



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1465, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office

Staff Name and Phone Number: Sheryl Bratton 707-565-2431

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Station Study

Recommended Action:

The Board is requested to provide policy direction for investigating additional Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) station locations along the railroad corridor in Sonoma County, and consider the following options:

- A) Direct staff to initiate a headway feasibility study for a SMART station in Fulton and authorize use of \$50,000 in General Fund Contingencies to provide funding to SMART to conduct the analysis. (4/5 Vote Required).
- B) Identify a second SMART station location and direct staff to engage SMART to conduct an additional headway feasibility analysis.
- C) Direct staff to defer the SMART station analysis and explore other potential site locations.

Executive Summary:

Some Board Members have expressed interest in exploring additional SMART stations in Sonoma County, including potential sites in Fulton and Southwest Santa Rosa. The requested action seeks policy direction for pursuing identification of potential locations in Sonoma County.

The Board may also wish to consider directing staff to investigate the headway feasibility analysis for establishing a Fulton SMART station and authorize use of \$50,000 in General Fund Contingencies to engage SMART to conduct the analysis, and/or identify a second site and direct staff to pursue a study. If the Board seeks to analyze multiple sites, additional funding will be required. Alternatively, the Board may wish to forgo initiation of a SMART station headway analysis, and identify additional sites for further investigation.

Discussion:

SMART offers passenger rail service in Sonoma and Marin counties on a single track system that includes a bicycle and pedestrian pathway along much of the rail line. SMART's 43 miles of rail corridor includes 10 stations from the Sonoma County Airport to Downtown San Rafael. In Sonoma County this includes 6 stations: Sonoma County Airport, Santa Rosa North, Downtown Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Downtown Petaluma.

There is interest among the Board to investigate the feasibility for additional SMART station locations in Sonoma County, including sites in Fulton and Southwest Santa Rosa. Upon identification of a potential site, an analysis would be completed to calculate the change in headway - the time interval between two successive

train-runs heading in the same direction. The current train headway is 32 minutes. This analysis is necessary to evaluate impacts to train schedules and service delivery times. Based on discussions between SMART and County staff, SMART has indicated willingness to conduct a headway feasibility analysis at a cost of \$50,000 per study.

Proposed Fulton SMART Station Headway Feasibility Analysis

Interest for a Fulton station has been long standing by members of the Fulton and West County communities to further promote revitalization of the area and provide an access point to SMART service for West County communities. The proposed analysis would calculate the change in headway resulting from addition of a SMART station located at the intersection of River and Fulton roads, 1.5 miles south of the Sonoma County Airport SMART station.

Following the completion of the headway feasibility analysis, if the Board decides to pursue a project, staff would seek direction to coordinate with SMART to obtain additional information on the process, including preparation of an engineer analysis, environmental review, and project construction costs.

The City of Novato embarked on the process to establish a SMART station in Downtown Novato in 2015. Construction for that project is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the end of 2019. The total project cost, which is being financed by the City, is \$11 million (\$8 million for the station and \$3 million for parking).

Upon determining that construction of an additional train station does not significantly impact the headway delays on SMART's schedule, the County would need to identify funds to cover any new SMART station and parking lot construction costs before a formal proposal could be presented to the SMART Board for approval. The projected costs to build a new station and parking lot is estimated to be \$11 million.

Next Steps

The Board is requested to provide policy direction for investigating potential SMART station sites in Sonoma County.

The Board also has the following options to consider:

- A. Direct staff to proceed with a Fulton SMART station headway feasibility analysis to be performed by SMART, and approve use of \$50,000 in General Fund contingencies to cover costs associated with the study.
- B. Identify a second SMART station location and direct staff to engage SMART to conduct additional headway feasibility analysis. Should the Board approve this option, \$50,000 would need to be requested to cover study costs.
- C. Alternatively, the Board may choose to direct staff to not pursue a SMART station analysis and explore other potential site locations.

Prior Board Actions:

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	50,000		
Total Expenditures	50,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies	50,000		
Total Sources	50,000		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Additional appropriations of \$50,000 in General Fund Contingencies is requested to cover costs associated with the Fulton SMART station headway feasibility analysis. Budget adjustments will be made as part of 1st Quarter Consolidated Budget Adjustments.

This request is being made outside the Board’s Use of General Fund Contingencies Policy guidelines which states that decisions to use contingencies should only occur at annual budget hearings and during mid-year budget updates. There is a critical timing need should the Board wish to move forward with a Fulton station project. A project proposal would need to be in place by March 2020 to ensure that SMART’s signal and communications contractor, who is responsible for installing the Positive Train Control system, will be available for construction and testing. Otherwise, the project would need to wait 3 years due to the contractor’s limited availability.

STAFFING IMPACTS:

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Attachments:

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board: