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June 27, 2019

Pat Randolph, Foreperson  
Marin County Grand Jury  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 275  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Subject: Response to Grand Jury Report, "SMART – First Mile/Last Mile Options"

Dear Ms. Randolph:

The Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Commissioners considered the report issued by the Civil Grand Jury entitled "SMART – First Mile/Last Mile Options" at its regularly scheduled meeting of June 27, 2019. The Board appreciated the efforts of the Grand Jury and the opportunity to respond to their recommendations. Attached please find the Board's response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Steinhauser". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dianne Steinhauser  
Executive Director  
Transportation Authority of Marin

Attachment: Response to Grand Jury Report

## RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

**Report Title:** SMART – First Mile/Last Mile Options

**Report Date:** April 25, 2019

**Agenda Date:** June 27, 2019

**Response by:** Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM)

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. Transportation Authority of Marin and Marin Transit should conduct surveys and pertinent research, using the criteria of convenience, cost and accessibility to determine optimal “first mile – last mile” connections to SMART stations.**

**Response:** R1. First/last mile solutions to transit are amongst the many challenges transit services face in building ridership. The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) has been engaged in discussions with the cities and towns in the corridor, transit operators, and employers along the corridor. Much of these discussions have centered around new transit or shuttle solutions, but have also included low cost first/last mile solutions such as walking and biking. TAM has facilitated and led discussions on this important issue with agencies, private employers and the public.

As a result of the financial recession, SMART was unable to provide shuttle services as originally planned as part of the joint train and multi-use path project. Due to this financial shortfall, TAM has engaged in assessment of various first/last mile services to connect to the SMART train in the course of the development of the passenger rail service since the passage of Measure Q in 2008. TAM recognized this need, and participated in the preparation of a first/last mile integration study conducted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and finished in 2017. This study brought TAM, transit operators and local jurisdiction staff together to analyze the need for first/last mile solutions at rail stations.

During the period prior to launch of SMART services, employer groups were also gathering and surveying employers to discuss the use of the train for their employees. TAM participated in those discussions as well, along with our transit operator partners. During the course of these discussions, SMART conducted a review of potential contractor provided shuttle services and determined that it would cost approximately \$85-125 per revenue hour to provide shuttle services. These estimated costs proved to be on the low end of the actual costs of shuttle services provided by the City of Santa Rosa and the County of Marin (via a contract with Marin Transit), both of which were discontinued after six months and deemed non-cost effective solutions.

As a low-cost option to address higher cost transit and shuttle services, TAM sought input from cities throughout the United States on potential low cost options and recognized the increasing role that Transportation Network Companies (TNC's like Uber, Lyft) were playing in this area. TAM reached out and discussed these services with other cities and ultimately ended up developing a successful pilot program with Lyft to provide \$5 off Shared Rides at SMART Stations in Marin. Part of this service package is Whistlestop, under a separate contract, they are contracted with TAM to provide ADA services as part of this pilot. This pilot is still ongoing, and the data reported from this program is being shared with transit operators to inform their decisions on transit schedules and routes. TAM has provided over

12,500 shared rides to date and over 42,000 miles of service. This pilot has provided commuters in Marin County with a low-cost service to SMART, and provides actual data about first/last mile travel behaviors.

TAM also plays a role in promotion of green modes of transportation to the SMART rail corridor. TAM has worked extensively with ZipCar to assist them in establish a car sharing operation next to the SMART Station in Downtown San Rafael, providing access to a car for commuters who may need one during the course of the day. TAM is also working closely with Sonoma County and local Marin jurisdictions and plans to launch a Bikeshare program at SMART stations in 2020, furthering first/last mile offerings at stations.

**R2. Marin Transit should expand the usage of Marin Connect beyond northern San Rafael no later than the first quarter of 2020.**

**Response:** TAM has worked closely with Marin Transit to explore the viability to expand its Marin Connect program. On-demand services such as Marin Connect are a way to expand potential ridership of transit services, however the costs of these programs should be considered prior to expansion.

**R4. Upon completion of the SMART station in Larkspur, there needs to be a free passenger shuttle between the station and the Larkspur ferry terminal.**

**Response:** R4. TAM would participate in multi-agency review of this proposal to explore a free passenger shuttle and could evaluate grant funding opportunities. Based on costs of recently discontinued City of Santa Rosa and County of Marin Shuttle programs careful consideration should be given to financial sustainability of a shuttle operation.

**R5. SMART, Transportation Authority of Marin and Marin Transit should prepare a joint feasibility study for the possible implementation of an autonomous shuttle for connection from the Larkspur SMART station to the Larkspur Ferry.**

**Response:** R5. TAM has been working to advance the next wave of technology improvements to Marin's transportation network. TAM has led initial discussions around the county with our local agency and transit partners about the concept of autonomous vehicle (AV) pilots in Marin County, including TAM's successful Innovation Workshops in 2017 and 2018. TAM's sister agency in Contra Costa has piloted AV shuttles at the Bishop Ranch business park, that includes access on local roads to BART. TAM is teaming up with Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) to possibly implement a similar shuttle in Marin. In addition, CCTA recently partnered with TAM to receive an \$8M Federal Mobility on Demand Grant from the Federal Highway Administration. As part of this grant, AV shuttle feasibility will be looked at in locations connecting transportation modes including the Larkspur SMART station and the Larkspur Ferry Terminal.