CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: November 17, 2026

==========

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Hinton
Department: Public Works
Presenter: Emily Betts, Transit Systems Manager, Sonoma County Transit
Subject: Informational Presentation: Sonoma County Transit February 2027 Service Changes and the Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS)

==========

RECOMMENDATION:
That the City Council receive the informational presentation from Sonoma County Transit on February 2027 service changes and the Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS). This item is informational only; no action is required.

PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:
- Presentation of Agenda item by the Requestor or Responsible Department
- Questions and Discussion from Councilmembers
- Public Comment Period
- Presentation Received

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
Sonoma County Transit staff will give the City Council an informational presentation on Sonoma County Transit (SCT) service changes taking effect February 14, 2027, and on the Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS). MASCOTS is a collaborative project among nine partner agencies, led by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), to create a more connected, frequent transit network along the Highway 101 corridor in Marin and Sonoma Counties. SCT's February 2027 changes are part of MASCOTS Phase II and were approved by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors following a public hearing on October 27, 2026.

The presentation gives the Council and the public a chance to learn about the changes, ask questions, and share how the changes may affect Sebastopol residents, workers, students and visitors. There is no fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND:
Public transit in the North Bay has been provided by several separate agencies. This has led to overlapping routes, schedules that do not line up, and long transfers. In 2024, the North Bay transit operators and funding agencies launched MASCOTS to evaluate transit service in the Highway 101 corridor and plan how it could operate as one coordinated system.

The MASCOTS partner agencies are the Metropolitan Transportation Commission; the Transportation Authority of Marin; the Sonoma County Transportation and Climate Authorities (SCTCA); the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART); the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (Golden Gate Transit); Marin Transit; Sonoma County Transit; Santa Rosa CityBus; and Petaluma Transit.

The plan's key recommendations include:
- Making SMART the main regional service between Sonoma and Marin Counties, with more frequent trains and longer service hours.
- Ending Golden Gate Transit Route 101 service north of Novato and adding service between San Rafael and San Francisco.
- Combining Sonoma County commute bus routes to San Francisco into one more frequent route (Route 172).

- Strengthening and simplifying local bus connections to SMART stations.
- Reducing duplication, improving transfers, and lowering fares for most regional trips.

MASCOTS is funded as a pilot from April 2026 through June 2029, and the partner agencies are tracking ridership and service results.

Sonoma County Transit provides inter-city and local bus service throughout the County. Routes currently serving Sebastopol include Route 20 (Russian River Area, Forestville, Sebastopol, Santa Rosa), Route 24 (Sebastopol Shuttle) and Route 26 (Sebastopol, Cotati, Rohnert Park). Countywide transit planning also identifies the Highway 12 corridor between Sebastopol and Santa Rosa as a key corridor for future service.

SCT's February 14, 2027 changes affecting Sebastopol are:

- Route 20: Re-timed for better high school service and SMART/Golden Gate connections; will end at the Santa Rosa Transit Mall, with transfers to Santa Rosa CityBus Route 1.
- Route 20X: Discontinued due to low ridership; replaced by added Sebastopol–Santa Rosa service on Route 20.
- Route 24 (Sebastopol Shuttle): Re-timed to connect with Route 20; minor stop safety adjustments.
- Route 26: One trip added; re-timed to serve schools and the SMART station.
- Route 28: Re-timed to connect with Route 20 in the Russian River area (affects West County riders transferring through Sebastopol).

Separately, SCT, SCTCA, Santa Rosa CityBus and Petaluma Transit are developing a five-year Strategic Transit Plan, with a final plan expected in March 2027. The February 2027 changes are near-term improvements; the Strategic Transit Plan will guide longer-term decisions on routes, frequency and service hours.

DISCUSSION:

The City Council will receive a presentation from Sonoma County Transit staff regarding the Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS) and proposed Sonoma County Transit (SCT) service changes scheduled to take effect February 14, 2027. MASCOTS is a regional planning effort intended to improve transit connectivity, coordinate service among regional operators, reduce duplicative routes, improve reliability, and strengthen connections to the SMART rail system. The presentation will provide an overview of the proposed changes affecting Sebastopol, including Routes 20, 24, 26, and 28. Proposed changes include adjustments to Route 20 service and transfers at the Santa Rosa Transit Mall, modifications to Route 24 to better coordinate with Route 20, additional Route 26 service, and schedule and stop adjustments to Route 28.

The Council will have an opportunity to discuss how the proposed changes affect transit access for Sebastopol residents, including students, seniors, workers, and individuals with disabilities. Discussion may include connections to Santa Rosa, Cotati, Rohnert Park, Sonoma State University, Santa Rosa Junior College, and SMART; the adequacy of service frequency and hours; transfer times and accessibility; and the potential impacts of proposed route and stop changes. The presentation will also provide an overview of public outreach conducted through MASCOTS and Sonoma County Transit's Strategic Transit Plan, including community surveys, workshops, stakeholder interviews, and public comments. The Council may discuss whether the proposed changes adequately address community feedback and identify any remaining concerns or recommendations for the transit agencies. The Council may also discuss how Sebastopol residents can remain informed, provide feedback before implementation, and share comments following the February 2027 service changes as part of the ongoing Strategic Transit Plan process.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

This item is informational only. SCT routes and schedules are set by the County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors through SCT's public process, and the City Council is not being asked to take any action. Council and public

comments received at the meeting can be shared with Sonoma County Transit staff for their consideration and may also inform the Strategic Transit Plan.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS / PRIORITIES / GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:
This item supports the City Council's goals and priorities, including:

- Goal 1 – Community Vitality: Supporting connectivity and access to services, employment, education, and regional destinations for Sebastopol residents.
- General Plan Circulation Element goals supporting public transit and alternatives to driving
- Climate action goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation

PUBLIC COMMENT:
As of the preparation of this staff report, no public comments have been received. Any written public comments received after publication of this report will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials prior to or at the meeting. Members of the public may also provide oral comments during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:
This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was made available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. More information on MASCOTS is available at mascotsplan.org and sctransit.com.

FISCAL IMPACT:
There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this informational presentation.

RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:
That the City Council receive the informational presentation from Sonoma County Transit on February 2027 service changes and the Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan (MASCOTS). This item is for information only; no action is required.

CITY COUNCIL OPTION(S):
1. None recommended. This item is informational only.

ATTACHMENTS:
1 – Sonoma County Transit / MASCOTS Presentation (to be provided by Sonoma County Transit)

APPROVALS:
Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 10/29/26
CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: N/A
Receiving an informational presentation is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is an administrative activity of the City that will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.
Administrative Services/Financial Approval: Approval Date: N/A
Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: ☐ Yes ☐ No
Account Code (if applicable) _____
City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: N/A
City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 11/10/26

MASCOTS Phase II

Marin-Sonoma Coordinated Transit Service Plan

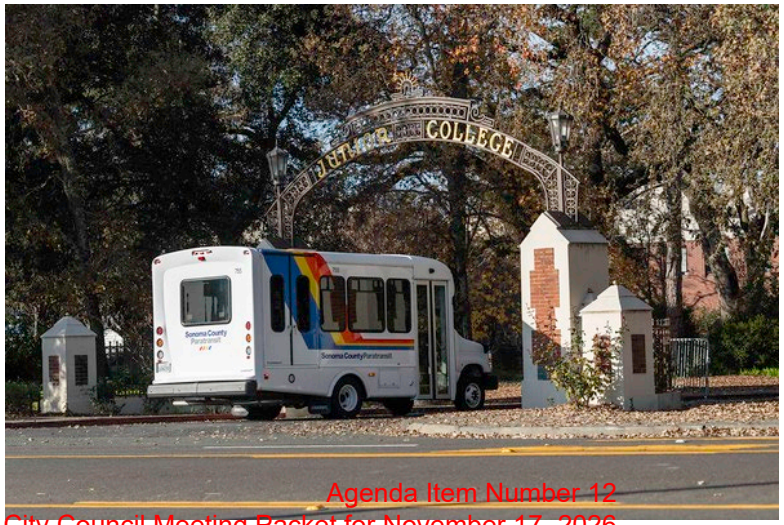
Proposed Updates to Sonoma County Transit Bus Service

Sebastopol City Council
November 10, 2026

Sonoma County Transit

- Sonoma County Transit has been in existence since 1980
- Current fixed route fleet has 28 CNG buses, 18 electric buses, and 3 gasoline cutaways; 19 routes
- We also operate Paratransit Service, operated by the Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership (CVNL), with a fleet of 34 cutaways and minivans
- FY26 at 87% of pre-COVID; 850,000 rides in FY26
- Sonoma County Transit has free fare programs for:
  - Youth (SCTCA Go Sonoma)
  - Veterans (County)
  - Santa Rosa Junior College (SJRC)
  - Sonoma State (SSU)
  - Local Routes (subsidized by local jurisdictions)



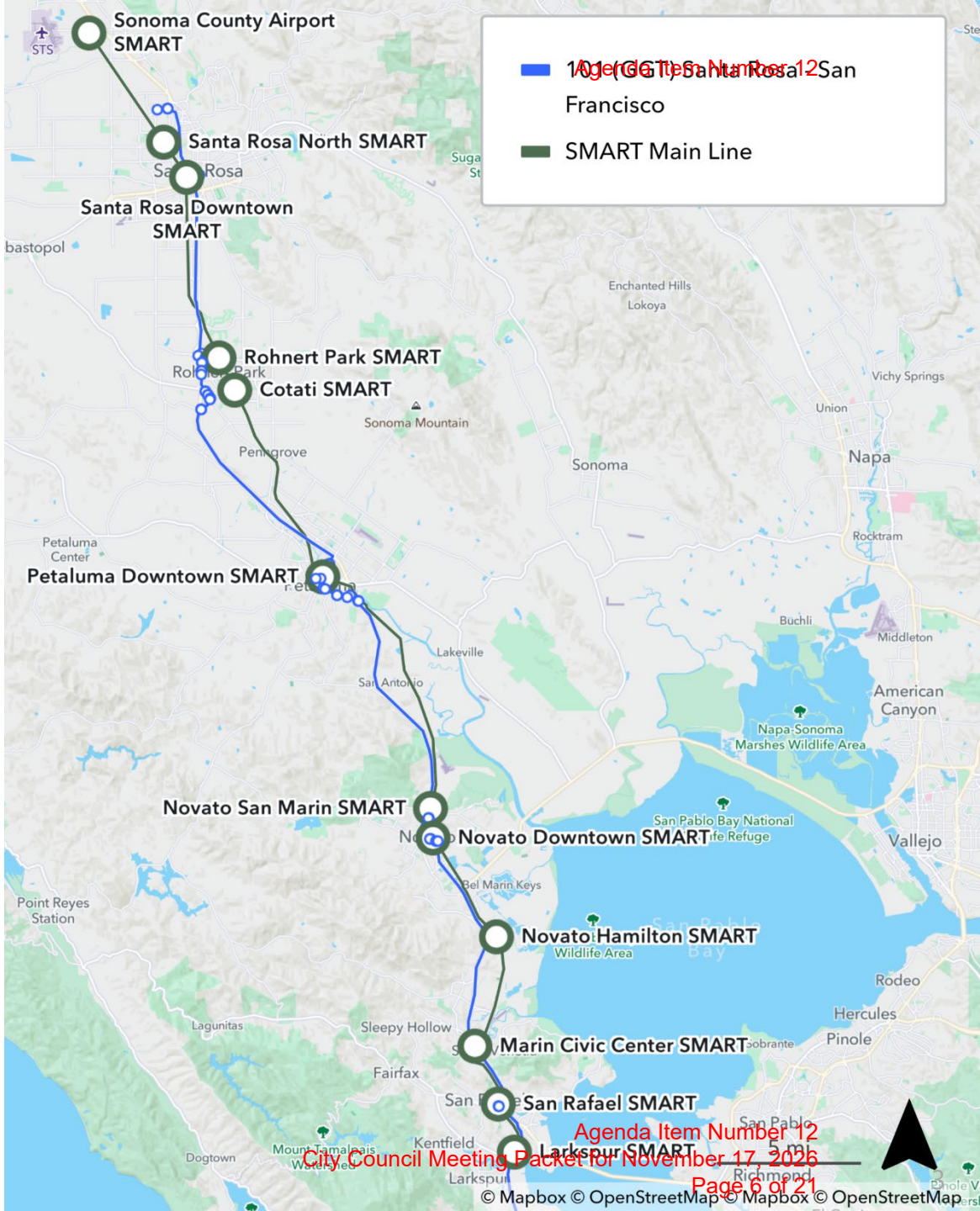


What is MASCOTS?

