Recommendation #2
"By December 1, 2023, SMART's Board of Directors should direct staff to develop a written strategic marketing communications and public outreach plan and budget focused on educating voters in Marin County about the community benefits derived from the continued operation of the SMART rail system."

- SMART's Board of Directors agreed with this recommendation
- Staff developed a draft marketing communications and public outreach plan
Main objective of the Plan is to inform taxpayers in Marin and Sonoma counties about the benefits SMART brings to the North Bay community.

The Plan outlines:

- Target audiences and messaging
- Branding and positioning
- Communication channels
- Metrics to measure effectiveness
- Analysis of budgetary and staffing resources
A Living Document

Marketing plans are designed to be regularly reviewed & refined, based on performance data and changing market conditions.

Other opportunities to refine the Plan

A. **Quality of Life and Economic Impact Assessment** *(Caltrans grant)*
   comprehensive assessment of economic, social, and environmental advantages passenger rail service offers the North Bay.

B. **Marin County Civil Grand Jury Recommendation #3**
   Consultant who will provide an analysis of messaging and communications channels for an effective marketing plan.
Current Marketing Activities

Marketing activities are conducted year-round

Primary objective is to **grow ridership**—social media, events, newsletter, and content marketing are continuous and ongoing

**Current Staffing Resources (3.0 FTE)**

- Communications and Marketing Manager
- Community Outreach and Customer Service Manager
- Community Outreach and Marketing Coordinator

**Current 2023-2024 Budget allocated to Growing Ridership**

- Print Materials: $50,000
- Participation in Community Fairs: $40,000
- Paid Advertising: $200,000*
- Photography/Videography: $8,000
- SMART Sponsored Events: $30,000

*Advertising graphic design & copywriting are done in-house.*
Large Regional Audience

Large regional audience. Social media reaches a small % of the population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>14,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>3,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X (Twitter)</td>
<td>4,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>9,500</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paid Ads</th>
<th>Average Impressions Per Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsprint</td>
<td>700,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Events</th>
<th>People Reached</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 events in 2023</td>
<td>250 -2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marketing activities to inform residents of Sonoma & Marin Counties about benefits of SMART

Recommend

1. Allow work to be completed on the
   • Quality of Life and Economic Impact Assessment
   • Consultant studying effective messaging and marketing plan

2. Develop a comprehensive budget for the Marketing Plan to effectively reach a large audience in Sonoma and Marin counties

3. Consider marketing activities that can be initiated in current fiscal year
## Marketing activities in current fiscal year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>Direct Mail: Send a mailer to all business and residential addresses in Sonoma and Marin counties, with content updating the community about District activities, and highlighting the economic, environmental, and sustainable transportation benefits of SMART.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>Video production: hire a professional videographer to produce informational videos in 15- 30- and 60-second lengths to meet specs for paid ads on cable, streaming and social media channels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$76,800</td>
<td>Paid advertising on cable television, streaming, digital platforms, and social media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions?
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