Windsor Middle School
Windsor Town Hall
Bell Village
Windsor Town Green
Lakewood Village
Windsor High School

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Healdsburg Station First-and-Last-Mile Transit Network



Transit Network

SMART Railway
Bus Routes
Ferry Routes

Transit Network consists of:
• Sonoma County Transit

Population and Job Density

Population (1 dot = 10 people)
Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs)

Major Facilities

Healdsburg High School
Fitch Mountain Elementary School
Healdsburg Junior High School
Healdsburg Elementary School
Healdsburg City Hall
Healdsburg Plaza
Veterans Memorial Beach

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⑦



SMART Railway
Bus Routes
Ferry Routes

Population (1 dot = 10 people) ●
Jobs (1 dot = 10 jobs) ○

Jefferson Elementary School
Cloverdale High School
Cloverdale City Hall
Washington Middle School
Cloverdale Health Care Center



Comment Letters on Draft Strategic Plan

The following letters were received from the below recipients as comments on the SMART Draft Strategic Plan. Responses to these letters are listed in the next section.

- Marin Transit
- Mike Arnold
- Adam Garcia
- Sonoma Land Trust
- Disability Services & Legal Center
- Train Riders Association of California
- WTB-TAM



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Town of Corte Madera

November 26, 2024

Eddy Cumins, General Manager
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District
5401 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954

Re: **SMART Strategic Plan 2025-2030**

Dear Mr. Cumins,

SMART's Draft Strategic Plan 2025-2030 is excellent. Marin Transit applauds your effort to create a useful, effective and concise document that creates a framework for annual workplans, annual budgets, and ongoing prioritization and decision-making over the term of the plan. We appreciate the clear articulation of goals, strategies and actions that are all in support of the agency's Vision and Mission and in alignment with the agency's core Values. The Plan also clearly lays out your financial outlook and commitments and allows riders, the public and partner agencies to understand the opportunities, challenges and trade-offs SMART faces.

We appreciate seeing our Marin-Sonoma coordination efforts mentioned in several places and are pleased to see the importance of cross-agency connectivity to riders (p. 21) and the emphasis on continuing to make improvements to connections between SMART and local and regional operators (p. 24).

We understand that SMART faces trade-offs in terms of how you allocate financial resources. We recognize the importance of building out the SMART system – both rail and pathway – to fulfil your promise to voters, especially in advance of renewal of your sales and use tax. That said, we want to emphasize the value of frequency to improving transfers with Marin Transit, Golden Gate Transit and Golden Gate Ferry in Marin County, as well as local operators in Sonoma County. Greater investment in frequency improvements will yield ridership increases across the network. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to explore the possibility of expanding SMART frequency to close midday gaps and expand span of service as demand justifies to improve connectivity for riders.

We respectfully submit a few suggestions for further emphasizing the role of coordination, service frequency, and reflecting our joint efforts in the Plan. Under Ridership Strategies and Actions (p. 24-27), we would like to see the following:



1. An emphasis on the linkage between #4 and #6: the higher the frequency of SMART service (#6), the easier it is to create strong transfers for riders between our services (#4). Perhaps this linkage can be made under the Insights sidebar.
2. An emphasis on the importance of ongoing service change coordination articulated under #4.
3. Mention of our joint Marin-Sonoma marketing/outreach efforts articulated under #8.
4. Mention of our future efforts to improve Marin-Sonoma fare coordination listed under #2.
5. Mention of funding for frequency improvements listed under #13.

We want to express the utmost support for this plan and appreciate your commitment to ongoing coordination and communication with Marin Transit and other partner agencies. We congratulate you on your ridership growth and look forward to continuing to work collaboratively to continue this trend and improve public transit services for the communities we jointly serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy E. Whelan".

Nancy Whelan
General Manager
Marin Transit

Comments on Draft Strategic Plan
By Mike Arnold, Ph.D. Novato

1. The Elephant in the Room: Obtaining Voter Approval to Continue Funding of the Agency

- The draft acknowledges SMART's trouncing in March 2020, but it doesn't address the obvious questions: how will it win back those voters that turned against SMART? In November 2008, it received almost a 70 percent vote for Measure Q. Yet, by March 2020 the vote for Measure I was under 55 percent. Why?
- Instead of analyzing why SMART lost Measure I as badly as it did, the draft states on page 34 the following:

“For purposes of this financial plan, SMART has assumed that the sales and use tax will be reauthorized by the voters.”
- Is this a reasonable assumption? SMART has lost 2 out of 3 tax measures at the polls. The table below compares the votes by county for Measure Q and Measure I. The vote counts indicate just how badly the agency fared in March 2020 and what a gigantic assumption the draft is making that it will pass the next measure.

Table 1

Vote Comparison between Measure Q and Measure I

Geography	Item	Measure Q	Measure I	Δ
Marin	Yes Votes	83,805	61,906	-21,899
	No Votes	49,665	49,316	-349
	% Yes	62.8	55.7	-7.1
Sonoma	Yes Votes	162,242	95,684	-66,558
	No Votes	58,016	87,122	29,106
	% Yes	73.7	52.3	-21.3
District	Yes Votes	246,047	157,590	-88,457
	No Votes	107,681	136,438	28,757
	% Yes	69.6	53.6	-16.0

- As indicated, there were 88,000 fewer yes votes, some of whom may not have voted or switched their votes to “no.” The majority of these occurred in Sonoma Co., where support for the tax dropped from 74% of the vote to 52%, or 22 percentage points.
- In addition, there is evidence from its actions that the Board and staff believe that passing a tax extension measure by two-thirds vote is not going to be easy. What is that evidence? If the Board thought it would be easy, they would have placed the ballot measure on a general presidential election ballot in November, when turn-out is higher and favors passage. They didn't.
- Has SMART conducted a recent poll to find out how it currently is doing with regards to a tax extension measure? Why not? It clearly has the funds to do so. What doesn't the agency want to know and incorporate those findings in its Strategic Plan?

- Conclusion: the agency needs to incorporate in the Plan why voters turned against the agency. The Strategic Plan ought to be transparent and direct with what the agency's plan is to win back the 88,000 votes it lost. And it needs to incorporate into a Strategic Plan what it intends to do should it lose at the polls a third time.

2. Performance Metrics Reported and Ignored in the Draft

- Based on the campaign material that was utilized in 2020, voters indicated they care about how much they are paying as taxpayers to subsidize SMART passengers. Information for past fiscal years is published by the Department of Transportation in that National Transit Database (NTD) through FY 2023. FY 2024 is expected to be reported soon.
- Table 2 reports this information for the data available. FY 2024 is estimated by me from SMART's reports.

Table 2
SMART's Performance Metrics Published in the NTD

Fiscal Year	Ridership (Th)	Operating Expenses (\$M)	Fare Revenues (\$M)	Farebox Recovery Ratio (%)	Taxpayer Subsidy per Boarding (\$)
2018	636	24	3.3	13.9	32.4
2019	717	27	4.1	14.9	32.6
2020	567	29	3.1	10.8	45.0
2021	123	25	0.7	2.8	196.4
2022	354	28	1.3	4.6	74.9
2023	640	31	1.8	5.9	45.0
2024(est)	850	36	2.2	6.1	39.9

- The Draft (Appendix B) does not report any of the above assumptions and calculations necessary for the voters to understand what assumptions are being made about the growth in ridership and operating expenses by fiscal year between 2023 and 2030.¹ However, by request, I obtained the projected ridership in an email sent by staff. From that information, one can compare actual and forecast ridership. This comparison is shown in Table 3.

¹ The key assumptions necessary to complete the table for the draft are ridership by fiscal year and operating expenses consistent with the NTD definitions. Given that its forecast contains fare revenues, staff undoubtedly has the ridership assumptions used in preparing the table.

Table 3
Ridership Trends and Forecast

FY	Riders (th)	Basis	Δ (th)	% Δ
2018	636	Actual	NA	NA
2019	717		81	13
2020	567		-150	-21
2021	123		-444	-78
2022	354		231	188
2023	640		286	81
2024	850		210	33
2025	950	Est	100	12
2026	1,215	Strategic Plan Forecast	265	28
2027	1,276		61	5
2028	1,340		64	5
2029	1,474		134	10
2030	1,547		74	5

- With the exception of FY 2026 and FY 2029, the ridership forecast is not particularly aggressive. Those of two years, however, are very aggressive and their timing, which is not explained anywhere, is supposedly associated with the opening of service to Windsor and later the opening of service to Healdsburg.
- As a skeptic of such ridership forecasts, I can provide many reasons why they are unlikely to occur. But the critical factors are the small populations in both Windsor and Healdsburg and, in the case of Windsor, the closeness currently to the northern terminus at Airport Blvd.
 - Just consider the “mode” decisions of current residents of Windsor and the travel choices they currently make. Would a 3-mile drive to the Airport Blvd. SMART station be a significant impediment on their choice whether to ride the train currently? The point: surely opening service to Windsor will generate some additional ridership, but many will already be SMART riders. So, projecting an increase of 28% to be a “hope.” It is not based on any detailed ridership analysis, because the agency has not conducted a detailed ridership study for years.
 - What about Healdsburg? First, Healdsburg’s population is less than half of Windsor’s. Commuter demand would be limited, because according to the American Community Survey there are relatively few residents working in Santa Rosa or south of Santa Rosa. Again, if the agency conducted a detailed ridership study, the projected ridership from the extensions would be far less.²

² As a reminder, SMART proponents of the Larkspur extension made similar claims. However, the NEPA study that included a ridership forecast calculated the extension would generate only 231 additional weekday boardings.

- The Board ought to consider its past history when reviewing the Strategic Plan. Its credibility is limited because actual performance and experience has been far different than anything ever claimed and promoted by the agency, in prior ballot arguments and op-eds by SMART supporters, brochures distributed by the agency at taxpayer expense, or prior plans.
- The Board ought to consider that whenever the next tax extension measure is placed on the ballot, the actual ridership data for prior years and months will be available for voters to see. The Board might want to consider a more conservative ridership forecast, less tax measure opponents exploit the agency's ridership "hopes" to another example of merely trying to mislead the voters regarding the ridership potential of a within suburban passenger rail system.
- Ridership forecasts that exceed reality also come with consequences to other variables contained in the forecast. For instance, what does the above forecast imply for the farebox recovery ratio. While this metric is not stated in the Draft it is trivial to calculate. Table 4 below reports this calculation. Prior years are reported above in Table 2 along from the National Transit Database.

Table 4

Incorporated Assumptions in Strategic Plan Forecast

FY	Operations & Maintenance Exp (\$M)	Fare Revenues (\$M)	Ridership (Th)	Avg. Fare (\$)	Farebox Recovery (%)
2024	Not Provided*	2.2	850	2.58	6.1 est
2025	48	2.2	950	2.33	4.6
2026	50	2.3	1,215	1.91	4.6
2027	53	2.4	1,276	1.88	4.6
2028	57	2.5	1,340	1.88	4.4
2029	59	2.6	1,474	1.76	4.4
2030	62	2.7	1,547	1.72	4.3

* Note: At the time these comments were drafted, staff was unable to clearly state how closely the definition of "Operations and Maintenance" costs in the Strategic Plan aligned with "Operating Expenses" reported to the NTD.

- The simple calculations reported in Table 4 provide further evidence that the calculations in the Strategic Plan are either not likely or not likely to win back voters that turned against the agency in 2020. The reason is simple: the Strategic Plan incorporates the forecast of declining average fares in nominal and inflation adjusted terms and a declining farebox recovery ratio. The current (FY 2024) recovery ratio already lower than it was when Measure I was defeated. And it could be argued that planning on reducing it further comes at a political cost. The Plan is incorporating a forecast where taxpayers are forecast to pay even a larger proportion of the cost of providing rail service than when the agency lost Measure I.

Is this a reasonable assumption? Cost to the taxpayers of subsidizing SMART riders was one of the main arguments used by the NotSoSMART campaign to defeat Measure I. The Board ought to consider whether adoption of such a financial forecast increases the risk that SMART's next tax extension measure will be rejected a third time by Marin and Sonoma voters.

3. The Other Elephant in the Room: Equity of Increasing the Subsidy of More Affluent Passengers with Sales Taxes Paid by the Less Affluent.

- P.9 of the Draft states:

MTC conducted an onboard survey on SMART between September 2023 and February 2024; the last onboard survey had been done in 2018. Overall, the survey found that SMART Riders represent a range of ages, income levels, employment status, genders, trip purposes, and race/ethnicities. Less than half of the riders identified as white-only, with 21% of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Riders were split nearly evenly by gender and distributed broadly across the age ranges. Just over half of the riders were employed full time, and 50% of trips were for the work commute. A third of riders indicate that they were transit-dependent, or did not have access to a vehicle for their trip. The median household income for riders was \$110,000, with a third of respondents indicating a household income of less than \$60,000.

- Meanwhile:

- The word “equity” or “equitable” appears in the draft only three times. And the use of these words is only in reference to state and federal funds seeking “equitable goals.”
- The Draft fails to address the underlying inequitable financial structure of its key funding source: the sales tax.
- Since the agency touts its “transparency” why doesn’t it address this issue? Here’s a quote from a website <https://www accuratetax.com/blog/regressive-sales-tax-infographic/>

Sales tax is regressive, in fact. Why? Because people who earn less pay a larger percentage of their salary in the form of sales tax, as compared to those who earn more. In fact, based on percentage of salary, people in the lowest bracket pay more than DOUBLE what the top 1% pay. Because everyone in a given area pays the same percentage of tax, it works out to be a larger portion of the overall income for people who earn less.

- As this will be an issue when the next tax extension measure will be voted on and the agency wants to promote its “transparency.” If it doesn’t address this issue, opponents to the tax extension measure will address it. And they are likely to point out to voters the lack of the agency’s willingness to be transparent about what is known.

4. On Ridership and Free Fares.

- Yes, free fares are generating additional ridership. But at what cost? And at what cost to claims by the agency that free fares are providing an equitable transit service?
- For instance,
 - how many wealthy elderly residents are now riding SMART for free?
 - How many affluent Marin students attending private schools in Sonoma Co. are taking the train for free?
- When I've asked staff how many riders are riding for free, I've been told the agency is "unable" to count those riding for free using the APC system.³
- In light of what voters care about, I believe voters have the right to know how many are traveling for free. What is their income level of those riding for free? How many would have taking the train if they had to pay for the trip?
- Since the agency has plenty of funds to conduct a survey of those riding for free, it is apparent that if it wanted answers to these questions, it could conduct a survey of those riding for free. In addition, it could assess:
 - Would those qualifying for free fares have taken the train in any case, which means for these boarders, the train has not increased ridership, but it has increased the subsidy for those who would have taken the train in any case?
 - Are those obtaining free fares taking the train in off-peak hours or off-peak directions? If so, the subsidies are having no impact on reducing traffic congestion on Hwy 101 during the peak hours.

5. Cherry Picking the Promises Made to Voters in Order to Pass Measure Q (2008)

- The ballot measure stated the following:

MEASURE Q:

To relieve traffic, fight global warming and increase transportation options, shall Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District be authorized to provide two-way passenger train service **every 30 minutes** during weekday rush hours, weekend service, a bicycle/pedestrian pathway linking the stations, and connections to ferry/bus service, by levying a 1/4-cent sales tax for 20 years, with an annual spending cap, independent audits/oversight, and all funds supporting these environmentally responsible transportation alternatives in Marin and Sonoma Counties?

Measure I

To continue relieving traffic congestion, reducing greenhouse gas emissions (having carried 1.5-million passengers by providing quality transportation alternatives to

³ I believe them because there is no digital link between the APC rider-counting system and the payment system. Also, there is no specific count of how frequently those paying monthly are taking the train and, as a result, the count of "Fare payments" reported monthly to the Board do not include the ridership associated with those paying monthly.

Highway 101), connecting stations with pathways, expanding rail service to Healdsburg/Cloverdale as grants become available, shall an extension of the existing Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District 1/4-cent voter approved sales tax, at the same rate, generating approximately \$40,000,000 annually for an additional 30 years, subject to audits and citizens' oversight, that the State cannot take away, be adopted?

- While the draft discusses progress on extensions north to northern Sonoma Co. towns and its current work on the pathway, it is odd that the word “congestion” appears only twice in the draft and these references are only related to goals of federal funding programs.
- Has the agency forgotten its promise to the voters, repeated in ballot language in March 2020? Why doesn't the draft say anything about this benefit promoted to voters and desired by voters?
- Nor does the draft note its promise to provide 30-minute headways and whether it intends to address this challenge.

6. On Freight

- For anyone interested in what is discussed on-line regarding shipping by truck or rail, here are two websites for reference.
 - <https://www.freightera.com/blog/train-vs-truck-transportation-efficiency-cost-advantages-disadvantages-infographic/>
 - <https://www.floridarail.com/news/train-vs-truck-which-is-better-for-freight-shipping-infographic/>
- One relevant conclusion: “Trucking is the more cost-effective action for smaller loads and shorter distances.”
- One anecdote provided to me by a “freight economist.” The containers arriving at the Port of Oakland, destined for Los Angeles are put on trucks. The distance is too short. And besides, if the container is delivered to a rail depot, a truck has to pick it up for its final destination.
- Descriptions of freight service fail to note that there exist many websites advising businesses regarding the choice between shipping by train vs. shipping by truck. One of the factors favoring shipping by trucks is cost. Another is convenience.
- It is time for the Board and public to realize that there are economic reasons that SMART currently has only 3 customers shipping items using SMART freight trains. NWP Co. (I think) had four after being in service for many years.

7. Community Outreach: Reaching Out to the Converted

- The Draft describes its efforts at “community outreach.” It has been stated at Board meetings that this has been highly successful.
- The entire process is challenged by those residents who choose to attend such sessions. Are the participants largely supporters of SMART? Did they vote for Measure I?

- To the extent that those who voted against Measure I are not participating in these sessions, one could argue that SMART is preaching to the converted. It is not hearing from those who voted against Measure I, why they voted against Measure I, and what would make them change their votes.

8. One technical note:

The table in Appendix B provides details on revenues and expenditures. It reports additional operating costs associated with providing service to Healdsburg. It provides no similar line item for providing service to Windsor. Given how late in FY 2025, the service to Windsor is forecast to begin, one would think there would be a comparable bump in the Operations and Maintenance Expenditures. Table 5 compares these forecasts. The large increase in operating costs in FY 2028 is associated with the forecast start-up of Healdsburg extension. No such increase arises in FY 2026 following the start-up of Windsor.

Table 5

Rate of Increase in Operations and Maintenance Expenses

FY	Operations & Maintenance Exp (\$M)	%Δ
2024	NA	NA
2025	48	NA
2026	50	5.0
2027	53	4.6
2028	57	9.2
2029	59	3.2
2030	62	4.2

September 25, 2024

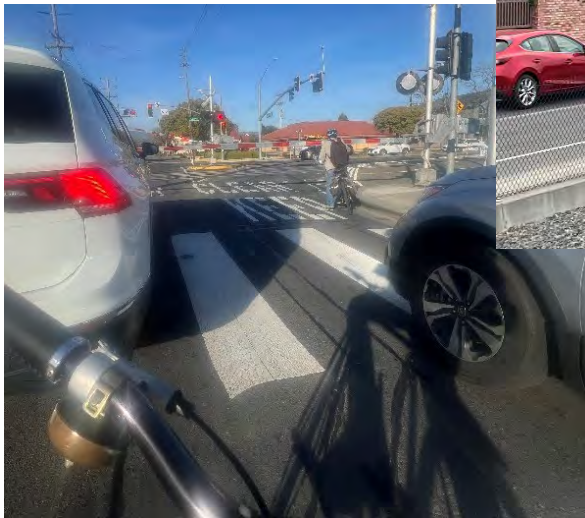
Sonoma – Marin Area Rail Transit
5401 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 200
Petaluma, CA, 94954

RE: SMART Strategic Planning for Downtown Petaluma SMART Station Circulation

As a transit rider, I take the train three times a week from Petaluma and witness the struggles at the intersection of Lakeville St and East D St. The following is an account of the challenges and potential solutions to helping accommodate existing and future roadway users in a safe, reliable fashion for all modes, ages, and abilities.