- Collaborative comprehensive analysis of transit services in Highway 101 corridor
- Focused on regional services
- Grounded in post-pandemic travel behavior and work patterns.

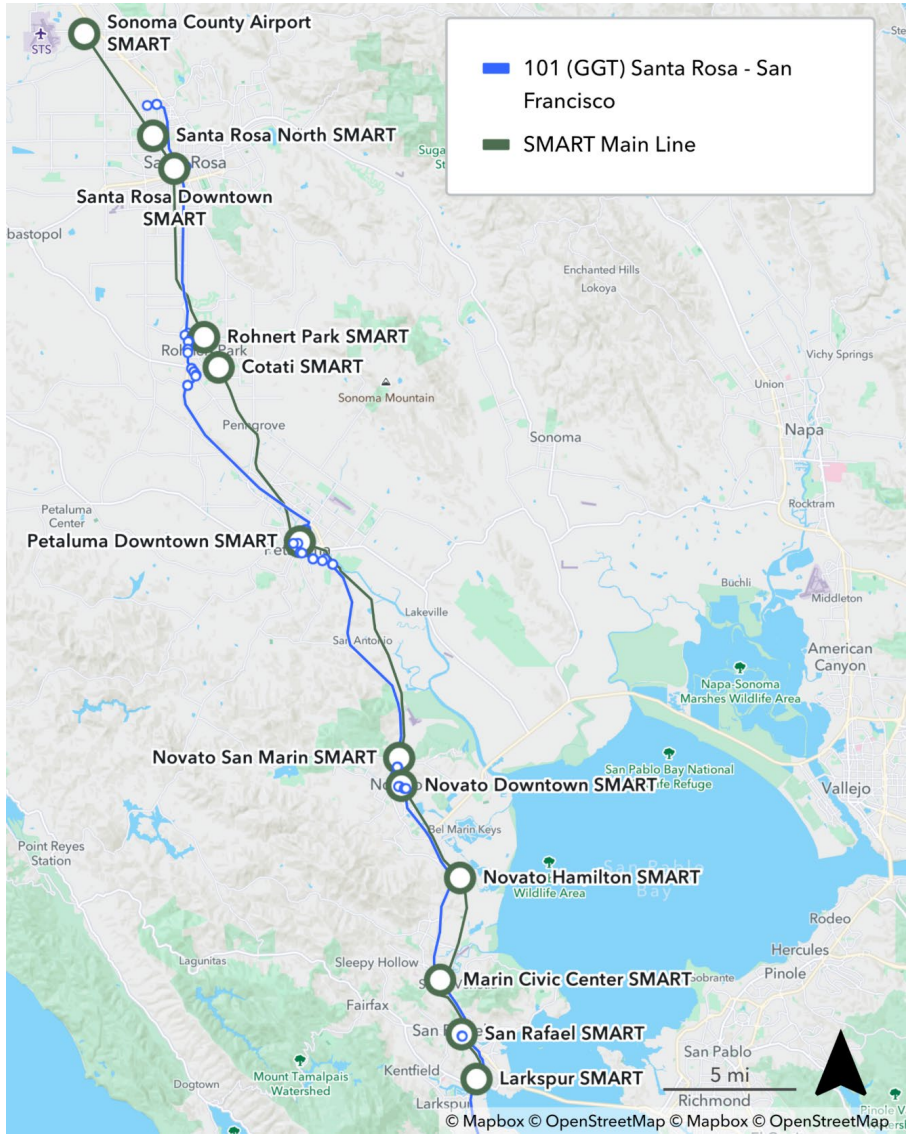
Goals

- Grow ridership
- Better use of existing resources
- Work as if one agency



MASCOTS Phase 1 Recommendation Summary

- SMART increases frequency and span to offer regular consistent coverage as the **primary service** in Highway 101 Corridor
- Golden Gate Transit provides more frequent Marin – San Francisco service, no all-day Sonoma service
- Less Marin Transit duplication with GGT
- **Initial results:** 28% SMART ridership increase; 8.5% GGT ridership increase
- **Phase 2:** Better local bus connections to SMART in Sonoma County



MASCOTS Phase 2: Sonoma County

- Leverage connections to SMART
- Reduce duplication of service
- Plan *as if one bus agency* in Sonoma County
- Collaborative process focused on the *customer*

Context: shared fiscal and on-time performance challenges



Address Challenges as if One System

- Improve connections to reduce impact of service reductions
- Focus on corridors with significant overlapping service:
  - Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa Ave, Petaluma Blvd, McDowell Blvd, Windsor-Santa Rosa



Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa

Current service: CityBus Route 1, and seven SCT routes operate on an uncoordinated schedule

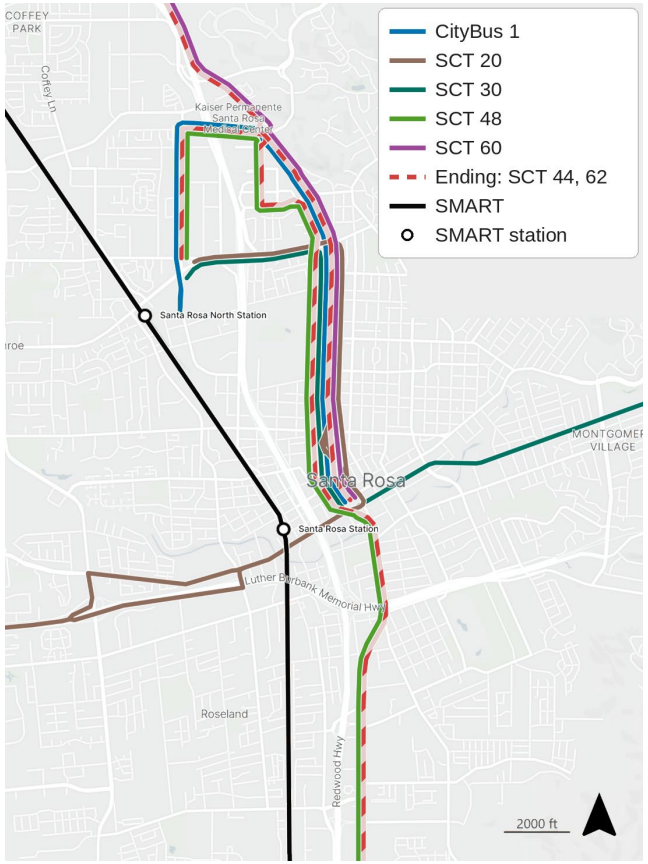
Recommendation:

