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SMART Hosts Workshop on Rail Vehicles

Bikes on board? How about bagels, black coffee or maybe even beaujolais?

The public will have its first opportunity to weigh in on the types of on-board amenities that should be included on SMART's new passenger rail vehicles at a workshop scheduled for 7 p.m. Dec. 9 at Chop's Teen Center, 509 Adams St., adjacent to the Railroad Square station site in downtown Santa Rosa.

Future users of the North Bay's passenger train are invited to comment on vehicle specifications during a meeting of the Operations Committee of the SMART Board of Directors. While the Board has already decided the type of vehicles SMART will use – state-of-the-art individually powered rail cars – the detailed specifications for those vehicles have yet to be written. SMART has contracted with LTK Engineering Services to develop the specifications over the coming months.

In addition to the highly technical details, the vehicle specifications will include items that directly relate to passenger comfort and convenience aboard SMART's trains. These include accommodations for disabled passengers, bicycle storage, rest rooms, wireless internet access, seating configuration, the ability to serve food and drink on-board and other options. The workshop is designed to gather public input regarding these choices.

SMART is a 70-mile passenger train and multi-use pathway project that will provide daily train service to 14 stations between Cloverdale, in northern Sonoma County, and Larkspur, in Marin County. Voters in both counties approved Measure Q, a one-quarter percent sales tax to fund the project, in November 2008. Train service is scheduled to begin in Fall 2014.

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