Problems:

- Large turning vehicles turning right southbound from Lakeville St to East D St westbound frequently block through traffic on Lakeville St southbound by taking both lanes to prepare for their turn while stopped.



- There is no space for bicycle to queue safely away from vehicular traffic, the crosswalk, and 'Keep Clear' areas going eastbound on East D St. at the Lakeville St intersection. A painted bike box would be an easy fix in front of eastbound queued vehicular traffic on eastbound East D St waiting at the light in front of the train tracks.

- Transit riders connecting between SMART and local bus service often sprint from the train station to the bus stops. Anyone who thinks the current configuration of the bus and train stops is close enough should make that run while holding groceries and bags and ask themselves if this is what a world-class transit stop should look like.



- Long lines of traffic turning west towards downtown Petaluma.

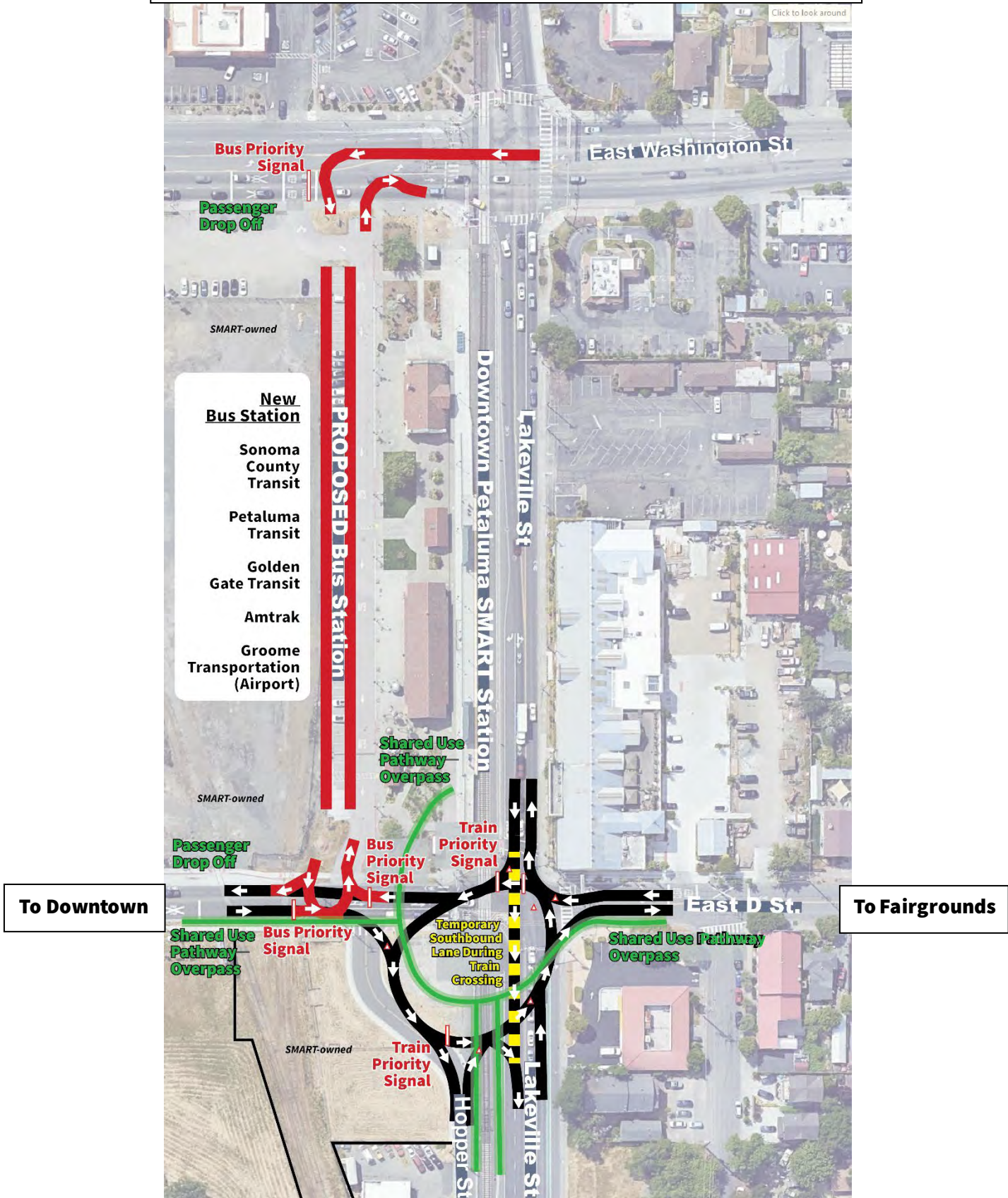


Solutions:

Work with the City of Petaluma to perform a circulation study for the Downtown Petaluma SMART Station, including a complete intersection analysis for East Washington St, Lakeville St, and East D St. Improving the efficient movement of vehicles, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists through this gap to the SMART station, downtown, the Fairgrounds, and more, will be fundamental to accommodating new adjacent development.

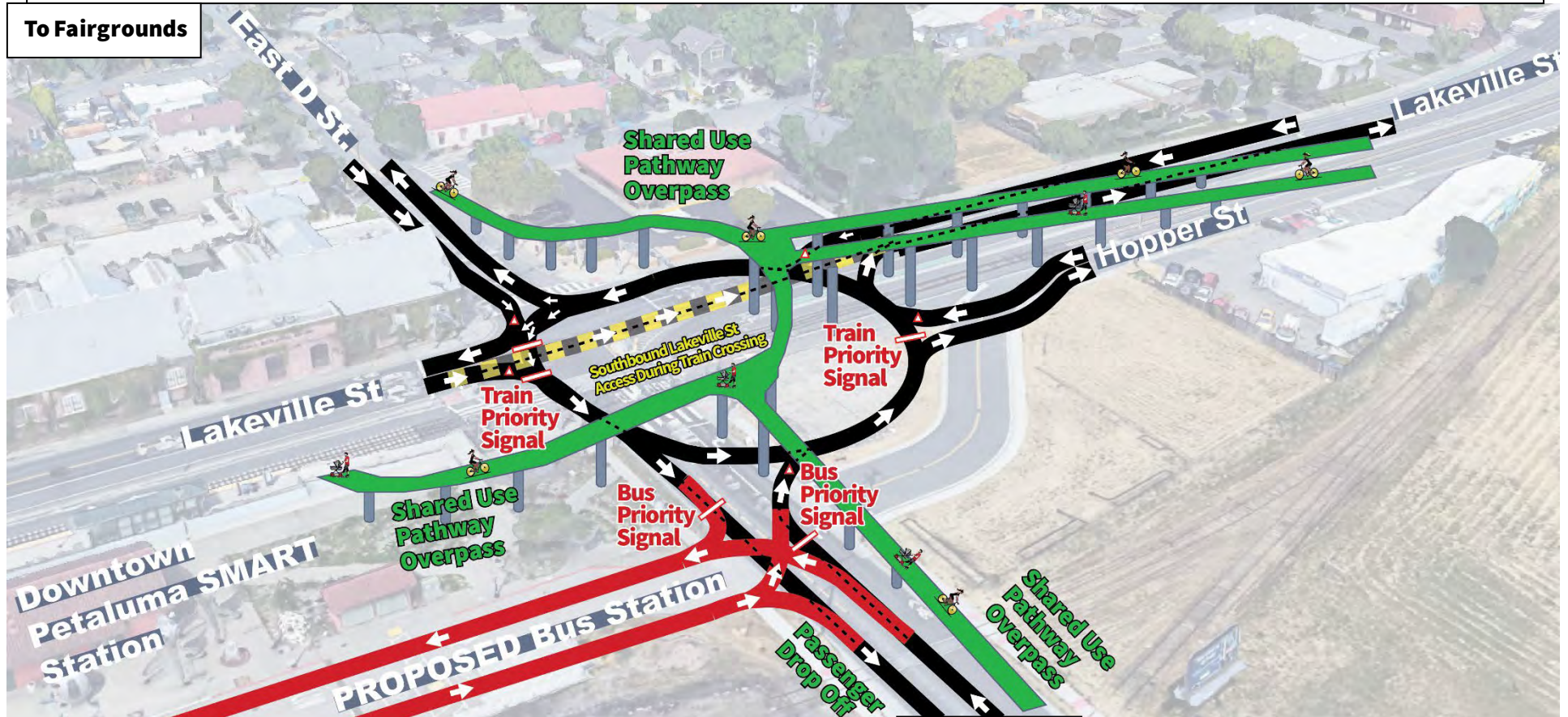
- Move the bus station to where the current SMART parking lot is located along the station length and provide passenger drop-off areas along East Washington St and East D St.
- Consider bus-only turn lanes, priority signaling for buses, and a shared use pathway overpass at the East D St and Lakeville St intersection that allows bicyclists and pedestrians to bypass the slowdowns on future active transportation corridors along East D St and Lakeville St connecting to the Fairgrounds, downtown, the Shollenberger wetlands, and other destinations.

Aerial map of proposed circulation improvements to Downtown Petaluma SMART Station



Perspective view of proposed circulation improvements to Downtown Petaluma SMART Station

To Fairgrounds



To Downtown



November 29, 2024

Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District
5401 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954

Dear SMART Strategic Plan Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for SMART. We appreciate partnering with SMART to align our restoration projects with your priorities.

We look forward to supporting action 12 on page 27 of the Strategic Plan: “Ensure resilience of system by planning for sea level rise and weather events.” The SMART rail line runs through many diked properties in the Baylands. Some sections of the SMART tracks, projected to be inundated by rising seas, are vulnerable to flooding and dependent on the aging system of berms and pumps that will be under increasing pressure as sea level rises.

We support SMART continuing to engage with the other Resilient State Route 37 agencies in coordination of the SR 37 improvements. We hope that the SMART Strategic Plan will advance one of the recommendations from SMART’s SR 37 Corridor – Freight and Passenger Rail Opportunities White Paper from April 2022: “Passenger integration could be achieved through a combined highway and rail solution that would allow a connection between SMART and the Vallejo Ferry Terminal.”

If the adjacent rail line is co-located with the road on an elevated causeway, the range of restoration alternatives that are possible is greatly expanded. Water could flow freely between the Bay and the Baylands, allowing more acres to be restored to tidal wetlands. Though expensive, raising the rail line would decrease the vulnerability of the rail to flooding and erosion from increasing sea levels. Where infrastructure is not raised on causeways, bridge crossings and culverts should be raised and expanded to reduce constraint of tidal flows.

We look forward to continuing to work with SMART to increase the resilience of rail infrastructure and advance our restoration projects in the Petaluma and Sonoma Creek Baylands.

Sincerely,

Ariana Rickard

Public Policy and Funding Program Manager



SMART Train Strategic Plan

I am Collin Thoma the Systems Change Advocate with Disability Services and Legal Center (DSLCL). My following comments are in regards on how to increase accessibility and ridership for people with disabilities and seniors on SMART trains and the pathways.

Since SMART Train started service in 2017 it has been a great benefit to help alleviate the public transportation challenges in Sonoma and Marin Counties. In particular it has helped increase connectivity to the rest of the San Francisco Bay Area. For people with disabilities and seniors who are unable to drive it is extremely challenging to get to other parts of the Bay Area. However, there are improvements that are still needed for SMART to help reduce these challenge, mainly improving public transportation connections to and from train stations. SMART should consider adding SMART Connect Shuttles service to the downtown Santa Rosa station and other stations that are in high volume areas. This is needed to help provide connections to other public transportation providers since it's likely people with disabilities and seniors live at least a few miles from the closest station. SMART should also make it a top priority to work with other public transportation providers to improve connections and reduce transfer times. This will be particularly needed in Windsor, Healdsburg and Cloverdale since public transport in these cities are limited. Aligning the arrival times of the train and bus or buses that serve the station should be implemented. Improving public transportation connections is needed to help create a seamless trip. If people with disabilities need to take multiple buses to get to and from the train it can be challenging for them to make a plan to make those connections. Furthermore, some may become easily fatigued by having to navigate and using multiple public transportation providers.

SMART should also make it a top priority to increase the frequency of service, in particular on weekends since services is too infrequent under the current schedule. Increasing weekday service is also needed to make it easier for those who use it to commute to work or

school. Furthermore, SMART should also bring back the late-night train to help provide transportation options for nightlife and for those who work late into the night. SMART should also make a committed effort to acquiring new train cars to increase the number of cars per train. This is needed since when there is big event in San Francisco or other parts of the Bay Area the train cars tend to fill up quickly. This greatly reduces the availability of accessible seating for those who need it. Furthermore, a person with disability or senior who may have planned on riding the train may change their mind if they see the train is full. If SMART will not bring back the snack bar it should be removed to increase seating, in particular ADA accessible seating. Some of the slip seats that were removed should be re-added to create a more even balance between accessible seating and bike storage.

From my time riding SMART, I have seen very little ridership from people with disabilities and seniors. To help increase ridership on the trains and usage of the pathways SMART should do outreach to these groups and to organizations that provide services to these groups. This will need to entail increasing awareness that the train and pathways exists. SMART should also provide training on how to use the train and how to get to the nearest station from where they live or frequently visit. SMART will need to help passengers who have disabilities or seniors access their discounted Clipper cards once Clipper 2.0 is rolled out. This is because the Metropolitan Transportation Commission does not currently have a plan for them to access their discounts. SMART should work with The California Integrated Transit Project, which has developed tools to help people with disabilities and seniors access their discounts. SMART should also consider expanding fare free programs to those with disabilities. In order to verify if they have a disability, they can show their discounted Clipper card, paratransit card or a note from their doctor that verifies their disability.

Wayfinding at both stations and on pathways is needed and will need to be accessible, by providing bold, large text that provides easy to understand directions. For wayfinding that is electronic, they will need to have an easy-to-use interface, have a screen reader and the ability for users to change the text contrast. Completing the pathway network is also very important since it can provide a safe walking path that is free of cars. This will greatly benefit people with disabilities and seniors by providing them with a safe place to walk or roll. This is needed as sidewalks are not always accessible or safe, furthermore, there are limited car free walking paths in the county. SMART will need to study lighting options to provide lighting on the trails at night while reducing light pollution for near by homes. This is greatly needed since the trails are

so dark it poses a significant safety issue for those walking on the trails. In addition, SMART also needs to consider increasing entrances/exits to the pathways to ensure there is adequate access on both sides of the track. For example, there should be another entrance on the other side of Jennings Avenue near the Santa Rosa North station. While there is an intersection by this may be too far for those with physical disabilities. For other parts of the trail that lack access to the pathway they should be added even if an intersection is nearby. Adding benches and other amenities such as water stations will also be great to see to provide areas for those using the trail to rest. This will be very benefitable to some people with disabilities and seniors who will need to take frequent breaks.

Thank you for taking time to review my comments on the SMART Train Strategic Plan. Overall, I was satisfied with the plan as it did a good job of identifying current issues and areas in need for improvement. Incorporating my comments into the plan will help strengthen the plan, especially for people with disabilities and seniors. This will help improve SMART train which is a critical transportation service for Marin and Sonoma Counties.

Respectfully,

Collin Thoma

Systems Change Advocate

Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLC)

521 Mendocino Avenue

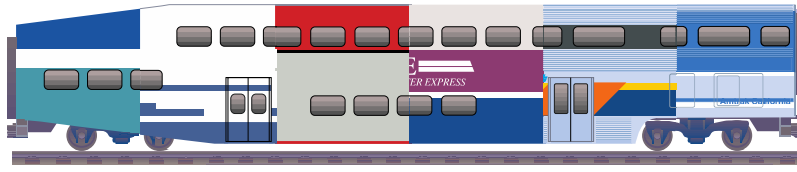
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(707)636-3076



TRAC

Train Riders Association of California



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Fresno County

William F. McGeehan III
Contra Contra County

Eric Lucan, Chair
SMART Board of Directors
5401 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 95954 (via Info@SonomaMarinTrain.org)

Re: SMART Draft Strategic Plan

Dear Chair Lucan and Board Members:

TRAC, the Train Riders Association of California, has spoken up for four decades on behalf of rail passengers and advocated for the intelligent investment of public resources. We offer the following comments on the SMART Draft Strategic Plan (Plan):

We see little in the way of critical thinking or priority-setting in this Plan. It merely documents how staff intends to proceed with implementing SMART's ongoing programs. There is no discussion of the tradeoffs that every agency must make in allocating its scarce resources to enhanced services and programs.

Worse yet, the Plan doesn't provide a Plan B, in case a replacement sales tax does not pass. Plan B would identify the level of services that could be offered without a sales tax. This Plan needs to provide a compelling justification for why SMART needs a sales tax after its bonds are repaid. Since no other operator in the Bay Area has one, why should SMART continue to be different?

Because the Marin Sonoma Coordinated Service Plan (MASCOTS) is still underway, SMART's Strategic Plan should be considered Interim until final recommendations from MASCOTS have been adopted by each partner agency. SMART will become the main linehaul transit operator in the Highway 101 Corridor north of San Rafael. MASCOTS' recommendations are highly likely to significantly impact the direction and details of future transit coordination for the North Bay.

Policy Comments

p. 9: TRAC commends SMART for achieving ridership that now, at 3,500 weekday riders, is 25%+/- more than pre-COVID performance. We think SMART is amiss, however, by not consistently pointing out that ridership as of September 2024 is 40% higher than the ridership estimates from the 2005 Environmental Impact Report, adjusting for projections for stations not currently in operation.

Upon the opening of the Windsor and North Petaluma stations in Spring 2025, TRAC believes SMART will quickly exceed the 2005 EIR projections of 5,000 per day—a fact SMART should certainly tout upon its achievement. However, it should be noted that the 2005 EIR projection for SMART assumed only peak-period

service with one midday round trip. We believe that the 2005 projection and current results, indicate much higher potential for rail ridership than 5,000 per day. That is, the potential is closer to the 20,000 daily riders projected by the Peter Calthorpe-led plan than it is to the EIR projections.

p. 14: This section talks about providing “integrated mobility solutions” but doesn’t talk about increasing capacity and frequencies beyond every 30 minutes or serving new markets. In TRAC’s view, there are four key objectives that the Strategic Plan needs to focus on:

1. Increasing frequencies to every 30 minutes all-day on weekdays, every 15 minutes Healdsburg-Larkspur Ferry Terminal on weekday peaks (requiring more passing sidings and double track), and at least hourly at all other times.
2. Besides frequency increases, the most-needed improvement to SMART would be a short extension from the current SMART Larkspur station to a cross-platform connection with the Larkspur Ferry. The current 0.6 mile walk between the train and ferries is unacceptable, dramatically reduces potential through-ridership to/from San Francisco, and forces a minimum connection time of 20 minutes for normally abled persons. It is unusable for anyone with a walking disability not met by microtransit.
3. Find a way to increase passenger capacity beyond 240 seats in 3-car trains. One option would be to realign Third Street between Tamalpais Avenue and Hether-ton Street in downtown San Rafael, so the SMART platforms can be extended to fit 4-car trains (using a corner of the soon-to-be former transit center site).
4. SMART should also look at obtaining double-deck trains, such as the 4-car battery-EMUs being developed for Caltrain, at the end of the useful life of the current fleet. The Caltrain carbody design allows for either low or high platforms, useful in accessing existing SMART station platforms. Selecting vehicles such as the proposed Caltrain battery-EMU would transition the SMART fleet to zero emissions. Such vehicles could be recharged by short stretched or overhead wire at each terminal station, e.g., similar to some systems in Japan and under wire with Europe’s widespread railroad electrification.

p. 15: TRAC reiterates that SMART has been successful in meeting the 2005 EIR ridership projections, when adjusted for unopened or planned stations. This needs to be made clear to the reader.

p. 16: TRAC agrees that there are opportunities for new SMART stations outside incorporated cities, such as Geyserville. We believe that there may be other station opportunities. TRAC notes that vehicles with better acceleration than the current fleet, such as battery-EMUs, could meet existing travel times even with more stations. As with microtransit, SMART should look at alternative feeder options, funded by the attractions they service. Perhaps this could include cableways to off-line destinations such as the Graton Resort & Casino in Rohnert Park, Dry Creek Rancheria from Geyserville, etc.

Page 17: TRAC strongly opposes “railbanking” of the railroad between Cloverdale, Ukiah and Willits in Mendocino County by the Great Redwood Trail Authority (GRTA) in order to construct their trail on top of the existing railroad grade. In all but name, “rail banking” is actually abandonment. Instead, we believe that SMART, in partnership with a private sector rail operator, should upgrade the tracks north of Cloverdale to at least Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Class I standards for restarting freight service. In documentation submitted by GRTA to the federal Surface Transportation Board, it was estimated that upgrading the 53 miles+/- of track between Cloverdale and Willits would cost about \$60 million—i.e., slightly more than \$1 million per mile.

TRAC believes upgrading the tracks to Class II and Class III standards for reintroduced passenger service would cost \$100-\$120 million, including radio-based Positive Train control and upgraded grade crossings, but exclusive of rolling stock. We believe the market potential is at least 3,000-5,000 annual freight carloads, and at even minimal service levels at least 100,000 round passengers annually per year, focusing on tourists.

TRAC believes there are willing and able freight operators who would take over current SMART freight services, IF the additional freight traffic from Mendocino County was included. They would be potentially willing to provide passenger/excursion operations catering to tourists and Cloverdale and Mendocino residents, with a cross-platform connection at the Healdsburg station.

p. 17: We believe the Highway 37 corridor could generate 4,000-5,000 daily weekday riders, which is well below SMART’s long-term potential between Larkspur and Healdsburg. The standard railroad industry approach of upgrading existing tracks as needed to meet Class III standards is sufficient for this line. TRAC does not understand how projected costs for the 8.8-mile rail extension between Windsor, downtown Healdsburg, and Lytton (Enso Village?) grew to \$264 million, let alone \$400+ million for the 13.5 miles between Lytton-Cloverdale. Both are about \$30 million per mile. There is simply insufficient market potential to justify that level of expenditure, both north of Healdsburg and along the Highway 37 corridor. See Attachment 2.

One thing is certain—the incoming Trump Administration will not provide the level of federal funds needed by the Geyserville/Cloverdale extension at \$400+ million (to serve 500 passengers/day at each station with hourly peak and two-hourly midday/weekend service). Similarly, federal funds would not be forthcoming for Highway 37 rail if it costs \$1.5 billion using the standard SMART approach, to serve only 4,000-5,000 daily riders.

p. 18: For the low-density Highway 37 extension, SMART’s operating costs are too high, compared to possible services operated by the private sector, such as the Napa Valley Wine Train. See Attachment 2.

p. 18. TRAC believes SMART should keep adding microtransit connections, as can be afforded. We also note that the MASCOTS Plan being developed will contain recommendations about connecting SMART’s corridor service to Golden Gate Transit south and east of San Rafael, as well as Marin Transit, Sonoma Transit, Petaluma

Transit, and Santa Rosa City Bus. These need to be included in SMART's final Strategic Plan.

p. 18: SMART should turn over freight operations to the private sector, provided rail service to Ukiah and Willits is restored as discussed earlier. SMART should concentrate on restoring switches and sidings on the existing line where potential shippers have indicated a willingness to ship by rail.

p. 25: The following listing of policy questions is useless without staff recommendations and a discussion of the pros and cons. The use of the word "explore" here is an abdication of the strategic plan process. At a minimum, the Plan needs to set forth criteria on how to make decisions in these areas. Otherwise, this isn't actually a strategic plan, as it proposes no strategy on how to proceed:

- Explore re-opening the onboard snack bar
- Explore adding Wi-Fi to trains
- Explore adding double track or sidings to decrease travel time

The following policy assumptions suggest that SMART is grossly over-funded and doesn't need a sales tax, especially in this highly inflationary time:

p. 24: Continue free daytime parking program

p. 25: Continue overnight paid parking program through FY25 and consider for future extension

p. 45: No fare increases

p. 45: The continuation of free fares for youth and seniors.

This "Strategic Plan" refuses to grapple with any actual strategic choices, framing these four key policy choices as foundational assumptions instead. Other operators rely on these sources of revenue for operations. Again, why should SMART be different?

p. 29: TRAC suggests that SMART invite local businesses to sponsor individual amenities: "Evaluate the feasibility of providing additional pathway amenities such as lighting, benches, and art."

p. 31: It is flatly untrue that "SMART has been working to create a fiscally sustainable freight business for the North Bay." SMART purchased a fiscally sustainable freight business, whose finances were then savaged by an action of the Board.

p. 31: TRAC provided comments on freight during the outreach for this Plan that are not reflected in: "Work with the private sector to rehabilitate/construct rail spurs for freight" See Attachment 1.

Financial Presentations

p. 36: Because the setting of fares is one of the most public of the responsibilities of the Board, the Plan fails at transparency when it hides the farebox revenues in the Operations--Other Revenues. Fares are a separate and distinct revenue category that need to be prominently shown in all financial presentations, including the master pie chart on p. 34.

Provide an explanation for the choice of inflation escalators: 5%, p. 45 and 8%, p. 47.

p. 43: Provide a breakdown of Operations and Maintenance, displayed as budgetary line items.

p. 44: Provide subtotals for each of the blue headings, as was done for Project/Capital.

p. 48: The FY 25 Remaining Balance appears incorrect.

Editorial suggestions

p. 30: passenger rail service, rather than "passenger rail system"

p. 30: add "station" after "Novato Downtown" and "Petaluma North"

p. 34: There is an omitted block of text after "in the counties of"

p. 46: "receives" rather than "received"

Conclusion

This Plan needs a lot of work. Thank you for considering these comments.

Respectfully submitted,




Michael D. Setty, President

Attachments

Attachment 1: TRAC's comments for the Plan's Outreach

Attachment 2: TRAC's article on cost-effective extensions

From: David Schonbrunn david@Schonbrunn.org 
Subject: Comments for Community Workshop for SMART's Strategic Plan
Date: September 24, 2024 at 4:00 PM
To: Leticia Rosas lrosas@sonomamarintrain.org



Please share these two contributions with the appropriate staff.

I've previously offered these to SMART, but never received any feedback from staff or heard that movement towards implementation of either was underway. They are still valid today.

Fulton Transload Plan

Here's the satellite view of the site:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@38.4958001,-122.7716717,215m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu>

This plan has the following elements:

- There is a switch to the mainline which I believe is PTC equipped, since SMART stores MOW cars there. (There are 2 cars in the satellite view.)
- The site can be accessed from River Road via Hart Lane.
- There is enough trackage to be able to load maybe a dozen cars.
- It seems likely this transload plan could be implemented without laying out any cash, other than for promotion. (SMART probably has a front-end loader, to which forks could be attached. Alternatively, a fork lift could be rented.)
- This plan would be an easy step for SMART. Successful implementation would help the Board gain confidence in the freight business, allowing the business to build momentum.
- If there is enough business, SMART could seek to buy the triangular lot to the west of the tracks, for additional storage and possibly more tracks.

Here's a ground-level view of the spurs from the River Road crossing:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@38.4965128,-122.7724494,3a,75y,182.74h,91.93t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1s57ZUGf-DFhSgDI5TJqH91A!2e0!7i16384!8i8192?entry=ttu>

Public-Private Partnership to restore the tracks to Willits.

Recognizing that MTC is unlikely to include funding for further extensions because of the low potential ridership north of Windsor, here is an idea that would make it possible to provide passenger service not only to Cloverdale, but also to Willits:

The RFEI that SMART issued for a contractor to handle interim freight service identified a group of freight operators that could be approached as potential partners in freight service. SMART should invite them to submit proposals on restoring the tracks to Cloverdale, with a further extension to Willits as an option. Find out what terms they would want (confidentially, of course) in terms of the capital to be invested and the length of freight rights they would need to make the transaction feasible. TRAC expects the cost of restoration to be in the vicinity of \$1 million/mile, plus grade crossings. PTC would not be needed initially.

Note that TRAC fully expects the restoration of service to be done using the existing rails, including where jointed rail is in use. That's all that's needed for freight. It will keep the costs low, and make the project conceivably feasible. This is how railroads operate. They only upgrade when necessary to meet service objectives.

The operator could contract with SMART to offer passenger service on a cost plus an add-on profit basis. Having passenger equipment could be a potential profit center, if excursion service was offered, which had been very popular back in the 90s. See attached history of NWP tourist trains.

This proposal is innovative and out-of-the-box. It is not aligned with current agency thinking. In order to actually get its objectives met, TRAC urges SMART staff to get creative in its use of available resources instead of waiting for money to fall from the sky.

As someone that has worked for 35 years to restore passenger rail to the NWP, I've been looking for--and haven't found--any evidence that SMART actually wants its freight business to succeed. Judging by its past few years of operations, it is pretty clear now that SMART is unlikely to make a go of its freight business.

Part of the problem seems to be a deep resistance to partnering with the kind of competent private sector rail operator who would make the business successful. Is this a covert conflict of interest about the ultimate scheduling of traffic? SMART should discuss publicly what appears to be an unwritten policy. I'm being deliberately provocative here in an effort to try to prevent the freight business from failing from benign neglect.

Thank you for your attention to these thoughts. I would be pleased to discuss any of these ideas in depth, at the phone number below.

--David

David Schonbrunn, Vice President
Train Riders Association of California (TRAC)
P.O. Box 151439
San Rafael, CA 94915-1439

415-370-7250 cell & office
President@calrailnews.org
www.calrailnews.org



NWPRR
TOURI...RY.pdf

A VISION FOR PASSENGER RAIL IN THE

By Michael D. Setty
Editor, California Rail News

In addition to ideas for improving the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and San Joaquins proposed by TRAC in the previous California Rail News, passage of the SB-1 transportation funding measure opens up many options for improving and expanding rail passenger service throughout California.

SB-1 raised gas taxes and registration fees for improved highway and street maintenance, as well as more funding for transit capital and operations, intercity rail, pedestrian and bicycle projects.

With SMART service beginning in August 2017 between San Rafael and Santa Rosa, this is an opportune time to examine potential future improvements in the North Bay.

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) also recently began a study of proposed light rail transit (LRT) parallel to I-80 between Sacramento and Davis at the behest of Yolo County interests. With the proposed increase of San Joaquin service to the Sacramento region, looking at additional improvements in the Sacramento region is also warranted.

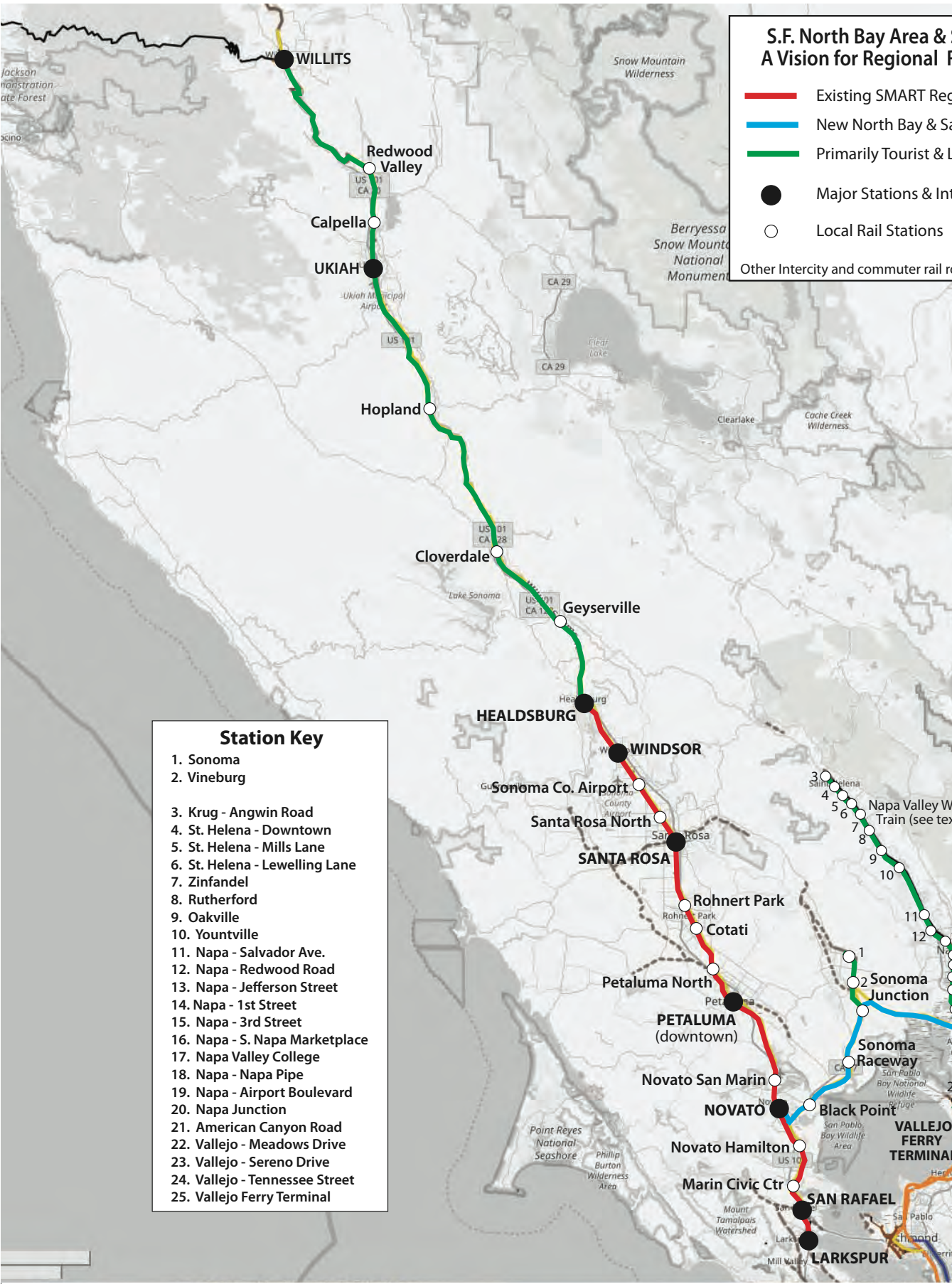
Upgrading & Extending SMART

Now that SMART service has successfully launched, its startup experience can be evaluated and viable improvements identified. In our view, SMART's current shortcomings include the following:

- An inability to hire enough operating personnel has left significant gaps in its peak hour service, harming both its usefulness and its ridership.
- No significant midday service between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. or evening service. The unexpected weekend ridership success with only four round trips demonstrates a strong market for midday, evening and additional weekend service.
- Full trains on selected peak period schedules demonstrate the need for obtaining full 3-car trains within a few years. However, even with 4 additional cars, the total fleet of 18 cars will quickly limit capacity and ridership within a few years.
- Poor schedule coordination, and a lack of connections between SMART and existing bus services. For example, Golden Gate Transit buses leave San Rafael Transit Center too soon to allow convenient connections from arriving SMART trains. Similarly, while the SMART station platform is only a block from the Petaluma Transit Center, a 3-block walk around a large fenced area is required to make bus–train connections.

SMART should commit to the following short term service goals:

- Providing consistent peak period service every 30 minutes in each direction between 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



- Provide hourly service in the early morning, midday, evenings after 8:00 p.m. and hourly frequencies on weekends and holidays.
- In cooperation with Golden Gate Transit (GGT), fix the schedules to make timed transfers between SMART trains and buses to San Francisco and the East Bay in San Rafael work better.
- Once SMART is able to provide consistent 60-minute all-day service (every 30 minutes during weekday peaks) seven days per week, redundant GGT transit service can be reduced or eliminated with major cost savings.
- Extend SMART service to Windsor and Healdsburg using the existing mix of welded and jointed rail. The diminished ride quality and possibly lowered speeds for this section of track are an acceptable tradeoff for getting this service into operation as soon as possible. TRAC believes that attracting drivers to rail is far more important than eliminating the clickety-clack. Welded rail can be installed later.

As ridership grows, SMART should start planning for peak period service every 15 minutes, and midday service every 30 minutes Monday-Friday.

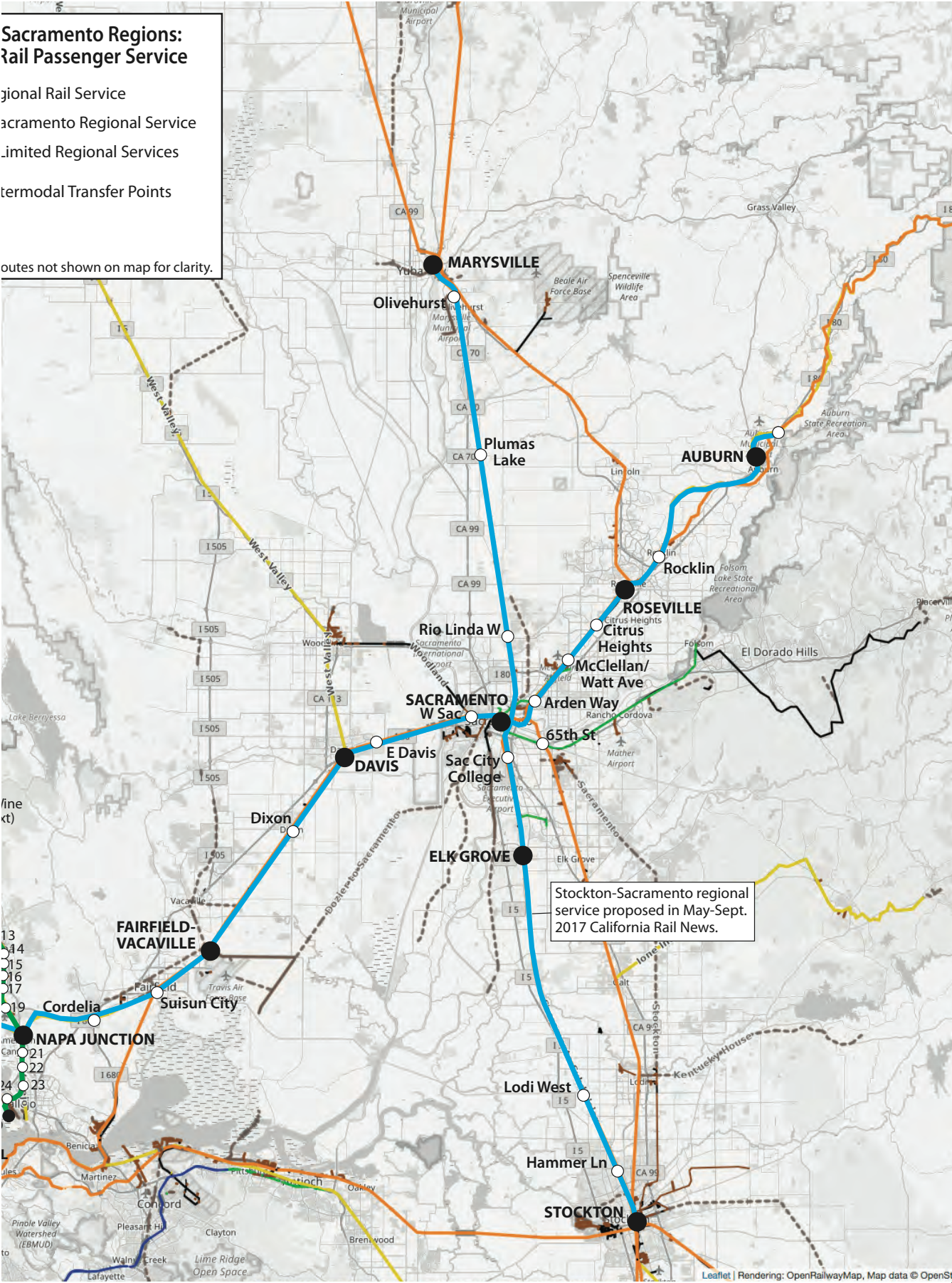
SMART will require significant capital expenditures for an expanded fleet and double track or new sidings in key areas. Study should begin on extending SMART to a location closer to the GGT ferries in Larkspur, including the possibility of a cross-platform transfer.