- Improve CityBus Route 1 frequency to 15 minutes
- Interline CityBus Route 2, one-seat ride to SMART
- All SCT regional service except Route 60 would end at the Transit Mall; SCT Routes 20, 30, 44, and 48 would no longer serve Mendocino Ave.
- SCT Route 60 would continue up Mendocino and serve County Center buildings

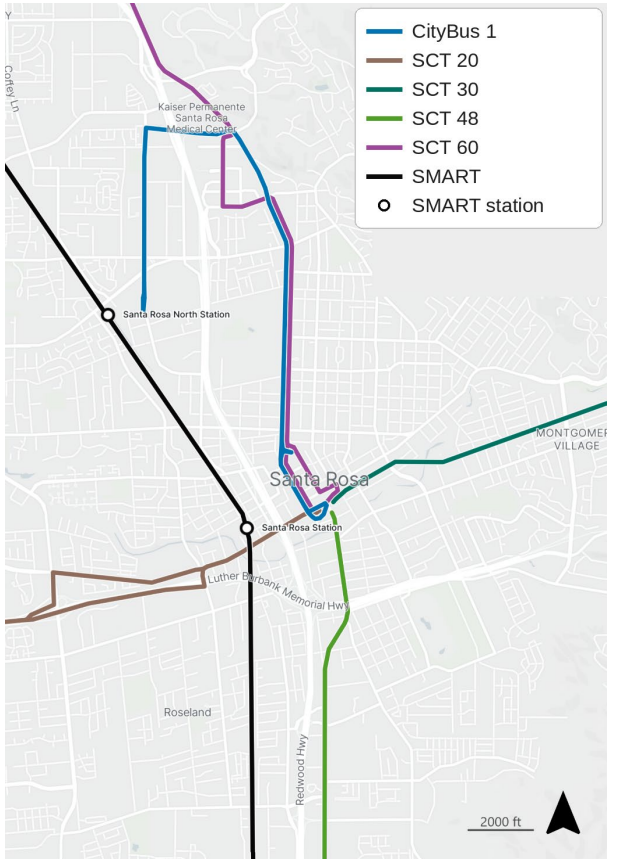
Benefits:

- Better connections to SMART
- Improve frequency and reliability of all services
- Better use of resources

Current



Proposed



Santa Rosa Ave, Santa Rosa

Current service: Two CityBus Routes (3, 5) and three SCT Routes (42, 44, 48) operate on an uncoordinated schedule

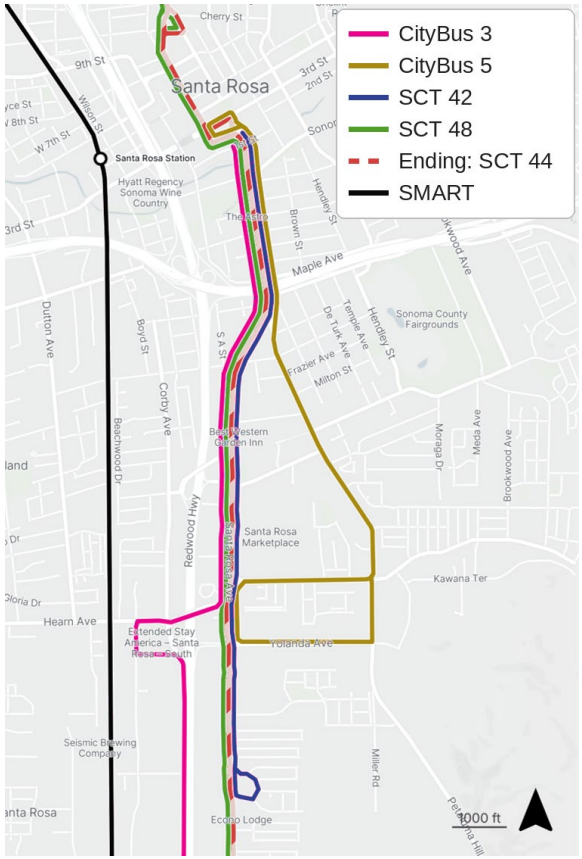
Recommendation:

- Combine Routes 44 and 48 into a single coordinated route that provides hourly service between Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, and Petaluma
- End the consolidated Route 48 at Transit Mall
- Adjust SCT Route 42 for efficiency
- Coordinate the Route 3 and Route 48 schedules for 30-minute service on Santa Rosa Ave

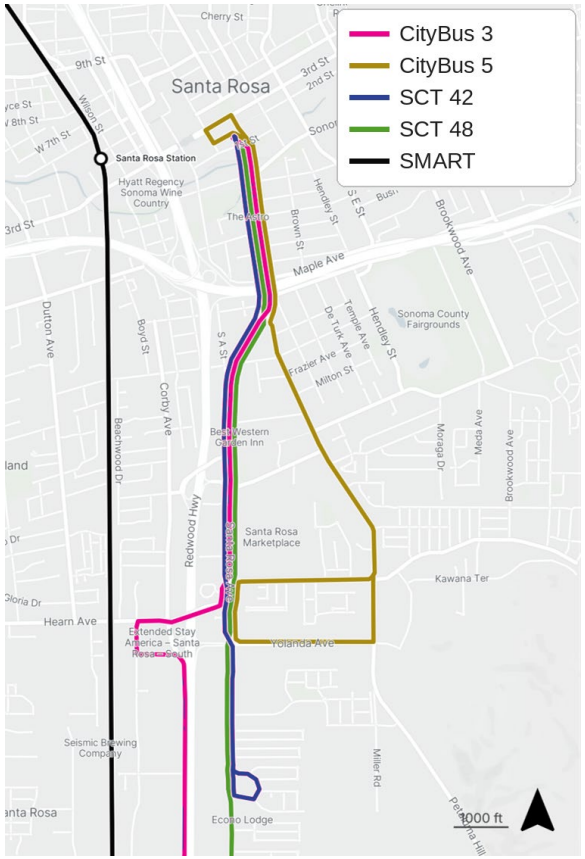
Benefits:

