



# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

## SUMMARY REPORT

---

**Agenda Date:** 3/3/2026

---

**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Registrar of Voters

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Evelyn Mendez, (707) 565-8564

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Call a Special Election on the “SMART Initiative: Safe, Modern, and Accessible Rail and Transit” to be Held on June 2, 2026

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a resolution calling a special election on the “SMART Initiative: Safe, Modern, and Accessible Rail and Transit” (“SMART Initiative”) to be held on June 2, 2026, and to consolidate the election with the Statewide Direct Primary Election and any other special election that is called for the same date.

**Executive Summary:**

On January 21, 2026, the Board of Directors of the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (“SMART”) District passed Resolution No. 2026-01, which accepted certification from the Sonoma County Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office that the SMART Initiative, an elector-proposed initiative petition, contained a sufficient number of valid signatures to qualify for the ballot. In addition, Resolution No. 2026-01 requested that the Boards of Supervisors of the Counties of Sonoma and Marin call a special election on the SMART Initiative in their respective Counties to be held on June 2, 2026, and that the election be consolidated with the Statewide Direct Primary Election and any other special election that is called for the same date, pursuant to California Public Utilities Code section 105045 and California Elections Code section 10418.

This item recommends that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution carrying out the requests made by SMART in Resolution No. 2026-01.

**Discussion:**

SMART is a special regional transportation district covering the territory lying within the boundaries of the Counties of Sonoma and Marin. It was established in 2002 when then-Governor Gray Davis signed California State Assembly Bill 2224 into law.

Pursuant to California Elections Code section 9611, since Sonoma County has more registered voters than Marin County, it is considered the “lead county” for SMART. This means that the Sonoma County ROV Office is responsible for setting argument and rebuttal deadlines for any SMART measures placed on the ballot, as well as selecting which arguments and/or rebuttals will be printed in the County Voter Information Guides (if more than one are submitted).

On August 25, 2025, SMART Initiative proponents filed the following documents with the Sonoma County ROV Office:

- Notice of intention to circulate an initiative petition
- Statement of reasons for the proposed petition
- Written text of the initiative
- Proof of publication of the notice of intention and statement of reasons in *The Press Democrat* on August 15, 2025.

The Sonoma County ROV Office acknowledged receipt of the aforementioned documents and, after consulting with the Marin County Elections Department, sent an email to the initiative proponents informing them that, in order to qualify the initiative for the ballot, they would need to collect 48,809 valid signatures from registered voters in the Counties of Sonoma and Marin by close of business on February 23, 2026. The number of required signatures was calculated by taking ten percent of the total number of registered voters (488,090) in the Counties of Sonoma (314,218) and Marin (173,872) as of the date of the last official report of registration (February 10, 2025). The filing deadline was determined by adding 180 days to the date the SMART Initiative was filed (August 25, 2025). This came out to February 21, 2026. However, since February 21, 2026, fell on a Saturday, the deadline was pushed back to February 23, 2026.

On November 21, 2025, SMART Initiative proponents submitted 46,453 raw signatures with the Sonoma County ROV Office, and 25,394 raw signatures with the Marin County Elections Department, for a grand total of 71,847 raw signatures. Both counties subsequently used DFM Associates' EIMS (Election Information Management System) software to generate random samples of signatures to check. Sonoma County's sample consisted of 1,394 signatures (three percent of 46,453) while Marin County's consisted of 762 signatures (three percent of 25,394), for a total combined sample size of 2,156 signatures (three percent of 71,847).

On November 26, 2026, the Marin County Elections Department completed checking the signatures in their sample, finding 651 of 762 to be valid. On December 8, 2026, the Sonoma County ROV Office completed checking the signatures in their sample, finding 1,072 of 1,394 to be valid. Added together, 1,723 of the sample of 2,156 signatures were found to be valid. Extrapolating from these numbers using the formula for random sampling spelled out in California Code of Regulations sections 20530-20532 and 20540, it was estimated that 57,418 signatures of the 71,847 were valid. Since this surpassed the 110% threshold (53,869), the petition was found sufficient.

On December 18, 2026, the Sonoma County ROV Office sent an email to SMART certifying that the SMART Initiative was found sufficient. In response, the SMART Board passed Resolution No. 2026-01 at their next meeting on January 21, 2026. This resolution formally accepted the Sonoma County ROV Office's certification, as well as requested that the Boards of Supervisors of the Counties of Sonoma and Marin take four main actions:

- 1) Call a special election on the SMART Initiative in their respective Counties to be held on June 2, 2026.
- 2) Consolidate the election with the California Statewide Direct Primary Election taking place on the same date, along with any other special election that is called for that date, pursuant to California Public Utilities Code section 105045 and California Elections Code section 10418.
- 3) Transmit the text of the SMART Initiative to the Sonoma County Counsel's Office to prepare an impartial analysis for printing in the County Voter Information Guide

- 4) Render full election services for submitting the SMART Initiative to the voters, for which the District will reimburse the Counties pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 105045.

This item recommends that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution carrying out the requests made by SMART in Resolution No. 2026-01.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

N/A

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY25-26 Adopted</b>	<b>FY26-27 Projected</b>	<b>FY27-28 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>			

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Costs of elections are typically shared between the entities involved pursuant to California Elections Code section 10416. In Resolution 2026-01, SMART agreed to appropriate funds to reimburse the County of Sonoma upon request for the incremental costs of submitting the SMART Initiative to the voters pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 105045. These costs will be calculated by the Sonoma County ROV Office and billed to SMART following the election. There are sufficient appropriations in ROV's 25-26 Adopted Budget for the costs associated with the initiative.

**Staffing Impacts:**

---

**Agenda Date:** 3/3/2026

---

<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

- Resolution to call a special election on SMART Initiative
- SMART Resolution No. 2026-01

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A