Other 101 Corridor Rail Services

While the original SMART plan included a 15-mile extension beyond Healdsburg to Cloverdale, this proposal is not cost-effective for less than 500 projected daily riders. However, a low-cost approach could make it feasible to extend passenger service to Cloverdale, Ukiah and Willits. For the anticipated volumes, upgrading existing tracks to 60 mph standards and adding modern signals would cost less than \$150 million (excluding rolling stock).

The volume of Mendocino County tourists appears sufficient to support

THE NORTH BAY & SACRAMENTO REGION



robust weekend and holiday service from the Bay Area, possibly via a public-private partnership. While weekday ridership potential is modest, it appears 5-6 daily round trips can be supported. This should be operated by modern lightweight Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs) that meet the latest Federal safety standards. These trains would make a cross-platform timed transfer to SMART's heavy DMUs at Healdsburg.

North Bay-Sacramento Rail Corridor

Typically, upgrading existing tracks to 60 mph standards costs less than \$1 million/mile, and less than \$2 million per mile including PTC. Contrary to recent Highway 37 studies, initial hourly rail service between Novato and the Suisun-Fairfield Capitol Corridor station would cost substantially less than \$100 million, exclusive of rolling stock. This figure includes upgrading existing jointed track to 60 mph standards, PTC, more sidings simple stations with 17"-18" high platforms and allowances for bridge repairs. For another \$200 million, new railroad bridges over the Petaluma and

Napa Rivers could be included since their replacement is ultimately required.

Novato-Suisun service should also be extended to downtown Sacramento along the existing Capitol Corridor, to provide regional service covering the local stops not served by the Capitol Corridor, including East Vacaville (Elmira), Dixon, East Davis, and West Sacramento. Service could be further extended to Yuba City and Marysville, because light DMUs are cheap to run.

Davis to Sacramento light rail (LRT) is currently being studied, as noted above. This would require new tracks across the Yolo Bypass, because standard LRT cars cannot share mainline freight tracks as can the Capitol Corridor and DMU trains. In our view, there is not enough potential

demand to justify the \$500 million+ cost of LRT between Davis and downtown Sacramento. However, the Davis-Sacramento idea would fit nicely with Novato-Suisun service, and potentially provide some of the funding.

If additional Solano County rail capacity is needed to support this service, a 3rd exclusive passenger track—from the west end of the existing Yolo Bypass rail bridge to the Suisun/Fairfield station—would allow passenger service independent of Union Pacific (UP) freight trains and Capitol Corridor intercity trains. With careful scheduling, the Yolo Bypass railroad bridge has a capacity of more than 100 trains day, vs. 20-25 freight and 34 passenger trains operated at present. This project should be relatively cheap to build since few structures are needed. In the longer run, an exclusive passenger track across the Bypass is desirable but it will not be cost-effective in the next decade or so.

As demonstrated by Austin's Metro-rail, light DMUs can operate "in-street" over short distances. On-street operations from West Sacramento over the Tower Bridge, and along the L Street corridor connecting to proposed service along the UP Sacramento Subdivision through Midtown should be explored.

Light DMUs could also connect downtown Sacramento with Placer County along the 3rd Capitol Corridor track proposed to Roseville (with 4th track/passing sidings). This track could also be extended to Auburn, allowing frequent all-day regional rail service independent of UP freights along the I-80 corridor northeast of Sacramento. This plan would not preclude UP's usage of the 3rd track at night as a freight lead to its Roseville Yard.

Vallejo-Napa (Wine Train) Corridor

A large fraction of Napa Valley tourists also visit San Francisco in their Bay Area stays. While it is doubtful that ridership between Napa and Vallejo by local residents would cover operating costs, potentially large volumes of visitors accessing the Napa Valley via the San Francisco-Vallejo Ferry connection would put such service well into profitability assuming the low operating costs of lightweight DMUs. In Vallejo, there are tantalizing real estate opportunities that could offset rail capital costs. Timed transfers at an American Canyon station connecting the Napa Valley and the North Bay to Sacramento routes could generate heavy ridership and revenues. These are exciting possibilities for private investment.



Light DMUs get 2 mpg for 160 seats, vs. 1 mpg for SMART trains, and can operate "in street" over 1-2 miles. Wikipedia. By Michlaovic - Own work, Public Domain



November 14, 2024

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District
5401 Old Redwood Hwy. Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954

RE: Draft SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Dear Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit District,

WTB-TAM has participated in the Strategic Plan process every step of the way, and we are pleased to see that many of our previous recommendations have been included in the Draft Plan. We commend SMART for the open and transparent process that has characterized the development of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan to date. It is a significant improvement over the processes that characterized the 2015-2019 and 2019-2024 Strategic Plans.

This letter contains additional recommendations to make the Final Draft of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan even stronger than the Draft Plan. Our recommendations are summarized immediately below in the EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. Following that, our recommendations are laid out in more detail in order the page number to which they refer in the Draft Plan. Finally, at the end of this letter there is attached an *Appendix* containing *Exhibits A through F* as referenced in the body of this letter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WTB-TAM recommends the following additions to the SMART 2025-2029 Strategic Plan:

- **On Page 29, under PATHWAYS Strategy 9 — “Develop plans for future pathway segments and enhancements” — add the following actions:**
 - For the Water Street Pathway segment in Petaluma, in addition to feasibility study and conceptual planning, add that this segment should be brought to shovel-ready status
 - Add the Copeland Street and Hopper Street Pathway segments in Petaluma for feasibility study, conceptual planning, and shovel-ready status
 - Add the SMART Pathway parallel to the SMART Railway from Haystack Landing Bridge in Sonoma County to Novato San Marin Station in Marin County for feasibility study and conceptual planning

DRAFT PLAN PAGE 5

Page 5 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan references versions of the Strategic Plan that preceded it, including the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. We would like to call out the following passage on page 9 of the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit A*).

*“The project includes a **bicycle and pedestrian trail parallel to the entire length of the railroad between Cloverdale and Larkspur**...SMART will provide a bicycle/pedestrian pathway along the SMART rail corridor linking the 14 train stations” – page 9*



This letter references the above passage again in our recommendations for Page 29 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.

DRAFT PLAN PAGE 16

Page 16 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan references the 1994 Marin County North – South Bikeway Feasibility Study as the vision document for what would later become the SMART Pathway (as well as the North – South Greenway and the southernmost portion of the Great Redwood Trail). We would like to call out two passages from Page 16 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan in particular:

“SMART’s Pathway aligns with the portion of the North-South Greenway from its northernmost extent in Unincorporated Marin County to Larkspur”

“SMART’s continued progress on the Pathway is helping to close remaining gaps and deliver on the long-envisioned connection to the North-South Greenway.”

The pathway alignment as envisioned in the 1994 Marin County North – South Bikeway Feasibility Study does not end in Novato. The northernmost two segments in the 1994 Study (Segments 23 and 24) show the **planned pathway continuing north of the Novato City Limits and the present-day location of the SMART Novato San Marin Station along the railroad right-of-way** (see *Appendix Exhibit B*). Segment 23 takes the pathway from the intersection of Redwood Boulevard and San Marin Drive to near Binford Road and Airport Road and Segment 24 takes it the remainder of the way to the Marin - Sonoma County Line.

The Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan references closing the remaining gaps in the North – South Greenway as envisioned in the 1994 Marin County North – South Bikeway Feasibility Study. We interpret this to mean that **SMART is committed to closing the gap in the SMART Pathway from Novato San Marin Station to the Sonoma County Line, thus providing an all-ages-and-abilities alternative to the existing on-street bicycle route along San Antonio Road with a posted speed limit of 55 mph.** This letter references the above passages from Page 16 of the Draft Strategic Plan again in our recommendations for Page 29 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.

DRAFT PLAN PAGE 17

Page 17 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan references several Active Transportation Plans and Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans in the cities and counties through which the SMART Pathway passes. Included amongst these Plans are:

- The Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- The Petaluma Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

While both the aforementioned Plans have updates currently underway, we would like to reference the most recently published versions of these Plans, which are currently on the books.



The Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (last updated in 2010) includes under “High Priority Projects” a Class I pathway by the name “SMART Rail Trail,” which runs along the SMART railroad right-of-way south of Petaluma to the Marin – Sonoma County Line (see *Appendix Exhibit C*).

The Petaluma Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (last updated in 2018) contains a Class I pathway along the SMART railroad right-of-way from the SMART Petaluma Downtown Station southwards, past the southern Petaluma City limits, across the Haystack Landing Bridge, and continuing south along the SMART railroad right-of-way towards the Marin – Sonoma County Line (see *Appendix Exhibit D*).

This letter references the above two Plans again in our recommendations for Page 29 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.

DRAFT PLAN PAGE 29

The section PATHWAYS on Page 29 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan outlines strategies and actions to achieve the goal of completing, maintaining, and enhancing the SMART Pathway. Strategy 9 — “Develop plans for future pathway segments and enhancements” — contains the following recommended action:

- Evaluate the feasibility and conceptual planning for those future segments of the Pathway that were not originally environmentally cleared as part of the SMART Rail and Pathway project, for example:
 - Puerto Suello Pathway in San Rafael
 - Water Street Pathway between Oak Street and Lakeville Street in Petaluma
 - 1st Street to the County Line between Cloverdale and Mendocino County

We suggest that the Puerto Suello Pathway segment does not belong in this category because it has already advanced beyond the feasibility and conceptual planning stage. In fact, SMART just recently issued an RFP for the design work on this segment on October 31, 2024, and the contract to bring this segment to shovel-ready status will be approved by February 19, 2025.

As for the Water Street segment in Petaluma, we suggest that in addition to feasibility and conceptual planning, the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan commits to bringing this segment all the way to shovel-ready status (at least 30% design, environmental clearances, and environmental permits).

In addition to the Water Street segment, we recommend that the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan commit to bringing two more pathway segments in Petaluma to shovel-ready status:

- **The SMART Pathway parallel to Copeland Street through the Petaluma Transit Mall as well as a Pathway encircling the SMART-owned block south of the Petaluma Downtown SMART Station** (i.e. the site of the possible future SMART headquarters and multi-use development)
- **The SMART Pathway parallel to the SMART Railway along Hopper Street from D Street to the portion of the Petaluma River Park east of McNear Channel**



Petaluma has long been the most glaring gap in the SMART Pathway system. It is the only city on the SMART Pathway network where the original EIR did not include an off-street pathway, leaving the SMART Pathway to follow an on-street alignment instead. The citizens of Petaluma have long felt neglected by SMART as a result of this decision. As SMART looks towards its approaching sales tax extension, it is vital that SMART earn back the trust of voters in Petaluma and make progress on the unbuilt segments of the SMART Pathway in that city, as laid out in Measure Q, the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit A*), the Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit C*), and the Petaluma Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit D*).

Fortunately for SMART, the task of completing the SMART Pathway through Petaluma does not fall on SMART's shoulders alone. Portions of the SMART Pathway in Petaluma are being planned, funded, and implemented by other agencies including the City of Petaluma, the Petaluma River Park Foundation, and the developer of Oyster Cove. Collectively, the pathway segments being implemented by the aforementioned parties plus SMART's portions of the SMART Pathway in Petaluma will realize a fully complete and connected SMART Pathway system in the City of Petaluma (see *Appendix Exhibit E*).

Returning to the pathway segments recommended for feasibility study and conceptual planning under PATHWAYS Strategy 9 on Page 29 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, we agree with the inclusion of the segment from 1st Street in Cloverdale to the Mendocino County Line in this category. This addresses a key gap in the Great Redwood Trail that is not being built by the Great Redwood Trail Authority, whose mandate for pathway implementation is limited to north of the Mendocino County Line.

In addition to the 1st Street to Mendocino County Line segment, we also recommend the following SMART Pathway segment be added to the list of pathway segments for feasibility study and conceptual planning under PATHWAYS Strategy 9 on Page 29 of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan:

- The SMART Pathway parallel to the SMART Railway from Haystack Landing Bridge in Sonoma County to Novato San Marin Station in Marin County

The gap in the SMART Pathway between Petaluma and Novato is the largest remaining unplanned gap in the SMART Pathway network between Larkspur and Cloverdale. The current alignment — along San Antonio Road and South Petaluma Boulevard — is not a “pathway” at all, but an on-street route with no accommodation for pedestrians, and which provides bicyclists with no protection from cars traveling at posted speed limits of 55 mph.

As outlined in our letter above, the SMART Pathway along the SMART Railroad between Petaluma and Novato is called for in the following documents, all of which are referenced in the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan:

- The SMART 2009-2014 Strategic Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit A*), referenced on Page 5 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan
- Segments 23 and 24 of the 1994 Marin County North – South Bikeway Feasibility Study (see *Appendix Exhibit B*), referenced on Page 16 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan



- The Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit C*), referenced on Page 17 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan
- The Petaluma Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (see *Appendix Exhibit D*), referenced on Page 17 of the Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

By following the above recommendations, SMART will honor its promise to the voters of Marin and Sonoma Counties who passed Measure Q in 2008, and go a long way towards cementing public support for a future sales tax extension when it goes before the voters again. The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, which will be in effect when the sales tax extension likely goes before the voters in 2028, must do as much as possible to fulfill SMART's promise to the voters and complete the SMART Pathway.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Seidler
President, WTB-TAM

Matthew Hartzell
Director of Planning, WTB-TAM

Appendix

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<i>Exhibit A: SMART 2009-2014 Strategic Plan.....</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Exhibit B: Marin County North - South Bikeway Feasibility Study (1994) Segments 23 and 24.....</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Exhibit C: SCTA Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2010)</i>	<i>Page 11</i>
<i>Exhibit D: Petaluma Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2018)</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
<i>Exhibit E: Pathway Segments to Complete the SMART Pathway in Petaluma.....</i>	<i>Page 13</i>

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The Strategic Plan is to serve as a guide for the construction and operation of a passenger train system and ancillary bicycle/pedestrian pathway along the existing, publicly owned Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP) right-of-way. The SMART project is to extend from Cloverdale in Sonoma County to Larkspur in Marin County.

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Pathway along the entire length of the railroad right-of-way

Measure Q revenues will be used to provide funding for the design, construction, implementation operation, financing, maintenance and management of passenger rail service and a bicycle/pedestrian pathway from Cloverdale in Sonoma County to a ferry terminal in Larkspur in Marin County that connects to San Francisco. The revenue from the tax can only be spent on project elements listed in the Expenditure Plan, including:

1. Weekday and weekend passenger rail service.
2. A parallel bicycle/pedestrian pathway.
3. Fourteen rail stations from Cloverdale to Larkspur (9 in Sonoma County, 5 in Marin County).
4. Rehabilitation and upgrading of the existing Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP) corridor from Cloverdale to Larkspur, including new passenger train passing sidings.
5. A maintenance facility in either Cloverdale or Windsor.
6. Shuttle service at selected stations.

- pages 6-7

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

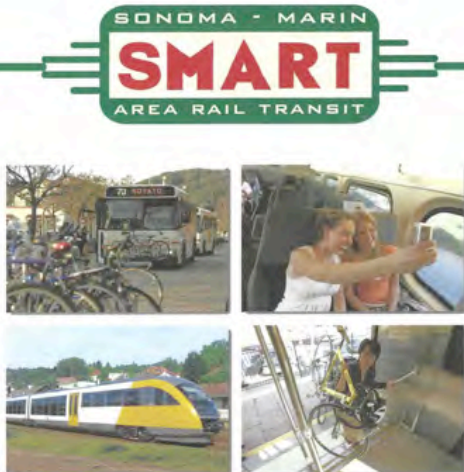
1.3.1. Project Description

The project includes a bicycle and pedestrian trail parallel to the entire length of the railroad between Cloverdale and Larkspur.

1.3.2 Project Components: Capital Improvements

E. Providing for a Bicycle/ Pedestrian Pathway: SMART will provide a bicycle/pedestrian pathway along the SMART rail corridor linking the 14 train stations and ongoing annual maintenance of the pathway.

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**SONOMA-MARIN AREA
RAIL TRANSIT DISTRICT
2009 MEASURE Q
STRATEGIC PLAN**

NOVEMBER 1994

MARIN COUNTY NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY
BIKEWAY ALIGNMENTS

Segment 23

A. Short-Term Alignment

Location: Northern Novato
From: Intersection of Redwood Boulevard and Marin Drive/Atherton Avenue
To: Highway 101 near Airport Road
Alignment Map: Figure 33

From Redwood Boulevard, northbound cyclists would cross the railroad and highway on Atherton Avenue, where bike lanes already exist. The existing signal loops at the intersection of Redwood Boulevard and Atherton Avenue are Type A. To improve bicycle accessibility, these loops would need to be replaced with Type D head loops, which would be sensitive to bicycles.

From Atherton Avenue, cyclists would turn on to Binford Road, which is a low volume roadway that would be appropriate as a bike route. A cyclists' entry onto Highway 101 is necessary at the end of Airport Road, similar to a facility that already exists on the west side of Highway 101 for southbound cyclists.

Southbound cyclists travel south on Highway 101 to this existing entry, which is a gap in the fence overgrown with weeds. This entry should be improved, but it already provides access from Highway 101 to Redwood Boulevard, which would provide southbound cyclist access to Novato.

Recommendations:

- a. Replace the signal loops at Redwood Boulevard/Atherton Avenue with Type D head loops.
- b. Improve the cyclists' entry from Highway 101 to Redwood Boulevard by removing weeds and debris from the area, and repaving the Bikeway that connects from the highway to Redwood. The area to be improved is shown in Figure 34.
- c. Build a cyclists' entry onto Highway 101 at the end of Airport Road, similar to a facility that already exists on the west side of Highway 101 for southbound cyclists. This will require paving of a bike path from the end of Airport Road, as shown in Figures 34 and 35.

MARIN COUNTY NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY
BIKEWAY ALIGNMENTS

NOVEMBER 1994

Costs:**Segment No. 23 -- Short-Term Alignment**
Total Length 8,900 L.F.

Item No.	Description	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
1	Earthwork/Base Material	70	C.Y.	\$40.00	\$2,800
2	Asphalt Concrete Pavement (0.2')	5,600	S.F.	\$1.50	\$8,400
3	Traffic/Bike Lane Stripe	600	L.F.	\$0.80	\$480
4	Signal Loop	1	EA.	\$500.00	\$500
5	Clearing and Grubbing	1	L.S.	\$2,000.00	\$2,000
Sub-Total					\$14,180
15% Design Cost					2,127
20% Contingency					2,836
Total Cost					\$19,143

B. Long-Term Alignment

Location: Northern Novato
From: Northwest Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way at Atherton Avenue
To: Northwest Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way near Airport Road
Alignment Map: Figure 33

From Atherton Avenue, the bike path would continue in the NWPRR right-of-way north to Airport Road.

The NWPRR/Binford Road undercrossing of Highway 101 just north of Atherton Avenue serves as the access to and from Mount Burdell for equestrians in the Bugcia Lane/Black Point/Green Point area. Equestrian access under this overpass would need to be preserved if a bike path is built, and sufficient area to accommodate both equestrians and bikes appears to exist.

Recommendation:

- a. Pave a bike path in the NWPRR right-of-way between Atherton Avenue and Airport Road.