- Improve frequency and reliability of all services
- Better use of resources

Current



Proposed



N. McDowell & Petaluma Blvd, Petaluma

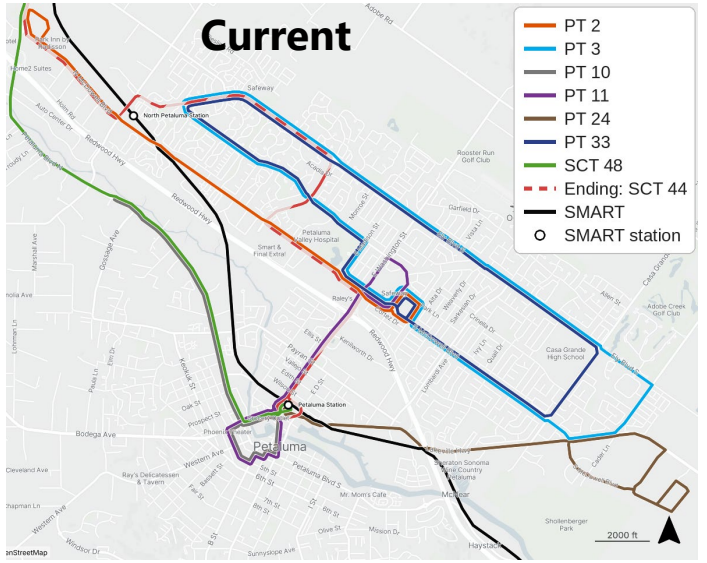
Current service: Duplicative service on both corridors by SCT (44, 48) and Petaluma Transit (2, 10)

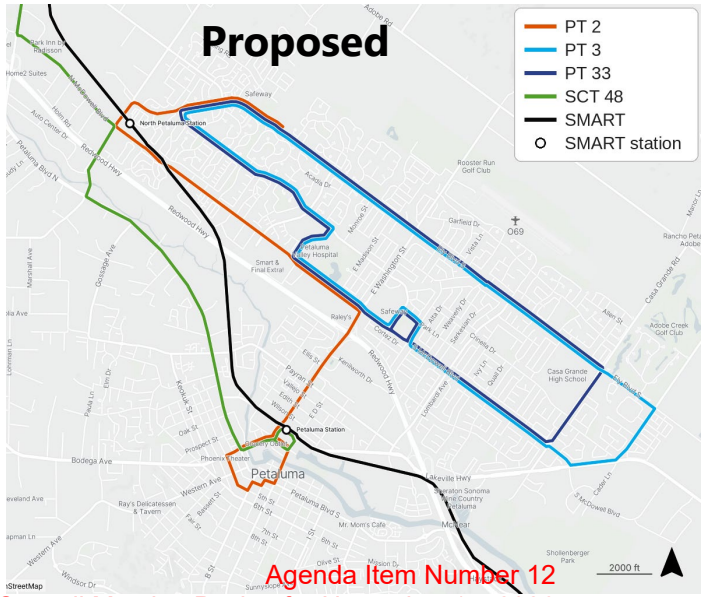
Recommendation:

- Petaluma Blvd. North only served by new consolidated SCT Route 48 (discontinue 44)
- N. McDowell only served by PT Route 2 with increased frequency
- PT Route 2 serves SMART Petaluma North and SRJC; corridor north of Corona Rd. served by SCT Route 48

Benefits:

- Improve reliability for Petaluma Blvd. and entire Route 48
- Increased frequency on N. McDowell Blvd.
- Improved connection to SRJC from SMART
- Better use of resources





Windsor – Santa Rosa Corridor

Current service: Duplicative service of SCT Route 62, SMART Train, and SMART Connect Bus

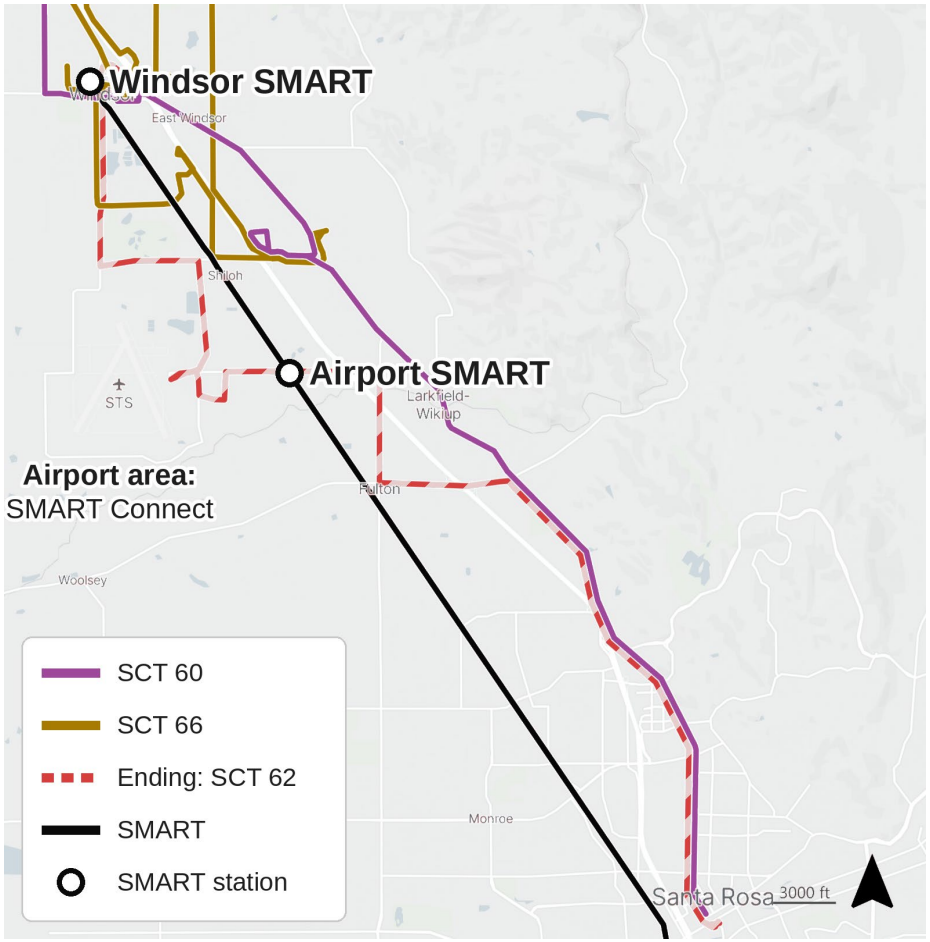
- Low ridership on Route 62; high ridership on SMART

