



**For Immediate Release**  
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**SMART establishes a 50% discount fare policy for low-income riders**

*Petaluma, CA*— On Wednesday, February 5, 2020, the Board of Directors of the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART) approved a Low-Income Discount Fare policy that would give riders with qualifying incomes a 50% discount on train fares.

Since the launch of passenger service in 2017, the SMART Board of Directors has directed staff to investigate ways to provide fare discounts to low-income riders. Now, an opportunity has arisen with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Clipper START Low Income Fare Program, which will launch as a pilot in Spring 2020. At Wednesday's meeting the Board authorization staff to submit a formal request to MTC to participate in the Clipper START Program.

"SMART is part of the fabric of the North Bay and we need to continue to make access to the train affordable for all residents. With transportation costs being a sizable expense in a family's budget, I'm pleased we now have the opportunity to offer a discounted fare for people with low incomes," said SMART Board Chair, Eric Lucan.

The Clipper START program is designed to address the concern that transportation is a significant portion of Bay Area household budgets.

Cubic, the agency that manages the Clipper transit-fare card program will serve as income eligibility verifier and perform application intake, review and approval as well as customer service functions for Clipper START program participants.

“Being able to offer our riders with lower incomes a discount fare will increase access to reliable transit services connecting people to jobs, schools and city centers; which in other words is access to opportunity,” said Board Member, Shirlee Zane.

SMART has carried 1.74 million riders to-date and as part of the North Bay’s transit network, is a convenient and climate-friendly means of transportation.

More information at [SonomaMarinTrain.org](http://SonomaMarinTrain.org)

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