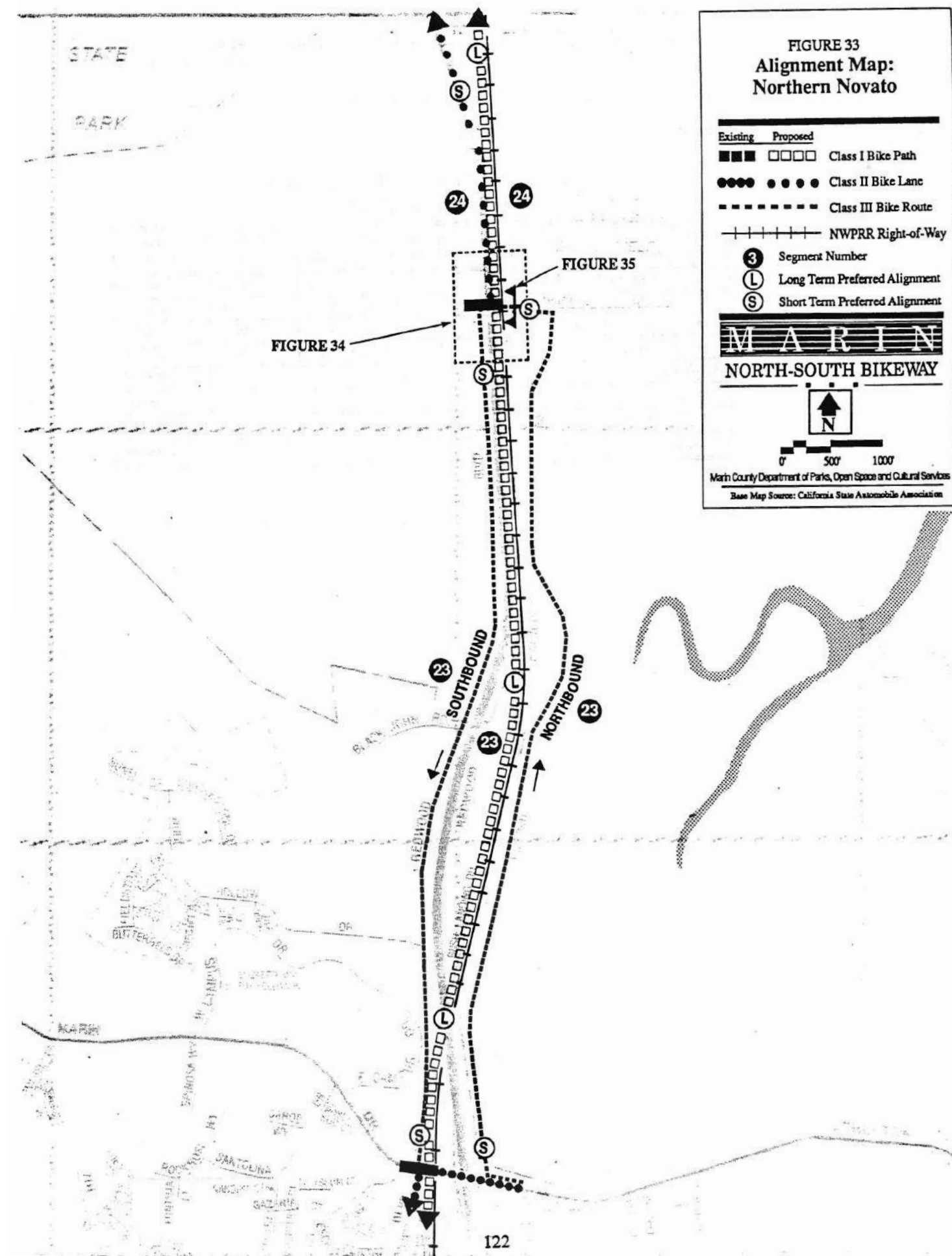
NOVEMBER 1994

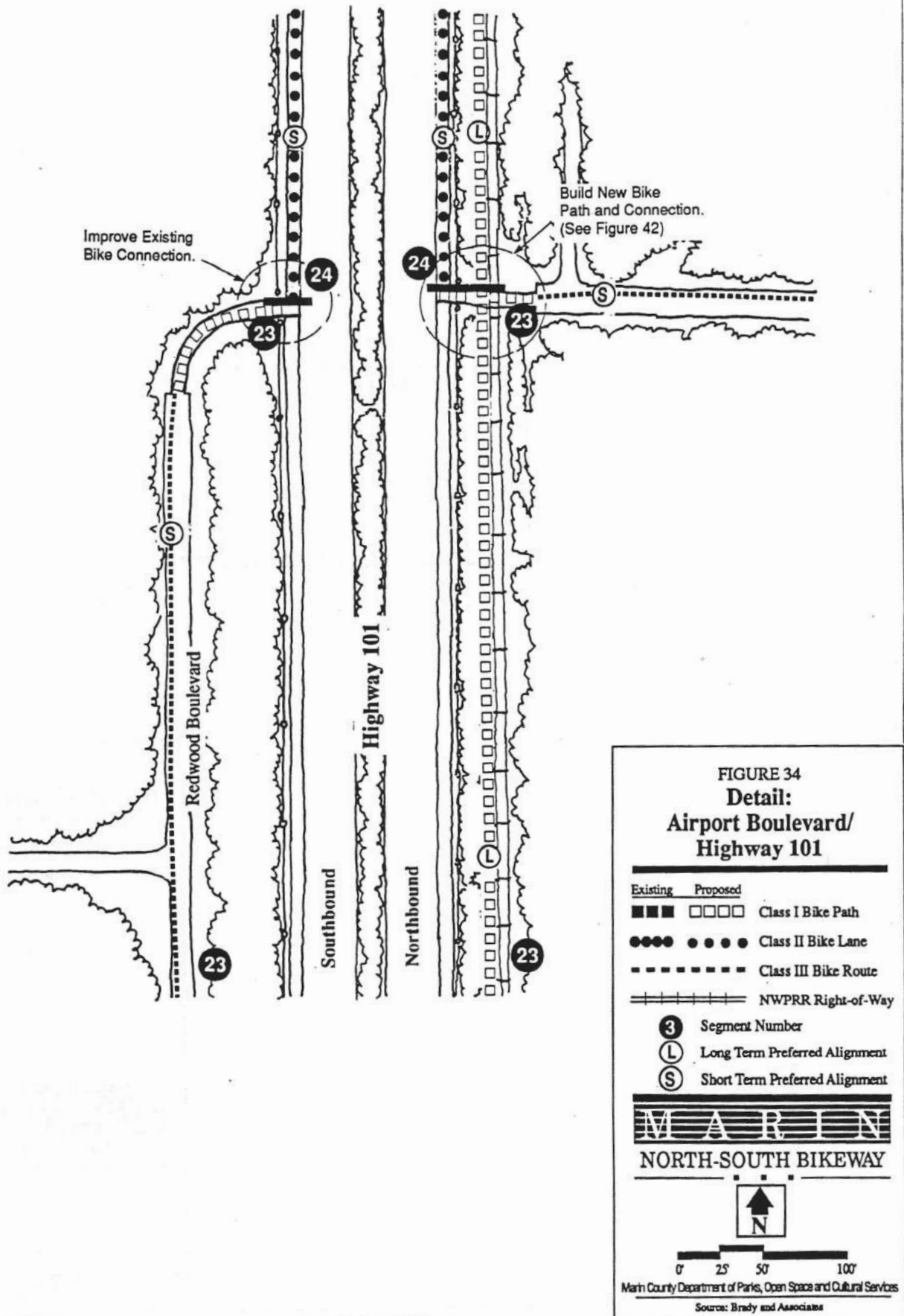
MARIN COUNTY NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY
BIKEWAY ALIGNMENTS

Costs:

**Segment No. 23 -- Long-Term Alignment
Total Length 4,700 L.F.**

Item No.	Description	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
1	Earthwork/Base Material	3,500	C.Y.	\$40.00	\$140,000
2	Asphalt Concrete Pavement (0.2")	56,400	S.F.	\$1.50	\$84,600
3	Traffic/Bike Lane Stripe	4,700	L.F.	\$0.80	\$3,760
4	Fencing	4,700	L.F.	\$20.00	\$94,000
Sub-Total					\$322,360
15% Design Cost					48,354
20% Contingency					64,472
Total Cost					\$435,186





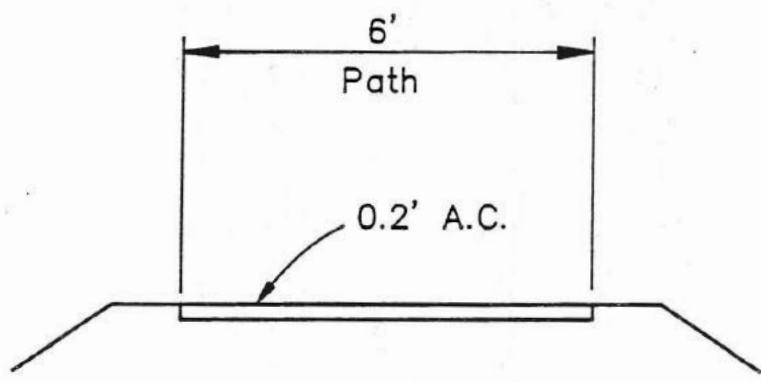


FIGURE 35
Section: Connector Path
Airport Boulevard/
Highway 101



Scale: Schematic, dimensions noted where appropriate
Marin County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services
Source: Coastal Civil Engineering Inc.

NOVEMBER 1994

MARIN COUNTY NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY
BIKEWAY ALIGNMENTS

Segment 24

A. Short-Term Alignment

Location: Marin County north of Novato
From: Highway 101 near Airport Road
To: Marin/Sonoma County Line
Alignment Map: Figure 33

From Airport Road, the Short-Term Alignment would continue as bike lanes on the shoulders of Highway 101, which extends to the County line and into Petaluma. Cyclists are already allowed to ride on the shoulders of the Highway, and they would continue to do so until the Long-Term Alignment is constructed.

Recommendation: No changes are needed.

Costs: None.

B. Long-Term Alignment

Location: Marin County north of Novato
From: Northwest Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way near Airport Road
To: Marin/Sonoma County Line
Alignment Map: Figure 33

From Airport Road, the bike path would continue in the NWPRR right-of-way north to the Sonoma County line, and ultimately to Petaluma. This segment would only be useful if it could be built in conjunction with a project in Sonoma County that would connect to Petaluma or to another bikeway.

North of Airport Road, the right-of-way traverses some wetland areas, so construction of the Bikeway might require some fill and appropriate mitigation.

Recommendation:

- a. Pave a bike path in the NWPRR right-of-way between Airport Road and the Sonoma County line, with an ultimate connection to Petaluma.

MARIN COUNTY NORTH-SOUTH BIKEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY
BIKEWAY ALIGNMENTS

NOVEMBER 1994

Costs:

Segment No. 24 -- Long-Term Alignment
Total Length 27,000 L.F.

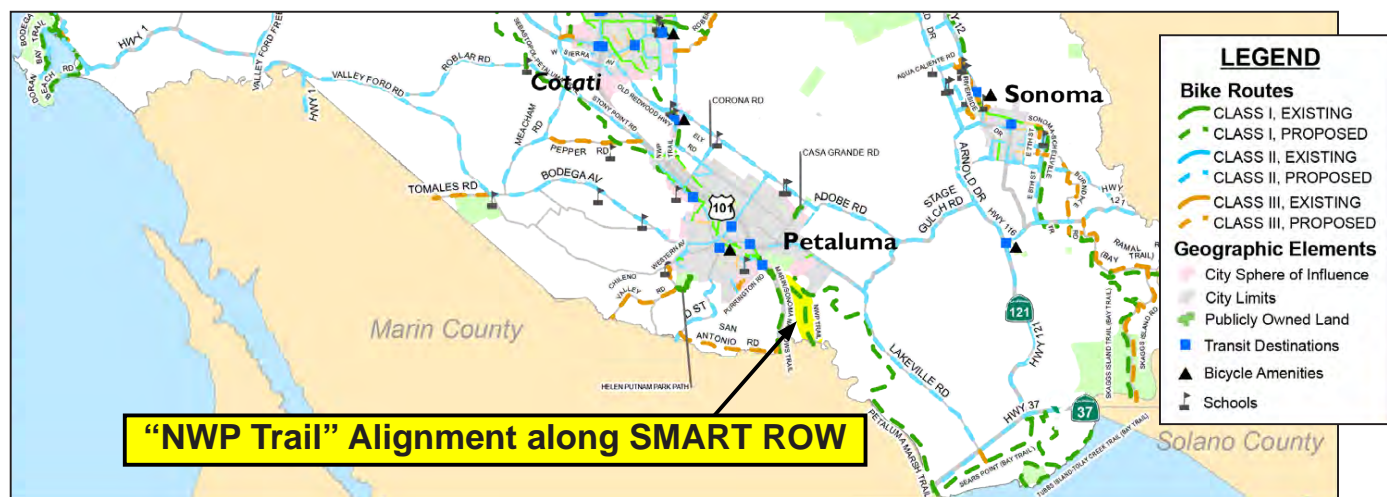
Item No.	Description	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
1	Earthwork/Base Material	14,300	C.Y.	\$40.00	\$572,000
2	Asphalt Concrete Pavement (0.2')	324,000	S.F.	\$1.50	\$486,000
3	Traffic/Bike Lane Stripe	27,000	L.F.	\$0.80	\$21,600
4	Fencing	27,000	L.F.	\$20.00	\$540,000
Sub-Total					\$1,619,600
15% Design Cost					242,940
20% Contingency					323,920
Total Cost					\$2,186,460

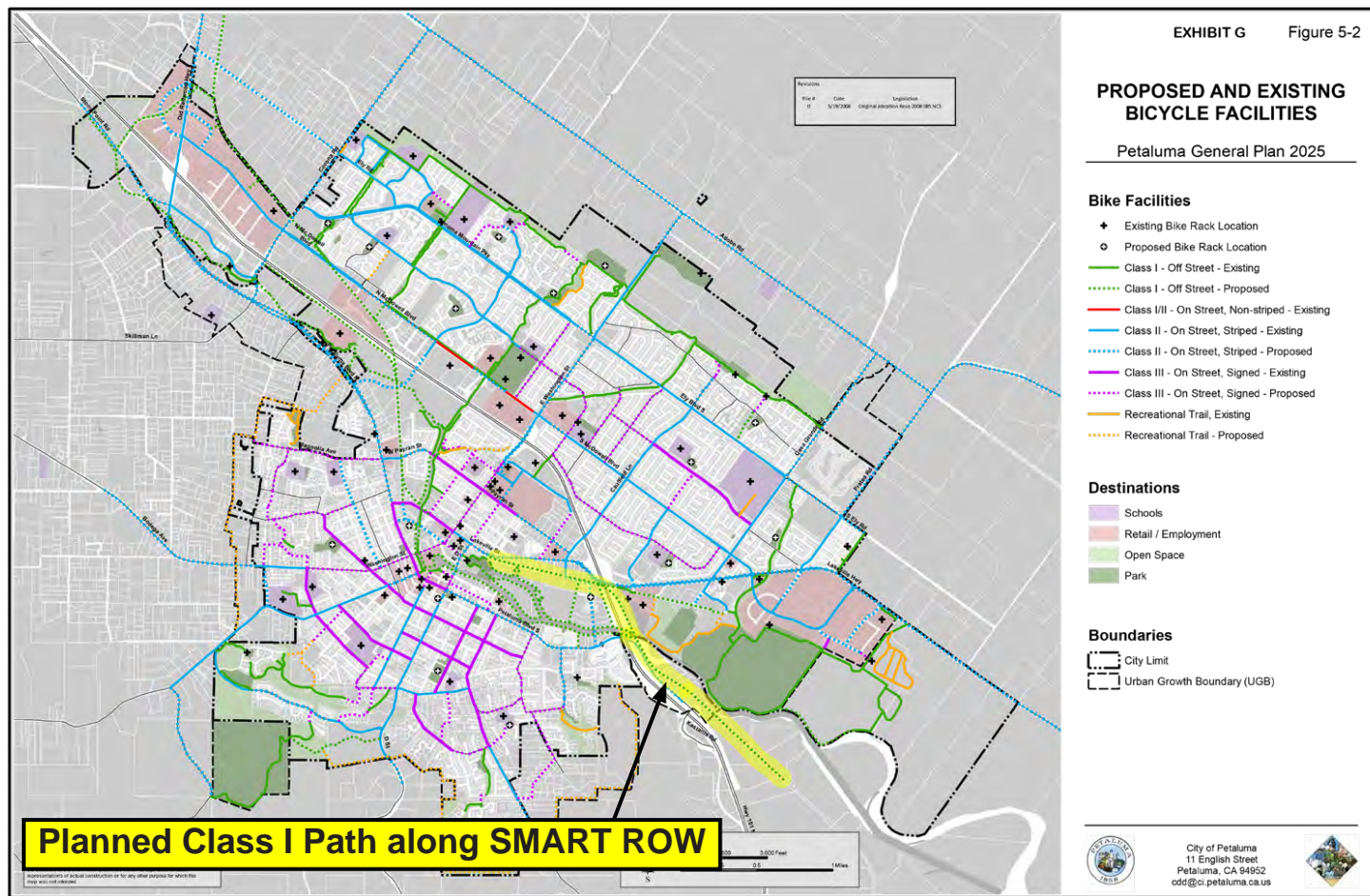
2010 Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Priority 1 Projects (High)

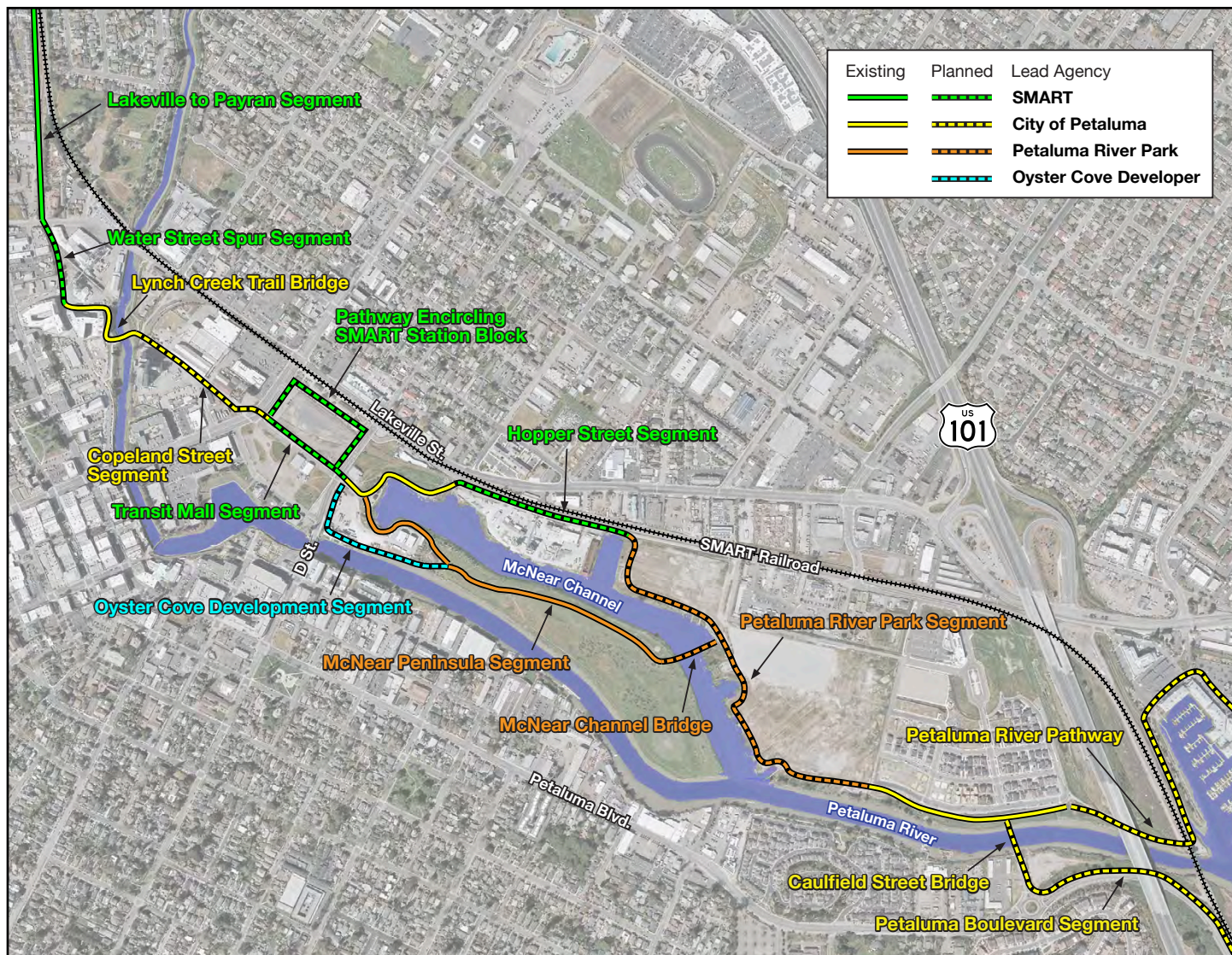
Route Segments	Project Area	Super-visorial District	Project Number	Bikeway Class	Begin Point	End Point	Miles	Cost / Mile	Cost Estimate	Notes
SMART Rail Trail	Petaluma	2	88G	Class I	Marin Co. Line	Petaluma City Limits	3.67	\$ 400,000	\$1,470,000	Principal north / south connection between Sonoma and Marin counties. Regional Network.
Sonoma County Bay Trail	Petaluma	2	206F	Class I	State Hwy. 121	Port Sonoma	4.61	\$ 400,000	\$1,845,000	Sears Point Trail. Segments I and II of the Bay Trail.