Recommendation:

- Discontinue Route 62
- Improve Windsor local connection to SMART (Route 60, 67)
- Market SMART Connect Airport area Shuttle

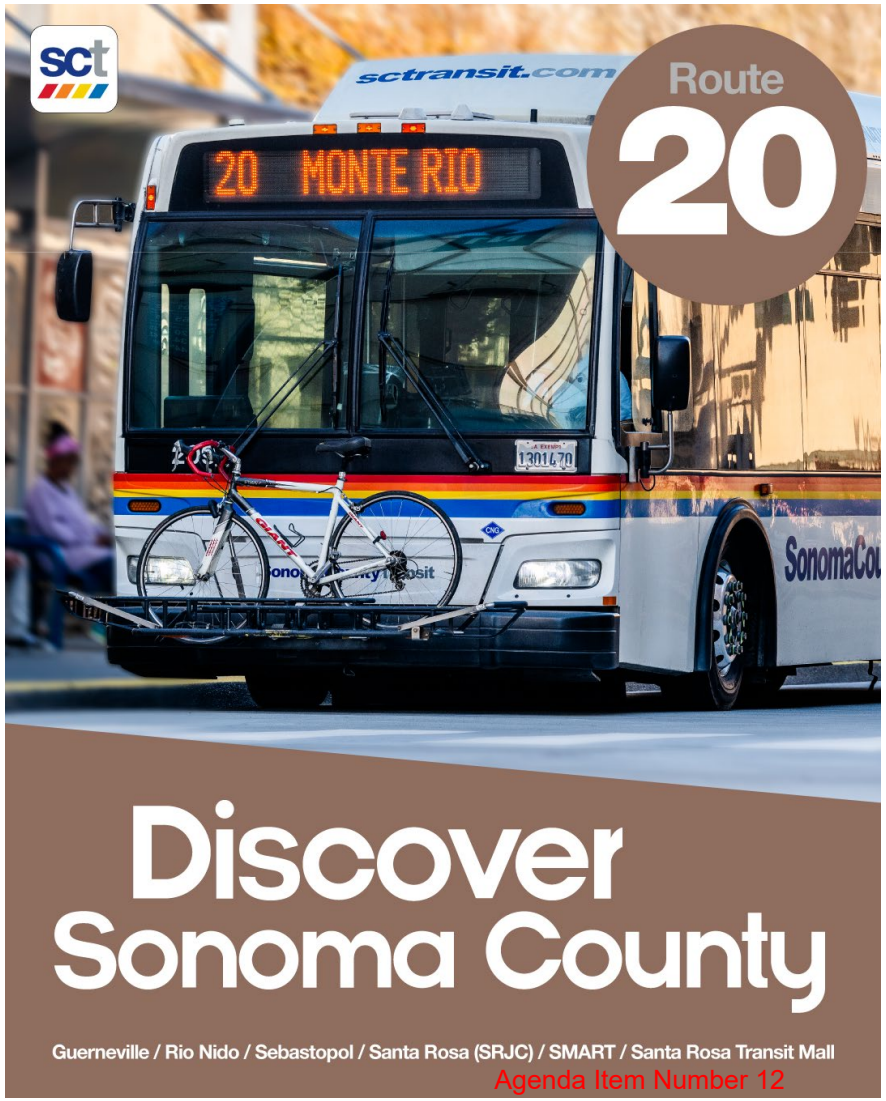
Benefits:

- Re-allocate Route 62 resources to underserved areas
- Support MASCOTS goal of restructuring service around SMART as the backbone of North Bay Transit service



West County: Routes 20, 20X, 24, 26, 28

- **Route 20 (Monte Rio to Sebastopol)**
  - Retiming service to meet SMART
  - Adding service and later trips (21 to 25 trips)
- **Route 20X (Sebastopol to Santa Rosa)**
  - Redesigning from current alignment to run directly from Sebastopol to Santa Rosa Transit Mall
  - Timing to Train (peak hour service)
- **Route 24 (Sebastopol)**
  - Re-timing service to meet the Route 20; stop improvements
- **Route 26 (Sebastopol to Cotati)**
  - Re-timing service to better serve Credo & SMART
  - Doubling service: one trip added AM & PM
- **Route 28 (Occidental to Guerneville)**
  - Re-time service to SMART
  - Adding service to Armstrong Redwoods State Park



Route 24 Sebastopol Shuttle Today



ANNUAL COST

$475K operations
$800K fully loaded

TOTAL RIDERSHIP, FY26

14,784

ON-TIME (WITHIN 5 MIN)

