



AGENDA ITEM 07

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September 16, 2026

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

SUBJECT: Consideration of Healdsburg Station Location and Request Direction to Conduct Public Outreach

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Direct staff to initiate public engagement on the consideration of the Healdsburg Station location.

SUMMARY:

In February 2024, Healdsburg's City Council determined that absent new information or changes, the City position on the SMART Healdsburg station location would be to continue with the Depot/Hudson Street site instead of a Downtown location. Since that time, significant changes have occurred to warrant further public engagement around the station location in Healdsburg. Additional public engagement around the two potential station locations in Healdsburg is being proposed to ensure the station location is fully vetted by the public, the City, and the SMART Board of Directors.

BACKGROUND:

In late 2023 and early 2024, the City of Healdsburg partnered with SMART to conduct outreach around the SMART Healdsburg station location. The engagement took the form of a City Council meeting on August 21, 2023, at which SMART was requested to make a presentation regarding the station location options, followed by a public workshop on October 19, 2023. A public survey was developed by SMART and posted for a limited period in January 2024, receiving only 12 responses. A second City Council meeting was held on February 20, 2024, to receive a City staff presentation and provide Council direction to staff. At the February 2024 meeting, SMART's General Manager provided an update and answered questions on the status of the project and the potential station locations and recommended a Downtown Station location. At the same meeting, the City determined that absent additional information, they would advance the Depot/Hudson Street location as the City's recommended station location.

In the nearly 3 years since the public workshop in Healdsburg, there have been meaningful changes with SMART's project advancement and ridership as well as

new and updated information that justifies the reconsideration of the station location. Listed here are many of the substantive developments since 2024.

- SMART's sales tax approval with 3 out of 4 people saying yes to funding through 2059;
- Continued record ridership, with August 2026 ridership 123% higher than SMART's average monthly ridership in FY24 and average weekday ridership now over 5,600, with over 25% youth under 18 many traveling to and from schools along the corridor.
- The Cloverdale Extension has been included in financially constrained, prioritized regional and state plans including:
 - the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Plan Bay Area 2050+ regional transportation financially constrained project list;
 - Sonoma County Transportation and Climate Protection Authority's Countywide transportation plan, and
 - State of California's financially constrained State Rail Plan as a Near Term project to be completed by 2031.
- SMART secured funding for the Healdsburg Extension project, including funding approval for track upgrades up to Lytton Springs Road and has additional pending and in-development applications to complete discrete segments of the remainder of the system to Cloverdale.
- SMART's Board adopted a Geyserville Station, enabling the segmentation and phasing of the northern extension.
- SMART constructed and opened the Windsor and Petaluma North Stations and 10 new miles of pathway/Great Redwood Trail.
- SMART has additional station area travel, jobs, income, and demographics data since the 2023/2024 station location discussions.

As recently shown with the public dialogue around the Geyserville SMART station, as SMART extends north, the opportunity exists to consider station locations in the context of how the local and corridor-wide community functions today versus when the railroad was built in the late 1800s. Additional consideration for station siting should be given to the future success of the entire SMART rail network and public and private first- and last-mile bus connectivity to the SMART regional rail system. In the case of Healdsburg, criteria for a successful regional rail station location include the following:

- Proximity to Downtown Healdsburg,
- Proximity to the highest concentration of jobs and people, and
- Directly connecting to regional road networks that can accommodate regional bus services including Sonoma County Transit, future Intercity Bus services from North Coast, private shuttle or school buses.

DISCUSSION:

Utilizing the criteria and new information stated above, staff recommends engaging the public by requesting inclusion on Healdsburg City Council agendas, holding a separate SMART-hosted community workshop in Healdsburg, providing opportunity at multiple SMART Board meetings, and deploying a public comment survey. Through these opportunities, SMART will engage the public on their travel needs, the ways in which the train and pathway can support those needs, and on the question of the station location to help inform station siting and

future rail service to Healdsburg.

Following the public engagement opportunities in the project area and throughout SMART's service area and the solicitation of public comment via the online survey, staff will return to the SMART Board, with the results of the engagement and other necessary information for consideration of the station location.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item. Budget included as part of the Marketing and Outreach FY27 budget is available and is being utilized to support the outreach efforts.

NEXT STEPS:

Should the Board direct staff to proceed with the proposed outreach, staff would initiate the public engagement process outlined in the staff report. Staff will return to the Board with updates throughout the process.

Sincerely,

/s/

Zoe Unruh
Planning Manager