“SMART Rail Trail” Pathway alignment on SMART ROW

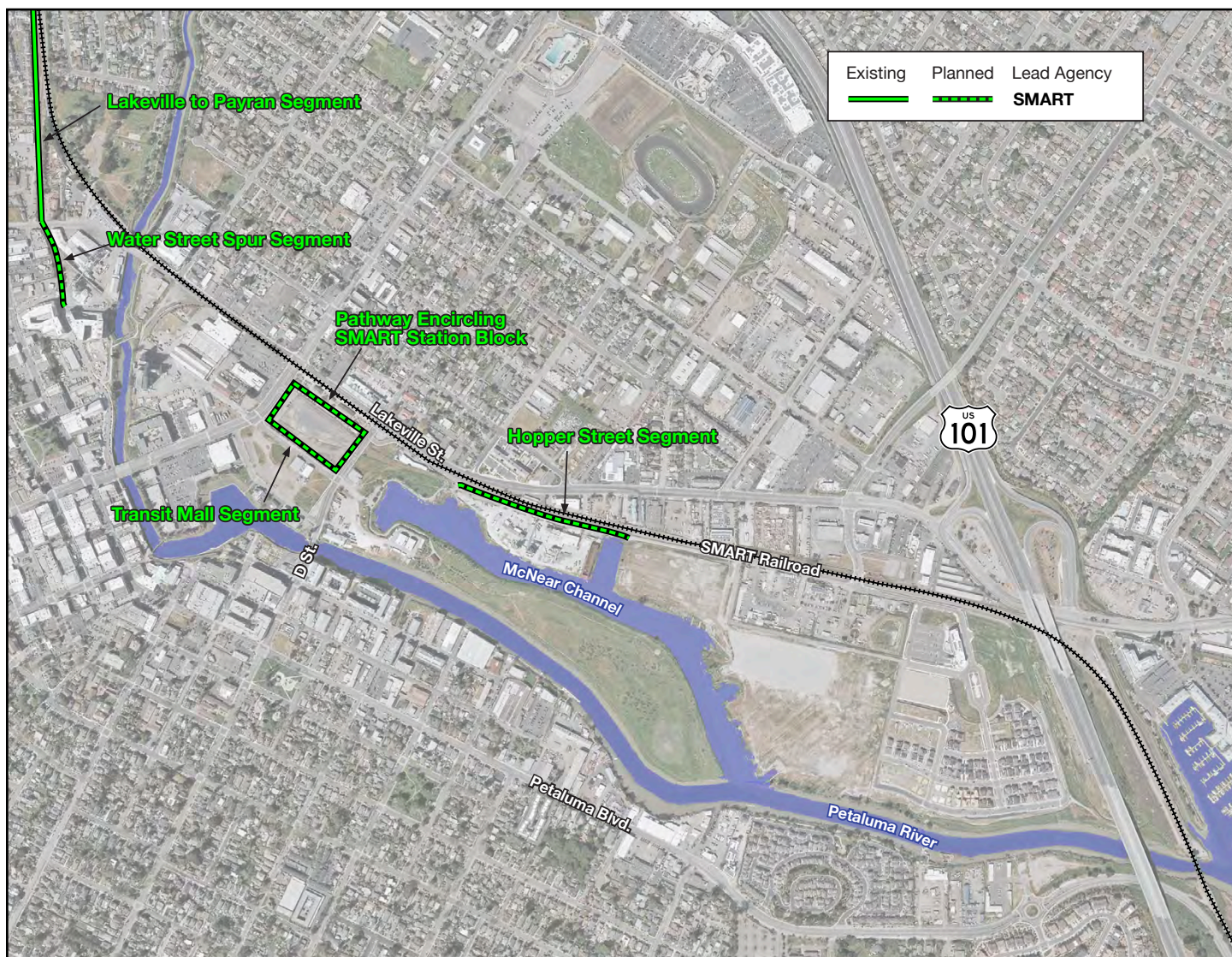




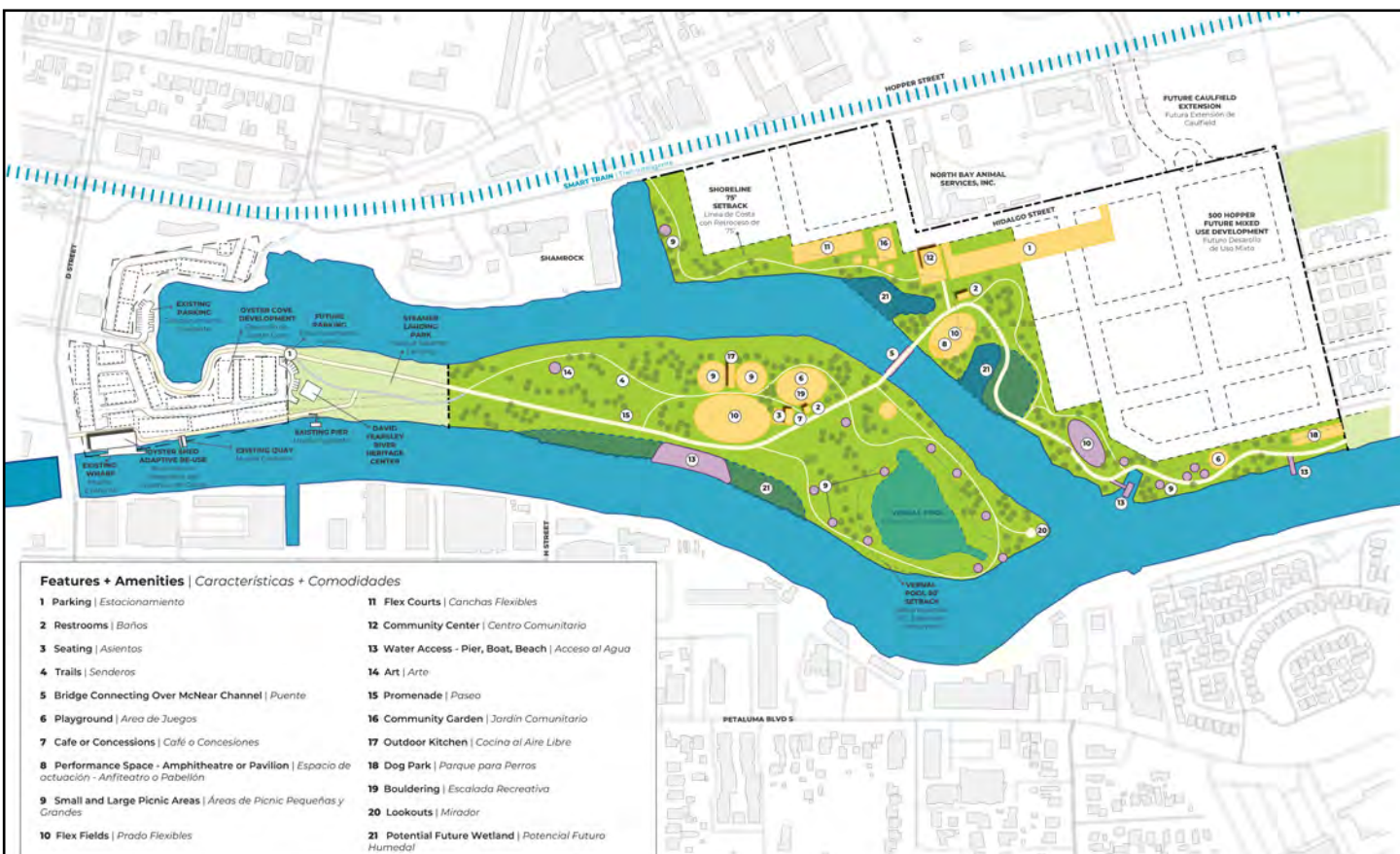
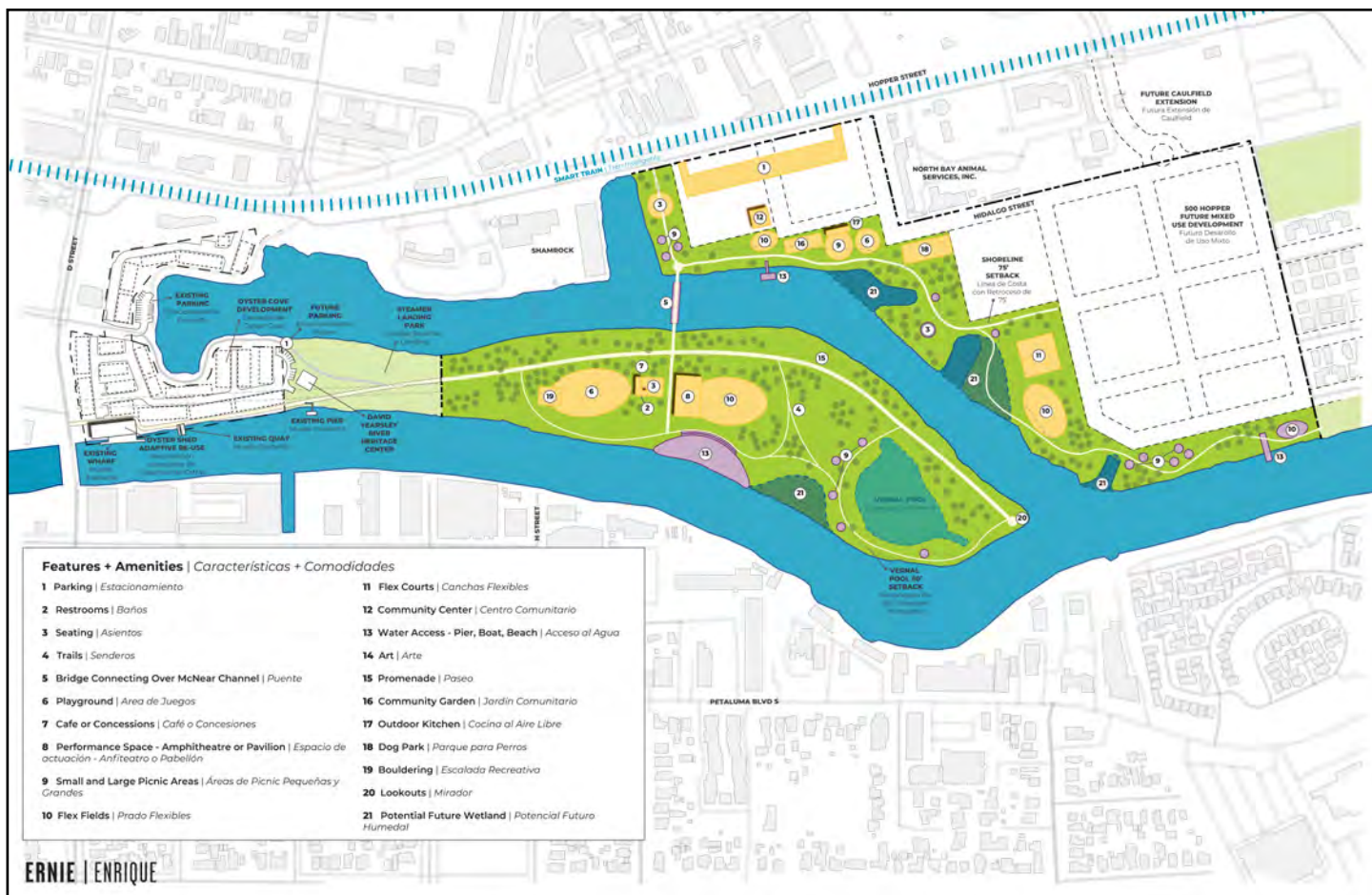
Pathway Segments to Complete the SMART Pathway in Petaluma and the Agencies Responsible for Each Segment



Pathway Segments to Complete the SMART Pathway in Petaluma (SMART SEGMENTS ONLY)



Conceptual Plans for the Petaluma River Park (2024)



Comments on Draft Strategic Plan

Comment	Agency Response
<p>From: Dan Bell <dan.martin.bell@gmail.com> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 10:18 AM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Comments to Draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan</p> <p>RIDERSHIP: SMART Connect Shuttle Buses should be Low-Floor Boarding Vans with greater space for large luggage pieces. Existing step-up vans are too difficult to ingress/egress and no space for luggage. Future seamless connection between Larkspur SMART Station and Ferry Terminal should be an aerial people-mover ala SFO Airport. Better train-bus connection to/from San Rafael Transit Center and downtown SF should include a fast, direct shuttle using Lombard, North Point, Embarcadero route to serve tourism at Fisherman's Wharf and downtown/Market Street. Increase bike capacity by removing the unused Cafe Bar and adding Bike Cars similar to CalTrain. Support Transit-Oriented Development by facilitating housing at the large SMART owned parcel adjacent to the downtown Petaluma SMART Station.</p> <p>PATHWAY: Construct the Smith Ranch Road to Main Gate Road pathway by working with the two adjacent property owners (Silviera Ranch and SF ArchDiocese) for easements on their property, since construction in the SMART ROW would be very expensive and environmentally difficult to mitigate. Napa's Vine Trail project has obtained numerous private property easements to facilitate their pathway project. The North-South Greenway project south of Corte Madera Creek should be implemented with SMART working with Corte Madera and private property owners to complete Gap 4 from Redwood Highway to Corte Madera Creek Crossing.</p> <p>Dan Bell, Sonoma Valley</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>Supporting TOD is included as Strategy 14 under Ridership.</p> <p>We are exploring the option of easements for pathway segments.</p>
<p>From: Conor McKay <conor96@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 9:42 AM</p>	<p>Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Strategic Plan. Regarding a future station</p>

To: Leticia Rosas <lrosas@sonomamarintrain.org>

Subject: Re: COC Meeting Packet - November 13, 2024

Hello Leticia,

Unfortunately, a conflict with work came up that I am not able to miss. I will not be able to attend today's COC meeting. I reviewed the packet, including the Draft Strategic Plan, and I think it looks great. One thing I would like to see added is some sort of consideration of a South Santa Rosa SMART Station. As I have articulated in previous meetings, the southern portion of Santa Rosa has been historically underserved by public infrastructure, particularly transit connections both locally and regionally. In order for SMART to achieve its ridership goals and for local jurisdictions to meet their climate goals, capturing new riders in the growing south Santa Rosa area would be essential. I am currently managing the South Santa Rosa Specific Plan process for the City of Santa Rosa, which is looking at how the future of this area might change over the course of the next 15-20 years. In conducting this research, we have found a huge need for alternative forms of regional transportation. Additionally, if residential density increases in the area, the need for a South Santa Rosa SMART Station grows.

I understand General Manager Cumins wants to avoid the transformation of SMART from a commuter rail to a light rail system, but I feel for the reasons above, that a South Santa Rosa SMART Station should not be completely off the table. I kindly request that the following language be added under Goal 2 on Page 45 of the Strategic Plan:

-Consider addition of a south Santa Rosa station, west of Highway 101 and south of Highway 12, to enhance value of the investment in the railroad through central Sonoma County.

Please share this with your staff. As always, thank you for your service.

Thank you,
Conor McKay

in South Santa Rosa, although this station has been included in past City documents, adding a third Santa Rosa Station at Bellevue is not part of SMART's EIR, the Countywide Transportation Plans, the Regional Transportation Plan, nor the Caltrans State Rail Plan.

Our single-track system was designed and built around sidings and double track sections being built in certain locations to allow a certain frequency of service along our single-track system. That means changing station locations or adding stations has a big impact on our service headways, and putting station locations too close together has a negative impact on train speeds in between those stations. Modifications within the built system would have negative service impacts throughout the corridor.

We are currently constructing the Pathway between Rohnert Park and South Santa Rosa and have funding to close the gap between Joe Rodota Trail and 3rd Street. When completed, residents and other people wishing to travel between southwest Santa Rosa and Downtown Santa Rosa or Rohnert Park will have Class 1 SMART Pathway/Great Redwood Trail to access SMART Stations.

From: J Sever <jsever117@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 12:41 PM

To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>

Subject: Plan comments

It is critical to prioritize completing missing pathway segments with 2 miles of stations to make train access by bike possible and increase train ridership.

Hamilton is totally isolated and must be connected north to Bell Marin Keys.

On-street alternatives ARE NOT the pathways we need for the vast majority of people of all ages and abilities to feel safe accessing the train. So they don't access the train.

Please prioritize funding and building the separated pathway access to all train stations.

Thank you.

Jean Severinghaus

Thank you for your comments. SMART continues to prioritize completion of the system which includes completing the rail project and the planned pathway. All of the remaining pathway gaps along the operating rail line are in design and are advancing to a "shovel-ready" status which means they will be eligible for grant funding to fund construction. This includes the segments you mention between Hamilton Station and Bel Marin Keys area, and segment south of Hamilton Station that connects Hamilton with the Pathway in San Rafael. The latter segment was recently submitted for a grant application. Both of these Hamilton segments are at 50% design, meaning once the funding needed is secured, these segments could enter into a design/build contract that would construct them.

SMART monitors and pursues grant opportunities that SMART's pathway segments are eligible for, and strategically applies for grants for those pathway projects best positioned to receive funding in those particular programs. We have been successful with this approach, which has made it possible for SMART to construct 9 more miles of pathway (all opening between now and mid 2025) and funding for another 5 miles of pathway that will be going into construction soon.

	<p>We are hopeful that we may receive funding for the pathway from Hamilton south to San Rafael, and will be working towards securing full funding for the other segment north of Hamilton and for the other remaining gaps.</p>
<p>From: Adam Garcia <amg.sustainable.planning@gmail.com> Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 10:11 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Strategic Plan comments</p> <p>Hello SMART,</p> <p>Please accept the attached digital version of the letter I dropped off at the Petaluma Downtown SMART community gathering on September 25th about coordinating with the City of Petaluma on re-imagining the Petaluma Downtown SMART station to prioritize people walking, riding-rolling, and taking transit.</p> <p>I'd also encourage SMART to explore the feasibility of using railway tracks for solar energy production. As described in the article below, the Sun-ways pilot project in Switzerland shows an encouraging pathway for maximizing the railway's multiple uses and benefits.</p> <p>Article Solar power project hits the rails with between-track panel pilot New Atlas, October 10, 2024 https://newatlas.com/energy/sun-ways-solar-power-between-rail-track-panel-pilot/</p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments. SMART will continue to coordinate with the City of Petaluma on potential station access improvements.</p>
<p>From: Matthew Hartzell <mhartzell@wtb.com> Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 7:50 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Cc: Patrick Seidler <pseidler@wtb.com> Subject: Comments on SMART Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan</p> <p>Dear SMART,</p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments. We have revised the Puerto Suello pathway project to reflect the upcoming design and environmental work on the</p>

<p>Please accept for the record WTB-TAM's Comments on the SMART Draft 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>For those recipients who may have already read our November 12 Comments to the COC, please note that this version of our Comments is shorter than our previous Comments. We listened to General Manager Cumins' response to part of our original Comments during the COC meeting, and have modified our Comments accordingly.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Sincerely, WTB-TAM</p>	<p>project as its own action. Please see p. 30.</p> <p>SMART will continue to work with the City of Petaluma and the Petaluma River Park Foundation to support the planning and completion of pathways providing improved access to the SMART station.</p> <p>The SMART pathway alignment between Haystack Landing Bridge and Novato San Marin SMART Station is consistent with the 2006 SMART EIR. Additionally, the SMART Pathway alignment between the Novato San Marin SMART Station and the county line is consistent with the North South Greenway alignment as detailed in the Transportation Authority of Marin's 2023 North-South Greenway & Cross Marin Bikeway Status Report.</p>
<p>From: Nancy MacFarlane <nmac716@gmail.com> Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 7:37 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Extend service to Cloverdale</p> <p>As a resident of Cloverdale, we have been paying taxes on the SMART train for years, but it doesn't look like service will actually come here. Please be sure to extend the SMART train to Cloverdale. It is greatly needed here especially since most of the working residents have to commute south to their jobs. Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. SMART is committed to full system buildout to Cloverdale.</p>
<p>From: Mark <mabirnbaum1@gmail.com></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 5:10 PM
To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>
Subject: SMART 2025-2030 Draft Plan comments

I just read the Draft Plan. It is quite impressive both in terms of obvious efforts put into it and the goals/objectives identified.

Several comments/suggestions.

As a user of both the rail and path components of the SMART system, there are several items that would have beneficial effects on both pathway ridership AND train ridership.

1. In Novato, there exists a large industrial area (Bel Marin Keys) that is only a few flat miles away from the Downtown Novato SMART station, but which is nearly impossible for potential SMART train riders coming from the North to access. With the advent of electric bikes, this is a prime candidate for “first mile/last mile improvements. The Vintage Oaks to Hanna Ranch Rd. pathway extension will get train riders to within a few feet of an unmaintained existing path that runs to Frosty Acres in Bel Marin Keys. Rehabilitating this “Orphan Path” that runs from Hanna Ranch Rd. to Frosty Acres Rd. would provide a route to an actual destination.. The other end of this potential route, from Rowland Blvd. to the Downtown Novato SMART station consists of an unmaintained path that runs from south of the Downtown Novato SMART station to a street connection a bit north of Rowland Way. Completion of this route would generate both increased train ridership and increased pathway usage.

2. Pathway designs should be shown to actual potential users of the path. Users can provide input that will make the paths practical and attractive to non-hard core cyclists. The pathway in Petaluma has numerous barriers where the pathway intersects with a street. In addition it is difficult in some cases to see where the pathway continues, if it does, on the other side of the street. These barriers are a disincentive for potential usage of the path. Page 28, item 6 of the Draft Plan states that pathways should be safe and user friendly. Most of the SMART paths are unlit, making them unusable at night on a practical basis by both females and children. The only exceptions I’m aware of are the Foss Creek Path in Healdsburg and the path between Andersen Drive and

SMART is working with Caltrans and the County of Marin to confirm ownership and maintenance responsibility of the section of pathway from Hanna Ranch Rd to Frosty Ln.

Ridership – Strategy 6:

- Add train service as resources permit, including weekend, midday, earlier morning or later night service.
- Explore adding double track or sidings to decrease travel time

Pathway -- Strategies 6:

- Evaluate the feasibility of providing additional pathway amenities such as lighting, benches, and art

<p>the Larkspur SMART station. Also, to permit nighttime usage, way finding signs should be lit. An example of good path/street interface is the path that runs under the elevated BART tracks from North Berkeley to Richmond.</p> <p>3. As funding becomes available, more train runs should be added mid day, to reduce the “Hole” in the schedule.</p> <p>4. Double tracking should begin (obviously a long-term project) to permit more frequent train schedules.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention. Mark Birnbaum Novato, CA</p>	
<p>From: Patrick Dorn (Saint Pisces) <pmdorn@gmail.com> Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 4:47 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Draft plan</p> <p>It would be great if there was station in Geyserville.</p> <p>It’s a hidden gem in Sonoma County. The distance between Healdsburg and Cloverdale planned stations is too far to walk and uber/lyft charge a lot in those locations.</p> <p>Cycling would be fine for me but not for many that would want to visit and spend money in Sonoma County.</p> <p>-Patrick</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Extensions, Strategy 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider addition of a Geyserville station halfway between Cloverdale and Healdsburg to enhance value of the investment in the railroad through northern Sonoma County.
<p>From: dorybeny@sonic.net <dorybeny@sonic.net> Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2024 4:58 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: input on strategic plan</p> <p>Thank you for sharing the SMART strategic plan update and providing avenues for residents to provide input. My husband and I live in the Montgomery Village neighborhood of Santa Rosa. He does not have a driver's license and works at Marin General Hospital. The train is an important part of his commute, but he does have a very long day given the difficult coordination of bus schedules at both end of his trip (getting to Railroad Square and even worse getting from downtown</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We continue to work with our transit partners to improve connections.</p>

<p>San Rafael to the hospital in Greenbrae). He leaves the house at 6:30 AM and arrives back home between 7:30 and 8:00 PM every day.</p> <p>I appreciate how many people are using the train for recreation and tourism (it's really great), but I don't think that their needs and desires should take priority over residents who depend on the train to get to and from work. Wasn't that the main point of starting SMART? My husband sometimes has to stand on the way home, after working on his feet all day at the hospital. Please do not remove even more seats for bicycles. They are primarily used for tourism and recreation, which is nice, but should not be the first needs met by our train over those of commuters.</p> <p>I, too, use the train when I can to get to other towns on the route for shopping and restaurants; but I'm not dependent on it for my daily work commute. I wish I could be, but working in SF makes it impossible given the trouble making connections, and slow travel times on the bus, train, ferry, and then bus that I'd have to take. Unfortunately, this still isn't a viable option for those of us who work in SF.</p> <p>Thanks again for the opportunity to express my opinion.</p> <p>Dory Escobar</p>	
<p>From: Mark Helmbrecht <Mark.Helmbrecht@cityofvallejo.net> Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2024 4:44 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan comments</p> <p>SMART:</p> <p>I reviewed your draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan and saw the direction to submit comments at this email address. The City of Vallejo is very interested in and supportive of development of north bay passenger rail service. The City completed a passenger rail service study for the rail lines that come down into Vallejo from Napa Junction. Our study looked at making our southern terminus at the WETA Ferry Terminal in our Downtown/Waterfront and how a passenger rail service could serve travel demand into American Canyon, Napa, and over</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Extensions Strategy 5: Continue development of east/west passenger rail project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Hwy 37 coordination efforts and work with partners to incorporate rail into Hwy 37 projects

to Suisun/Fairfield to connect to the Capitol Corridor. We understand that Napa has now initiated a passenger rail study to look at extension up into the City of Napa. Vallejo is also participating in the SR37 studies and is supportive of developing transit services across the north bay running east/west to serve the travel demand in the SR37 corridor. We believe SMART operations across the 46 mile stretch between Novato and Fairfield/Suisun would be valuable and as any service gets planned, we'd like to participate and understand how that service would serve Vallejo, the most populous city in Solano County.

Appreciate that support for pursuing north bay east/west passenger rail service by SMART is in this strategic plan. Reach out to me for any questions or for further coordination on planning further north bay rail services with the City of Vallejo.

Sincerely,

Mark Helmbrecht
Transportation Program Superintendent
City of Vallejo | Public Works Department

From: Robert Pilgrim <robert.pilgrim@acumentransit.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2024 3:16 PM
To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>
Cc: 'Walter Allen' <walter.allen@acumentransit.com>
Subject: comments on SMART Draft Strategic Plan - ACUMEN

The one comment ACUMEN has is regarding EV Charging provisional plans, whereby it appears SMART has a less energetic venue for chargers at the various stations in comparison to other agencies in the area. Revising the draft to show a more robust plan would help promote movement in the EV direction and serve as a degree of comfort to future SMART riders.

Robert Pilgrim, P.E.
Operations & Program Manager



Acumen Building Enterprise, Inc.

Thank you for your comments.
See under Ridership, Strategy 5:

- Plan for future Electric Vehicle (EV) charging needs at SMART-owned parking lots

<p>7770 Pardee Lane, Suite 200 Oakland, CA 94621 Tel: 510.530.3029 Ext. 105 Cel: 510.332.4656 Fax: 510.530.3125</p>	
<p>From: Victor Delpanno <victordelpanno@gmail.com> Sent: Monday, November 25, 2024 12:22 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Re: Corrected email link for comments on SMART Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>I'm very impressed with what SMART has achieved in the last few years. It is truly a national example for intercity rail connections.</p> <p>In part because of the SMART Trail and the train frequency, I was able to sell my car and travel to most places by biking/walking/transit. The strategic plan looks like it covers most of everything, and explains concepts in an easy to understand way. I hope you reach the great set of goals laid out.</p> <p>I'm excited for upcoming openings, especially Windsor Station and the trail between Bellevue and Golf Course. The shuttle is a great micromobility program, and would love to see SMART partner with cities on adding shuttles around more stations, in the model of Petaluma with LumaGo.</p> <p>And I don't know how big of a role SMART plays in transit-oriented development, but I'm glad to see the Lance Drive development near Santa Rosa North approved for construction, which will put many people in the catchment area of the station.</p> <p>In the next few years, I'm confident that SMART will continue to improve the transportation options in the region and help make our cities better. One thing I wish SMART did is drop its opposition to the Jennings pedestrian at-grade crossing, building it would advance many of the values in the plan at a relatively low cost to SMART. Having people near a station not have to drive for short trips will encourage less car use and ultimately increase ridership.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>From: Derek McGill <DMcGill@tam.ca.gov> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 4:17 PM</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org>

Cc: Emily Betts <ebetts@sonomamarintrain.org>

Subject: TAM staff Comments on SMART Strategic Plan

Hello SMART Strategic Planners,

TAM staff appreciates the opportunity to comment on SMART's Draft Strategic Plan 2025 - 2030. Overall, TAM is pleased to see the draft plan articulate an actionable path forward for SMART service in Marin and Sonoma counties. As longtime partners with SMART, in 2017 TAM entered into a funding agreement to provide make ready infrastructure of EV chargers at the San Marin and Hamilton parking lots, and identified EV charging needs at these locations in the 2019 Marin County Electric Vehicle Charging Station Siting Plan. TAM staff would encourage SMART to complete the buildout of these lots with EV charging equipment and complete the long-term commitment to community EV charging opportunities the district has identified. TAM EV charging rebates of up to \$3,000 per charge port are available for installation, on a first-come first-serve basis.

TAM staff are also pleased to see the support for implementation of the Redwood Bikeshare pilot to support first last mile ridership to SMART. As a SMART connection, the Redwood Bikeshare system is designed to integrate the railroad service into the community. As the pilot is launched using one-time grant funds, ongoing operations and support for the program beyond the initial pilot phase may require additional operating funds. To the extent the strategic plan can reflect SMART's support of bikeshare as an ongoing operations and maintenance line item, either as an individual line item or as part of the shuttle service line item would demonstrate SMART's commitment to a truly multimodal first and last mile connection.

TAM staff look forward to continued partnership with the district on these items and other areas identified in the draft Strategic Plan, including:

- Completing the SMART Multi-use Pathway in Marin, also known as the North-South Greenway as identified in TAM's Countywide Transportation Plan.
- Ongoing participation in the Marin Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan to improve

See under Ridership, Strategy 5:

- Plan for future Electric Vehicle (EV) charging needs at SMART-owned parking lots

SMART is planning to install chargers at Hamilton and San Marin, using the infrastructure previously funded by TAM, in 2025.

SMART is fully committed to completing the planned segments of pathway in Marin, supporting the development of Mobility Hubs at SMART stations, and participating in the Marin Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan.

<p>transit connectivity and efficient transit services in the two counties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Development and implementation of Mobility Hubs at SMART stations in Marin County. <p>Regards,</p> <p>Derek McGill, AICP Director of Planning Transportation Authority of Marin dmcgill@tam.ca.gov (415) 226-0825 900 5th Avenue, Suite 100 San Rafael, CA 94901</p>	
<p>From: Cathleen Sullivan <csullivan@marintransit.org> Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 8:52 AM To: Emily Betts <ebetts@sonomamarintrain.org>; Eddy Cumins <ecumins@sonomamarintrain.org> Cc: Nancy Whelan <nwhelan@marintransit.org>; Robert Betts <rbetts@marintransit.org> Subject: SMART Strategic Plan Letter</p> <p>Dear Emily and Eddy, Attached please find a comment letter from Marin Transit on the SMART Draft Strategic Plan. It's a great document! Big compliments and thank you for the opportunity to review/comment. Best, Cathleen</p> <p>Cathleen Sullivan (she/her) Director of Planning [p] (415) 226-0878</p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>The following changes have been made to the document:</p> <p>Added to the insights sidebar “Increases in frequency by SMART and connecting services is the most effective way long-term to improve transfers.” p.25</p> <p>Added action under strategy #8 “Coordinate with other transit agencies in the North Bay to provide joint marketing of services and improve the legibility of the system” p.27</p> <p>Added action under strategy #13 “Pursue operating funds for continuation or expansion of services to meet customer demand” p.28</p>
<p>From: David Schonbrunn <David@Schonbrunn.org> Date: 11/29/24 5:58 PM (GMT-08:00) To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org></p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

<p>Cc: Eddy Cumins <ecumins@sonomamarintrain.org>, Heather McKillop <hmckillop@sonomamarintrain.org>, "Lucan, Eric" <elucan@marincounty.org>, Kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org</p> <p>Subject: Comments on Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>Attached please find the comments of the Train Riders Association of California. An email indicating receipt would be most appreciated.</p> <p>--David</p> <p>David Schonbrunn, Vice President Train Riders Association of California (TRAC) P.O. Box 151439 San Rafael, CA 94915-1439</p> <p>415-370-7250 cell & office www.calrailnews.org</p>	<p>See the addition of Appendix C: Scenarios beyond April 2029, as presented to the Board in 2023.</p> <p>15-minute headways are not currently possible due to the single-track configuration. Planning for passing sidings or double track is included under Ridership, Strategy 6.</p> <p>The following changes have been made to the document:</p> <p>Amended the actions as follows: "Evaluate the feasibility of providing additional pathway amenities such as lighting, benches, and art, including potential sponsorship by local businesses." p. 30</p> <p>Fare Revenues are shown separately in Appendix B</p> <p>Revised "passenger rail system" to "passenger rail service" p. 31 Added "station" after "Novato Downtown" and "Petaluma North" p.31</p> <p>Revised "receives" rather than "received" p. 48</p>
<p>From: Janet Barocco <jbarocco@gmail.com> Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2024 4:09 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Input to SMART strategic plan</p> <p>Input to the SMART strategic plan:</p> <p>Build Jennings pedestrian crossing! It has been months since the City of Santa Rosa sent SMART a reasonable counter-proposal to deal with liability issues. Why hasn't SMART</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

<p>replied? Although it has been nearly TEN years since this project was approved by the CPUC, our community has not forgotten about Jennings Crossing.</p> <p>If SMART is sincere about its dedication to the community and to mitigating the effects of climate change, then the SMART Board will finally reply to the City of Santa Rosa with their agreement that an at-grade, car-free rail crossing be built at Jennings. Community members want and need to have car-free access to businesses, restaurants, and schools on both sides of the tracks. Diverting pedestrians to either Guerneville Road or West College prolongs a trip by foot by 20 – 30 minutes, thus encouraging people to drive instead. And, forcing people to walk longer distances on N. Dutton, to Guerneville Road or West College to cross the tracks with car traffic is more dangerous than a gated, car-free, at-grade crossing at Jennings would be.</p> <p>My enthusiasm for SMART has soured over the past decade because of SMART’s disregard for the community’s and the City of Santa Rosa’s wishes for this crossing.</p> <p>Include Jennings Crossing in SMART’s strategic plan!</p> <p>Janet Barocco Jennings Avenue</p>	
<p>From: Richard Heinberg <richardheinberg@postcarbon.org> Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2024 8:20 AM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Shape the future of SMART</p> <p>Input to the SMART strategic plan: Build Jennings Crossing. SMART has for several years now shown utter contempt for the pedestrians, bicyclists, and residents of the Jennings Avenue neighborhood. Our neighborhood was injured by SMART's closing of the crossing, and residents, with the backing of the City of Santa Rosa and the CPUC, have worked for years to get SMART to agree to building a safe, at-grade crossing. SMART is still dragging its feet, refusing to seriously engage with the City, and clinging to the phony excuse of safety (when in fact the Jennings crossing would be significantly safer than crossings at Guerneville Road, College Avenue, and Railroad Square). As the tone of</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

this letter implies, the initial goodwill of Santa Rosa's environmentally minded pedestrians and bicyclists toward SMART is wearing thin. Jennings Crossing: JUST BUILD IT!

--

Richard Heinberg

Senior Fellow, Post Carbon Institute

www.richardheinberg.com

www.postcarbon.org

From: Guy <gaetanlion@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2024 12:23 PM

To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>

Subject: Public Comment from Gaetan Lion, Mill Valley

SMART just does not work and never will. SMART's original targets of reaching a daily average ridership of 5,000 and a farebox recovery ratio of 36% remain pipe dreams. The current figures are 2,329 and only 3% respectively.

<https://marinpost.org/blog/2024/11/28/smart-is-not-viable>
<https://marinpost.org/blog/2024/6/26/benchmarking-smart-train-vs-caltrain>

I am not the only one who looked at SMART's poor performance.

Mike Arnold, economist

<https://marinpost.org/blog/2023/10/28/smart-marketing-spending-your-money-to-convince-you-of-the-wonders-of-smart-rail?query=Mike+Arnold§ion=blog>

Marin County Grand Jury Report of 2023 was also rather discouraging

<https://www.marincounty.org/-/media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2022-23/smart-at-a-crossroads.pdf?la=en>

I suspect you will get 2,300 positive comments from your daily passengers. But, if SMART wants to renew Measure Q, there are 100,000s upset voters that can't stand the traffic jam SMART is causing at the San Rafael station during commute hours. And, that's among SMART numerous failings detailed within my studies.

Thank you for your comments.