80%

CITY FARE SUBSIDY, FY26

$4K

FREE RIDES PROVIDED, FY26

13,120

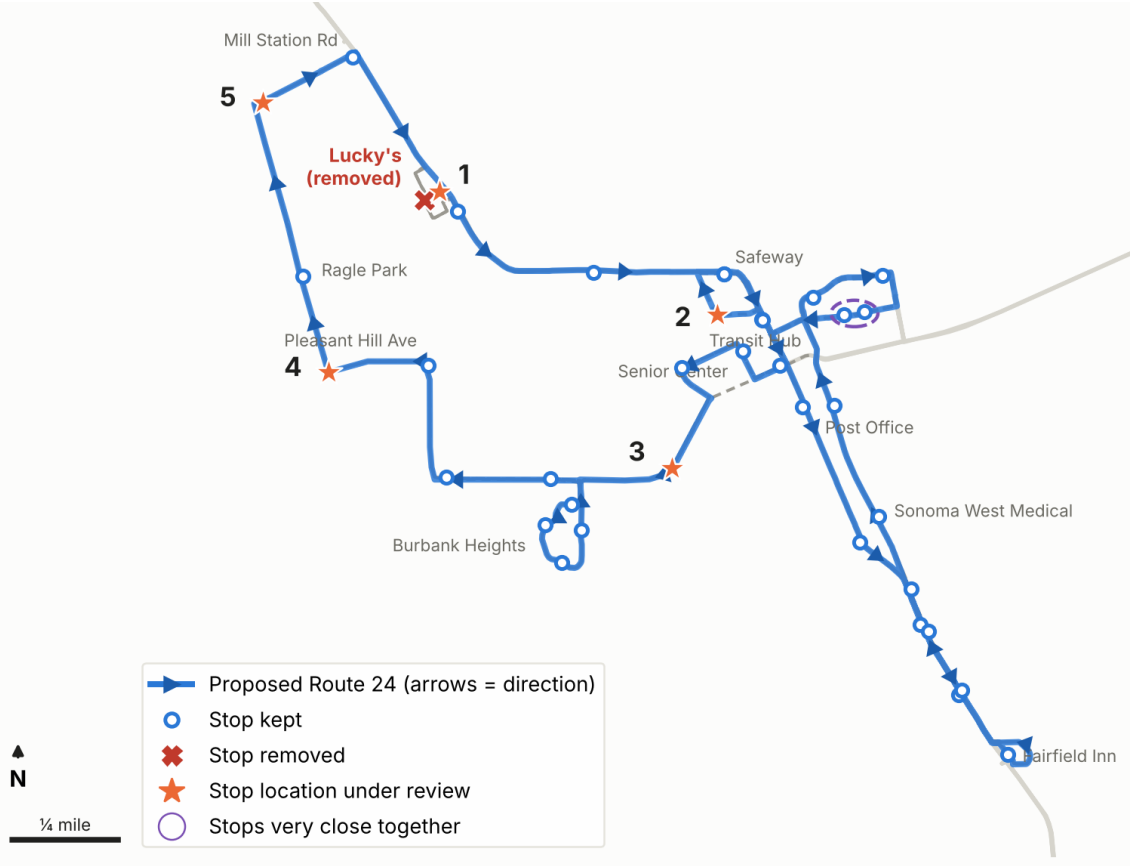
FY28 agreement: the City fare agreement will need to be revised due to rising costs for SCT

Route 24 Sebastopol Shuttle: What's Changing

	Today (August 2026)	Proposed (February 2027)
DAYS OF SERVICE	Monday – Saturday	**Monday – Saturday**
LOOPS PER DAY	Weekday 11, Saturday 10	**Weekday 9, Saturday 9**
HOURS OF SERVICE	7:23 AM – 5:45 PM	**7:48 AM – 6:01 PM**
TIME PER LOOP	32 – 42 min (varies)	**45 min, every trip**
ROUTE PATTERN	Some weekday trips run a shortened loop	**Every trip runs the full loop**
STOPS	33	**32 – 37 (Lucky's removed, up to 5 added)**
SERVICE HOURS PER DAY	Weekday 7.3, Saturday 6.6	**Weekday 6.75, Saturday 6.75**

Same loop, simpler schedule: every trip covers the full loop, timed to connect with Route 20 at the Transit Hub

Stop Changes and Locations Under Review



Moved

Lucky's: the bus no longer enters the lot. Routes 20 and 26 stop nearby at Gravenstein Hwy & Hurlbut.

New stop locations under review

1. Gravenstein Hwy at shopping center
2. Keating Ave & Pitt Ave
3. Florence Ave near Bodega Ave
4. Pleasant Hill Ave / Ragle Rd
5. Ragle Rd north of Ragle Park

Close together

McKinley St at Morris St and Brown St: 260 ft apart

Next step: field checks and ridership review before stop locations are finalized

Public Outreach to Date

740

MASCOTS Phase II survey

Fall 2025 · English & Spanish

- Promoted via **pop-ups, social media, e-blasts, bus stop flyers** and open houses
- **64%** support a faster, streamlined 44/48 even if a transfer is needed
- **84%** say moving Route 44 to Petaluma Blvd works with more PT service on N. McDowell

~400

Strategic Transit Plan participants

May – July 2026 · English & Spanish

- **245** community surveys + **80** onboard passenger surveys
- **8** stakeholder interviews
- **~70** attendees at workshops: virtual, Windsor, Sonoma Valley, Sebastopol

Oct 27

Public hearing notice & review

Per Title VI Public Participation Plan

- **Press Democrat** legal notice + bilingual display ad
- **Bilingual on-bus ads** and Instagram / Facebook posts
- **SCTCA** PAC, TTAC and TAC
- **Local Jurisdiction** meetings and presentations ongoing
- **Spanish interpreters** at the hearing on request

What we heard: riders prioritize frequency and reliability on core routes; 60% prioritize SMART connections

