



For Immediate Release
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SMART marks 5th anniversary of startup of passenger service

Petaluma, CA – Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) will celebrate its 5-year anniversary of the startup of passenger service tomorrow, August 25, 2022. Since the start of service on August 25, 2017, SMART has carried more than 2,440,900 passengers, 273,450 bicycles, and 9,400 mobility devices.

SMART has also met and successfully responded to many challenges since the startup of passenger service. Beginning with the Tubbs Fire in October 2017, SMART assisted in the evacuation of Santa Rosa residents, provided free service to all during the weeks of the fire and recovery. SMART later provided free passes to people who lost their homes or businesses during the Tubbs fire.

In the following years, SMART responded to the Camp Fire in 2018, severe floods and the Kincade Fire in 2019, and the COVID-19 pandemic which severely impacted all transit operators in 2020.

SMART opened two new stations in December 2019: the Novato Downtown Station and the Larkspur Station, establishing an important link to San Francisco via the Larkspur Ferry. With the opening of the Larkspur Station, SMART's ridership grew to new heights, until March 2020, when COVID-19 shelter in place orders impacted all the transit operators in the Bay Area.

This past July, SMART's ridership was 857% greater than ridership from the low point of the COVID-19 shutdown.

To celebrate its 5-year anniversary, SMART staff will be on trains on Thursday, August 25, passing out commemorative T-shirts to passengers.

"I'd like to thank our employees and our train riders for making the past 5 years such a success story." said SMART Board Chair David Rabbitt. "SMART has been challenged by fire, floods, and the COVID-19 pandemic, and has responded by coming back stronger every time. SMART has a bright future – its ridership continues to recover from the pandemic and the agency is working hard to improve its service and to connect the communities of the North Bay"

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