<p>Gaetan Lion Mill Valley</p>	
<p>From: Collin Thoma <cthoma@mydslc.org> Sent: Monday, December 2, 2024 2:37 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: SMART Strategic Plan Comments</p> <p>Dear whom this concerns,</p> <p>I am Collin Thoma the Systems Change Advocate with Disability Services and Legal Center (DSLCL). I have attached a copy of my comments regarding the Strategic Plan and, I do apologize for turning them in late, I hope they are still able to be accepted.</p> <p>Sincerely, Collin Thoma Systems Change Advocate Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLCL) 521 Mendocino Avenue Santa Rosa, CA 95401 (707)636-3076</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Ridership section:</p> <p>Strategy 3: Improve first/last mile connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue SMART Connect Shuttle Program at Airport and Larkspur stations; expand service as demand warrants • Explore offering SMART Connect Shuttle service to new stations <p>Strategy 4: Work with local partners to improve transit connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to improve local bus and ferry connections and transfer times <p>Strategy 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add train service as resources permit, including weekend, midday, earlier morning or later night service. <p>Added new Action under Ridership, Strategy 8: “Expand outreach to seniors and persons with disabilities and provide information to organizations that provide services to these groups.”</p>
<p>From: Ariana Rickard <ariana@sonomalandtrust.org> Sent: Friday, November 29, 2024 6:40 PM</p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p>

<p>To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Sonoma Land Trust comments on SMART draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>Hello,</p> <p>Enclosed please find a comment letter from Sonoma Land Trust on the draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. We appreciate our partnership with SMART and look forward to continuing to work with you to promote climate resilience in the North Bay.</p> <p>Thanks, Ariana</p> <p>Ariana Rickard <i>Public Policy and Funding Program Manager</i> Sonoma Land Trust 822 Fifth Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404 (707) 526-6930 ext. 153; cell: (925) 354-6764 www.sonomalandtrust.org Pronouns She/Her/Hers</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments on the Hwy 37 corridor.</p>
<p>-----Original Message----- From: Michael Arnold <Arnold@AlcoPartners.com> Sent: Friday, November 29, 2024 8:51 AM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Cc: Eddy Cumins <ecumins@sonomamarintrain.org>; Heather McKillop <hmckillop@sonomamarintrain.org>; Rachel Farac <rfarac@novato.org>; Lucan, Eric <elucan@marincounty.org>; Kate.colin@cityofsanrafael.org; Gabe Paulson <gpaulson@cityoflarkspur.org> Subject: Comments on Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>attached</p>	<p><i>Note: comment letter attached.</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>30-minute headways are not currently possible due to the addition of the Novato Downtown Station. SMART is working to restore 30-minute headways through the addition of strategically located double track sidings.</p> <p>Ridership – Strategy 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore adding double track or sidings to decrease travel time <p>Corrections to fare revenue projections have been made to align with ridership projections (see p.38)</p>

	<p>Regarding operating funds for Windsor, SMART assumed the opening of Windsor in FY 25.</p> <p>A new appendix with scenarios that include an assumption of SMART not securing a sale tax extension prior to 2029 was added under Appendix C. Additionally the following language was added to the Sales and Use Tax (Measure Q) section, “However, in September 2023, SMART did present the Board of Directors with potential scenarios for continuing operations beyond the April 2029 sales tax expiration date, which included scenarios where a sales tax was not approved prior to 2029. Those scenarios can be found in Appendix C.” p.46</p>
<p>-----Original Message----- From: Mike Pechner <weather@sonic.net> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 8:33 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>COMMENTS ON PLAN: First and foremost for both Passenger and Freight operators, the roadbed has to be raised not only above historic floods but also taking into account sea level rise from Climate Change. Staarting at Marin County Civic Center north to Gallons Creek. I am not telling anything that is not known, but Ignacio Wye to Novato Creek both on the Schelville Main and north to Novato Depot needs to raise.. Schellville Itself is the Achilles heal of the railroad. It flooded again during the storms this November. High water on the storage tracks threatens the viability and safety of stored cars and cuts off the railroad from going north to Petaluma or east to pick up the loads at Lombard. Once the railroad is opened to Healdsburg and Cloverdale,, there are LEGACY NWP</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

<p>customers who will use the railroad IF SMART does not take up their spur and then charge them tout it back., Myself and the late Doug Williams visited potential customers iin Cloverdale including Redwood national and All Coast Lumber. They told us there are not enough trucks and trucking is too expensive. Once the Skunk Line is rebuilt, they will want to get their loads onto the National Rail network Willits to Cloverdale. SMART. Will get much needed revenue from such an operation. SMART will need t spend millions or get grants to keep the freight viable.</p>	
<p>From: Beth Kraft <magic7picard@yahoo.com> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 7:28 AM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: public comment</p> <p>I am so thrilled that we have the SMART train up and running in Marin and Sonoma counties. My sixteen year old grandson and all of his friends use SMART train regularly. My grandson is homeschooled and he has classes all over Marin and Sonoma county. He depends on the SMART train to get him from Novato to Santa Rosa, from Novato to San Rafael to take classes and to meet up with the many friends he has in both counties.</p> <p>He now has me relying on the train for my many happenings I have in Petaluma...I love the train! It's dependable....always on time...it's fast and efficient...it's clean and comfortable.</p> <p>I will gladly pay an increased tax to extend the SMART train to Cloverdale and to put in bike lanes along the rail to encourage more bike transportation and less cars on the road...</p> <p>thank you Mary Beth Kraft Novato</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>From: Adam Garcia <amg.sustainable.planning@gmail.com> Sent: Monday, November 25, 2024 12:00 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan comment</p> <p>Hello,</p> <p>To improve conditions for bicyclists on the SMART train, I'd like SMART to consider the following additions to the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan:</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the vending station in each train car with bicycle parking. • Provide free origin-destination tags that can be attached to bicycles and written on with a marker to help bicyclists easily view and communicate the order in which to stack bikes in the train car. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ A similar tag system is successfully employed by bicyclists riding on Caltrain, an initiative by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition. 	
<p>From: DENISE COLEIRO <deni.1963@comcast.net> Sent: Saturday, November 23, 2024 4:51 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: train</p> <p>Most helpful to have a train earlier than 6:48 departing from downtown Petaluma station traveling North.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>From: Craig Tackabery <ctackabery@gmail.com> Sent: Friday, November 22, 2024 3:34 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: SMART strategic plan comment</p> <p>Hi, the plan looks like \$670M is proposed for construction of rail infrastructure north of Santa Rosa.</p> <p>And that without that expenditure, you could fund service from Larkspur to Santa Rosa with an 1/8 cent sales tax.</p> <p>I do think the campaign around Measure Q indicated it was adequate to fund all the construction. It wasn't. It implied that going forward after 20 years all that was needed was funding for O&M, not a perpetual 1/4 cent tax.</p> <p>The plan provides no incremental ridership forecast to justify this rail extension to the north. Nor does the plan look at a bus alternative (which already exists today by Sonoma Transit) rather than a rail extension.</p> <p>Please look at a more modest and cost effective proposal.</p> <p>-- Craig</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

<p>From: Nadia Silvershine <nsilvershine@gmail.com> Sent: Friday, November 22, 2024 12:56 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan</p> <p>THANX! Love the train and can't wait for it to go to Healdsburg!</p> <p>Best wishes,</p> <p>Nadia Silvershine</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>From: Richard Harkness <harknessrk@gmail.com> Sent: Saturday, November 16, 2024 12:00 PM To: Planning <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Cc: Johnston, Eric <eric.johnston@pressdemocrat.com>; chris.fusco@pressdemocrat.com; john.danna@pressdemocrat.com; jim.sweeney@pressdemocrat.com; vfleming@srcity.org; dgiacopini@bayareametro.gov; david.rabbitt@sonoma-county.org; Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org; district3@sonoma-county.org; district4@sonoma-county.org; district5@sonoma-county.org Subject: comment on SMART's Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>In response to your email here are my comments relating to SMARTs strategic plan:</p> <p>When carefully analyzed and documented by this writer before the 2019 vote asking to extend the sales tax for SMART, it was established that SMART was almost certainly not saving any GHG. And it was likely not reducing traffic congestion either. (Even the original EIR said it wouldn't do that.) Yet reducing GHG emissions and traffic congestion were the two primary goals set forth on the original 1998 ballot that imposed a sales tax for SMART. These are the leading words in the 1998 ballot: <i>"To relieve traffic, fight global warming ... shall (SMART) levy a 1/4-cent sales tax for 20 years..."</i></p> <p>When last checked neither the SMART web site or strategic plan mentioned either of those two founding goals nor reported on the progress, if any, made in achieving them. The original EIR and the original ballot could not be found on the</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

web site either. It is clear to the author that SMART does not want to be held accountable for achieving the goals it promised voters when they authorized it. (Please look yourself on the web site in case I simply couldn't find them)

Since that last analysis of SMARTs impact on GHG emissions it is likely that SMART's environmental performance has declined even further, since new cars are more fuel efficient and EVs have now entered the vehicle mix thus making it even harder for SMART to reduce emissions relative to the car mix. This was all anticipated in that careful analysis mentioned above.

In light of this failure SMART continues to expand, and plans to further expand, its line north. This takes it into even less dense areas that will have even lighter ridership over longer routes, thus making SMART even more costly to operate while having even less beneficial impact. In a nutshell SMART is the wrong technology for the north bay because every transportation planner knows that commuter rail only makes sense in high density corridors.

Therefore this citizen proposes that SMART amend its plans so as to stop construction after reaching Windsor, in other words not plan to extend SMART any further north, nor to extend it eastward toward Vallejo.

Keep in mind that Golden Gate Transit (also subsidized) runs buses along 101 serving the same corridor as SMART, while also carrying readers directly into downtown SF.

SMART is also extraordinarily costly requiring a large public subsidy for every ride. Then this writer last compared SMARTs annual expenses with ridership each one-way ride was costing about \$135. The rider was paying about \$3.50 while the public was paying the rest. That's simply not reasonable nor fair to the majority of citizens of Sonoma or Marin. And now with local government reaching its sales tax limits we need to consider whether other needs should take priority over SMART. If it were possible before the 2029 vote asking to renew the SMART tax, I am confident that the majority of voters would say to drop SMART and apply that 1/4 cent sales tax money to something more important.

<p>The MTC should also reconsider its support for SMART as other systems probably merit it more.</p> <p>Its unfortunate that the public has not been made aware of SMART's failures to deliver on promises nor on the huge per-ride subsidy. The papers should report on those fundamentals, try to make SMART accountable, and not just repeat SMARTs self-serving press releases.</p> <p>Thank you for the invitation to comment on SMARTs plan.</p> <p>—Rich Harkness, BSEE, PhD in Urban Transportation Planning.</p>	
<p>From: Andrew Smith <a.asmith@comcast.net> Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 1:20 PM To: 'Planning@sonomamarintrain.org' <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>42% of SMART's revenues comes from Unfunded Future Grants. Not a good way to run a railroad in terms of revenue.</p> <p>That is why offering free fares to students and those under 18 and seniors as well is not a good policy. Yes it makes SMART look good in terms of ridership but not revenue.</p> <p>I have no issue with lower fares for students and seniors only for certain times of the week.</p> <p>On running a commercial freight rail line which was pushed onto SMART by State Senator McGuire, a bad policy, someone SMART needs to get out of this business with only 4 customers.</p> <p>If and when SMART ever gets to Cloverdale which will require the sales tax to be extended by 2029, not a given especially after a failed attempt a few years ago which was a bad decision by SMART leaders, then the decision to expand should be into Mendocino County. When the state of California gave SMART money to do a study a few years back to extend SMART along Highway 37, it was done in a dishonorable fashion! Who is going to pay for this line as it would touch both Napa and Solano Counties? Maybe</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>The unfunded future grants are assumed for capital projects and will not affect continuing operations; capital projects will be built as grant funding is available.</p>

<p>Mendocino County funds a train line from Ukiah to Cloverdale. Not a huge expense. And there is a train line that McGuire wants to get rid of for his unpaid for elitist park in Mendocino County that benefits people outside Mendocino County.</p> <p>Mendocino County has a lot more in common with Sonoma County and that could bring people down to visit the three hospitals in Santa Rosa and medical appointments. The use of shuttles would be needed or synch up with the bus services. But Mendocino County people may want to visit friends and relatives in Cloverdale and Healdsburg. Or better yet, fly out of Santa Rosa Airport and use the shuttle connector from the SMART airport station to the airport.</p> <p>SMART is at a crossroads. The Windsor line should be finished in 2025 but with the new president of the US, who knows if the money supposedly that SMART will get in 2025 to finish the line to Healdsburg will still be there. Without Healdsburg being finished, there is no way to get the sales tax extended.</p> <p>Andrew Smith Santa Rosa</p>	
<p>From: Dusty Resneck <dustyresneck@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:14 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>; Matt Stevens <mstevens@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Re: Submit your comments on SMART's Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>Hello,</p> <p>I scanned the Draft Plan and about 1/2 the 94 pages of the comments in the Appendix.</p> <p>Wayfaring Signage is listed as the 3rd most Priority.</p> <p>It did not highlight its funding.</p> <p>Wayfaring should be implemented NOW and as the Pathway is extended the Signage will be updated.</p> <p>If you want to continue to build strong support, get people on the paths and routes now with clear signs and a special Pathway Logo.</p> <p>Happy Trails YerNearSightedVisionary</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Pathway wayfinding installation began in November 2024 on SMART-owned pathway segments and will continue into early 2025.</p>

Dusty Resneck	
<p>From: Sherry Adams <sherry.n.adams@gmail.com> Sent: Friday, September 6, 2024 11:33 AM To: Emily Betts <ebetts@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Strategic plan input from COC member</p> <p>Hi Emily,</p> <p>I really appreciate your work on the SMART strategic plan and the expertise you bring to this process.</p> <p>As I have been thinking over what I believe needs to be in there since the last COC meeting, I have these additional comments. Please forgive me if these elements are already included and I missed it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning for and moving towards climate resiliency of SMART infrastructure. In 2 of our first 5 years of service we have had to suspend service due to tracks being underwater in Novato. There was a grain car that tipped over at Schellerville during a time of saturated soils. A key to voter confidence is knowing that this agency understands and is preparing for the realities of the near future. We need a strategic plan that shows this. If the agency is already working with partners on this, the public will benefit from knowing about it. - What do you think of the idea that the pathway should have metrics other than a count? Do we need any metric that shows how well it is working to meet the needs of users or the goals of the agency? I welcome your expertise on this. <p>Thank you for considering, and for your work!</p> <p>-Sherry Adams Citizens Oversight Committee member</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>SMART is working on resiliency planning with local partners. See Ridership Strategy 13: Ensure resilience of system by planning for sea level rise and weather events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partner agencies to assess the threat of sea level rise and weather events to SMART and develop plans and projects to create resiliency in the system
<p>----- Forwarded message ----- From: Adam Palmer <penncentral13@gmail.com> Date: Wed, Nov 13, 2024 at 11:04 AM Subject: Draft Strategic Plan To: <Planning@sonomamarintrain.org></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

I really don't have much if anything to comment on your regular commuter operations, however I am more than incensed that you deny historic preservation organizations, namely the Golden Gate Railroad Museum, access to operate occasional excursions on your rails. Your reasoning for denying them the right to run excursions anyways, the weight tolerances of bridges, is flawed at best and outright false at worst, as in your regular freight operations, there are pieces of rolling stock rolling over those structures that weigh more than the 2472 or any of its passenger equipment or diesel locomotives that are part of the GGRM's collection as well. In my opinion there are two scenarios for you denying excursions on your rails, one is that there was some political tomfoolery going on behind closed doors, probably with environmentalists objecting to the idea of a steam locomotive in operation, despite the fact that those people raising those objections in question likely expel more carbon into the atmosphere on a daily basis than the 2472 would put out in a single run. The second is that you let your ego as a company get in the way of allowing this organization, which has been nomadic since the Navy kicked them out of Hunters Point back in 2005, dreams of being able to operate excursions.

So all I ask is please don't let the misinformed environmentalists, nimbys, and your own ego take over, let the GGRM run a few excursions per year. If anything it would be an immense boost in ridership and PR to acknowledge the storied history of the railroad of which you run on. Thank you

From: "pkjonsky@sonic.net" <pkjonsky@sonic.net>

Subject: Draft Strategic Plan

Date: November 13, 2024 at 1:11:53 PM PST

To: Planning@sonomamarintrain.org

Questions re: above.

1) Does the Plan have any contingencies in the event the Trump 2.0 administration follows through with its de-funding threats? This could affect FY2026 or sooner.

2) Plan assumes renewal of the 1/4 cent sales tax, but doesn't address how that renewal will come about or be successful, nor address reasons why the last attempt at renewal failed. What are strategies to mitigate failure last time? Certainly

Thank you for your comments.

<p>this plan, itself, is a good start.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	
<p>From: Jack Oswald Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 12:04 PM To: Planning@sonomamarintrain.org Subject: Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>In addition to what was presented, there are 3 things that I did not see addressed.</p> <p>1 – [Most critical] There needs to be a much better plan to connect the south end of the system to the BART network and/or better seamless ways to get o the SFO and OAK airports in a reasonable transit time.</p> <p>2 – Run trains late enough in the evening to allow folks to go out eating/drinking and not have to drive home</p> <p>3 – Repair/upgrade the tracks in the southern section that “wobble” the trains. It all feels unstable and uncomfortable.</p> <p>We recently spent some time in Italy and Switzerland. Bothe of these countries are great examples of quality of service and experience including the trains themselves, the quality of the ride and the schedule of interconnection to make transit a pleasure.</p> <p>Jack Oswald CEO CTO Co-Founder ISOThrive Inc. pharma.iso thrive .com joswald@ISOThrive.com +1 415.272.6200</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Ridership Strategy 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add train service as resources permit, including weekend, midday, earlier morning or later night service.
<p>From: Joe Lieber <cala1696@icloud.com> Subject: Draft Strategic Plan Date: November 13, 2024 at 3:14:57 PM PST To: Planning@sonomamarintrain.org</p> <p>After a quick review of the plan, I must say that I believe you are doing great work. I was an early supporter of SMART along with George and Phyllis Ellman (close friends) and met Chris Coursey who was a staff person early in the process.</p> <p>I rode on the train from Petaluma to Larkspur roundtrip</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Ridership Strategy 3:</p> <p>Continue SMART Connect Shuttle Program at Airport and Larkspur stations; expand service as demand warrants</p>

<p>recently for the first time! It was a really seamless trip indeed. I REALLY APPRECIATED the shuttle between the Larkspur SMART stop and the Ferry. Being a senior citizen this was perfect. This also would be very desirable should it be raining. Please transform it into a permanent program and hopefully 7 days a week.</p> <p>Thanks for all you are doing.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Joe Lieber Sonoma</p>	
<p>From: BARBARA MACAUSLAND <bmabmw@aol.com> Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2024 9:14 PM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Comment</p> <p>The SMART CONNECT van is a God-send at the STS Airport Train Station to Charles Schultz, SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT STS . We hope that free service remains, especially along with the free SMART service for children & seniors! These are making a huge impact for access/ transportation to work & pleasure. Great use of government. It's \$50 each way to & from on the airporter to sfo/oak . Tell Sonoma & Marin residents to Fly Alaska (they even fly your wine no charge), American & Avelo from STS with no need for parking \$\$\$ & no long freeway traffic 🙌</p> <p>Smart Train saves money, time, traffic & patience— the MOST CIVILIZED WAY TO FLY !</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>See Ridership Strategy 3:</p> <p>Continue SMART Connect Shuttle Program at Airport and Larkspur stations; expand service as demand warrants</p>
<p>From: Alan Zahradnik <alanzahradnik@comcast.net> Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 8:12 AM To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org> Subject: Comments on Draft Strategic Plan</p> <p>Hello,</p> <p>After reading the draft Plan, I find one important issue that is not addressed: mitigating the significant negative traffic congestion impacts of at-grade rail crossings of major</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

roadways. In particular, I see no acknowledgement of the traffic delays in San Rafael caused by the closures of Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Mission streets when trains access and egress the downtown station and the associated negative environmental impacts. With the omission of this issue, actions to improve the situation are absent from the Strategic Plan. Without such improvements in the Plan, many of the residents of Marin County who travel in that heavily used East-west corridor may choose to not support SMART.

I urge SMART to acknowledge this issue and include in its Strategic Plan actions to address it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Alan Zahradnik
Resident of San Rafael

From: Diva Drumma <drum-core@live.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:49 AM
To: SMART Information <Info@sonomamarintrain.org>
Subject: Cloverdale !

Hello,

I live in Ukiah north of Cloverdale and am excited at the prospect of the SMART train coming to Cloverdale.

However, after reading the future plans for the extension of the line to Cloverdale, I am disappointed that there is still NO projected estimate of when this line will open.

I am also very disappointed that even though The Great Redwood Trail is mentioned there is NOT one single person representing Mendocino County on any of your boards or oversight committee, this is not acceptable.

Do the right thing, I understand you are working on the funding for the section to Cloverdale But the public REALLY needs an estimate for when this may happen.

I would also like to see public input meetings workshop/meetings in Ukiah etc. to get people here involved as the opening of the Cloverdale station will be a BIG deal as so many up here in Ukiah have been waiting DECADES for this to happen while that once brand new station has just sat there rotting.....

Our public transport south from Ukiah is limited, to an irregular and inconvenient #65 MTA bus that does not work for commuters, students to Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa airport, etc. And the Greyhound has become severely limited and is no longer a daily service south. Being able to get the SMART train from Cloverdale will also improve the quality of life and public transport for people north of Cloverdale.

Please listen to you future Cloversdale riders.

Thank You
L.Daniels

Thank you for your comments.
SMART is committed to full system buildout to Cloverdale.