

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: RACHEL EDE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-TRANSIT
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: MARIN SONOMA COORDINATED TRANSIT SERVICE PLAN
(MASCOTS) SERVICE RECOMMENDATION UPDATE

AGENDA ACTION: INFORMATIONAL

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by Transportation and Public Works Department, that the Council receive an update on the Marin Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS). This item is provided for Council's information and no action will be taken.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MASCOTS is a multi-agency planning effort to comprehensively analyze transit service in the Highway 101 corridor and recommend changes to optimize the transit network. This Council item provides an update on the plan's timeline, service recommendations, and public engagement process.

BACKGROUND

The Marin Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS) process began in summer of 2024 as a joint initiative of Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART), the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD), Marin Transit, Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa CityBus, and Petaluma Transit, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The planning and analysis portion of the plan was conducted in three phases.

- Phase 1: Research and Understanding of Current Conditions (Completed Summer 2024)
- Phase 2: Develop Solutions to Address Opportunities (Completed Early 2025)
- Phase 3: Document Impacts and Alternatives (Completed Spring 2025)

The City Council received an overview of the plan at its December 10, 2024 meeting. At that time the plan was in Phase 2.

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At this time the plan is proceeding into the public engagement phase. The plan's focus is how to better coordinate and optimize transit services along the 101 corridor with service recommendations primarily aimed at SMART, Golden Gate Transit, and Marin Transit. The plan tasks the local bus services in Sonoma County, including Santa Rosa CityBus, with strengthening connections to SMART rail service.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On December 10, 2024, Council received an informational presentation on the first phases of the MASCOTS initiative.

ANALYSIS

The key themes of MASCOTS plan recommendations are reducing duplication of services, improving connections between services, and matching service to where ridership growth has the greatest potential. High-level recommendations include the following:

- SMART and Golden Gate Transit Route 101:
 - Truncate Route 101 in Novato; increase Golden Gate Transit frequency between San Rafael and San Francisco
 - Increase SMART frequency and operate trains earlier and later in the day.
- Southern Marin Bus Service:
 - Streamline routes between San Rafael, Marin City, Sausalito, and San Francisco
- Local Bus Connections to SMART:
 - Improve Petaluma Transit, Santa Rosa CityBus, Sonoma County Transit, and Marin Transit with strong, direct connections to SMART
- GGT Commute Routes in Sonoma:
 - Combine routes into a single alignment with improved frequency, and restrict San Francisco local travel to reduce travel time
- GGT Route 580 in San Rafael:
 - Follow 580X alignment to improve travel time; 580 and 580X would continue to differ in the East Bay

In support of the MASCOTS recommendations Transit Division staff will work to better serve SMART stations to improve first and last mile transit connections for regional trips. Staff also hopes that comments during the public outreach portion of the process will also help inform coordination efforts between Santa Rosa CityBus and Sonoma County Transit at a more local level.

Public outreach will begin ramping up in late July and into August. Events will be held across Sonoma and Marin Counties to engage the public directly about the recommendations. Two surveys will also be administered—one for Sonoma County and the other for Marin County—so residents can hone in on the issues that affect them directly.

Once feedback has been collected and incorporated into the plan, the boards of the participating agencies will act on the plan in Fall of 2025. Agencies will then begin preparing for implementation of the changes in Spring of 2026. Following two years of operation an evaluation will be conducted to determine whether the plan has been successful in improving the transit network for riders in Marin and Sonoma Counties.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is information only and does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council finds that pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the proposed action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – MASCOTS Fact Sheet—English
Attachment 2 - MASCOTS Fact Sheet—Spanish

PRESENTER

Matthew Wilcox – Transit Planner