Public Information

A more connected Sonoma County

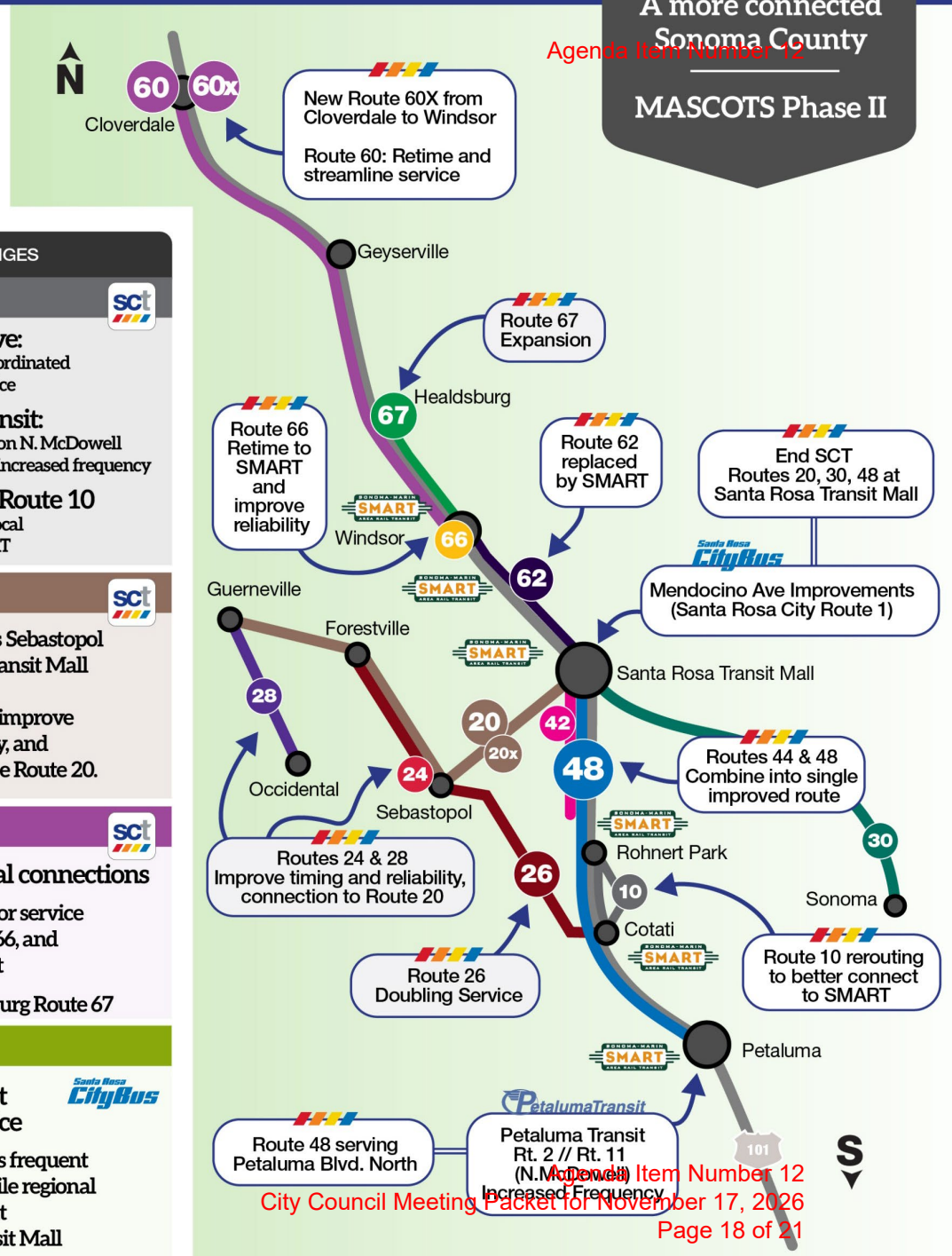
MASCOTS Phase II

Transit Changes Work Together

A connected system for a stronger Sonoma County

In February, transit agencies across Sonoma County are making coordinated changes. When we plan as one system, a change in one route can create benefits all across the county.

KEY CHANGES	BENEFITS	LINKED CHANGES
101 Corridor—Routes 10, 42, 44, 48		
Combine into a single coordinated Route 48 (Santa Rosa-Rohnert Park-Cotati-Petaluma)	• Simplifies service • Improves frequency and reliability • Service ends at Santa Rosa Transit Mall for transfers to Santa Rosa CityBus	**Santa Rosa Ave:** CityBus Route 3 coordinated for 30-minute service **Petaluma Transit:** Allows PT to focus on N. McDowell (Routes 2/11) with increased frequency **Adjust Cotati Route 10** To better connect local service with SMART
West County—Routes 20, 20X, 24, 26, 28		
Improve timing to SMART and end Route 20 at the Santa Rosa Transit Mall	• More reliable connections to SMART • Frees up resources • Consolidates service at Santa Rosa Transit Mall	• Rt.20X Connects Sebastopol to Santa Rosa Transit Mall • Rt.24 and Rt.28: improve timing, reliability, and connection to the Route 20.
North County—Routes 60, 60X, 62, 66, 67		
Route 62 replaced by SMART and Routes 60, 66, and 67 improved	• Reallocate resources to underserved areas • Supports SMART as the backbone of North Bay transit	**Improved local connections** Enhance Windsor service via Routes 60X, 66, and SMART Connect Expand Healdsburg Route 67
Santa Rosa CityBus—Route 1 Mendocino Ave.		
Increase frequency to 15 minutes on Mendocino Ave.	• Better local service • Stronger connection to SMART • Allows SCT Routes 20, 30, 44 and 48 to no longer serve Mendocino Ave.	**More efficient regional service** CityBus provides frequent local service while regional routes connect at Santa RosaTransit Mall



Agenda Item Number 12

Public Information

DRAFT Sonoma County Transit Route Change Summary

Route 20

West County to Santa Rosa

Improve timing to SMART; end route at Santa Rosa Transit Mall

- 20x Sebastopol to SRTM
- 24 Time to Rt. 20
- 28 Time to Rt. 20

Route 26

West County to Cotati

Add service to serve SMART, schools

Route 30

Sonoma Valley

Improve timing to SMART; end route at Santa Rosa Transit Mall

Routes 44 / 48

101 Corridor

Consolidate route to achieve consistent, reliable service

- 10 Redesign to connect with SMART and new Rt.48
- 42 Retime to improve efficiency

Route 60

Santa Rosa to Cloverdale

Adjust stops to improve travel time and reliability

- 60x Move origin to Windsor SMART; time to train
- 67 Expansion of service utilizing grant funding; improve connection to Rt.60

Route 62

Santa Rosa to Windsor

Eliminate duplicative service and redirect resources to improve access

- 66 Improve timing to SMART and increase route reliability

Agenda Item Number 12
City Council Meeting Packet for November 17, 2026

Next Steps and Outreach Plan

Oct 27
BOS public hearing

Nov 9
SCTCA Board

Nov 15
Schedules final

Feb 14
Service change effective

1 Announce
Nov – Dec 2026

- **Web page, news release, social** launch (week of 11/16)
- **Partner toolkit** to cities, CBOs, CityBus & Petaluma Transit
- **SMART / STS:** promote SMART Connect for Route 62
- **Car cards** and "What's Changing" brochure
- **Strategic Plan public workshop** on December 10

2 Educate
January 2027

- **Pop-ups** round 1; SRJC & SSU tabling
- **Trip planners updated** (GTFS) by ~1/24
- **Printed schedules** distributed from 1/25
- **Operator & customer service** briefings

3 Countdown
Feb 1 – 13, 2027

- **Bilingual notices** on board and at affected stops (from 1/31)
- **Pop-ups** round 2; paid bilingual ad
- **Email, text & social** reminders
- **New stop signage** 2/12–14

4 Launch & Support
Feb 14 – Mar 2027

- **New service Sun 2/14;** holiday service 2/15
- **Ambassadors** at key stops 2/16–2/20
- **Track rider issues** and fix quickly
- **Outreach summary** by 3/31

Informational campaign: English & Spanish materials; focus on riders losing or changing service (20X, 62, 42, 44/48)

Questions?

Emily Betts

Transit Manager

emily.betts@sonomacounty.gov

www.sctransit.com

SonomaCounty Transit

