



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
FEBRUARY 24, 2023 – 9:00 AM
MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, February 24, 2023 via teleconference.

The Board Meeting Agenda Packet can be found online at www.SCMTD.com. *Minutes are “summary” minutes, not verbatim minutes. Audio recordings of Board meeting open sessions are available to the public upon request.

This document was created with accessibility in mind. With the exception of certain third party and other attachments, it passes the Adobe Acrobat XI Accessibility Full Check. If you have any questions about the accessibility of this document, please email your inquiry to accessibility@scmtd.com.

- 1 **CALLED TO ORDER** at 9:01 AM by Board Chair Pageler.
- 2 **SWEAR IN NEW DIRECTORS**
Julie Sherman, General Counsel, swore in new and returning Directors Henderson and Quiroz-Carter.
- 3 **ROLL CALL:** The following Directors were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

Director Kristen Brown	City of Capitola
Director Rebecca Downing	County of Santa Cruz
Direct Jimmy Dutra	City of Watsonville
Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson	City of Santa Cruz
Director Manu Koenig	County of Santa Cruz
Director Donna Lind	City of Scotts Valley
Director Bruce McPherson <i>AR 9:25</i>	County of Santa Cruz
Director Scott Newsome	City of Santa Cruz
Director Larry Pageler	County of Santa Cruz
Director Quiroz-Carter	City of Watsonville
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson	UC Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College
Michael Tree	CEO/General Manager
Julie Sherman	General Counsel
- 4 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Today’s meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.

5 NOMINATE BOARD OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chair Pageler spoke to the slates presented in the agenda packet and opened up dialogue to the public and Board Directors.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, encouraged whoever is selected to represent METRO at the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) to advocate for METRO.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ENTIRE SLATE 1 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION DID NOT PASS WITH 5 AYES (Directors Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Newsome, and Rotkin).

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ENTIRE SLATE 2 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR KOENIG SECOND: DIRECTOR DOWNING

Discussion ensued amongst Board Members on the vote, including a misunderstanding regarding Slate 1 and a desire to retake the vote. General Counsel Sherman explained a motion and a second had been made and first needed to be dealt with before any other business. Director Koenig withdrew his motion.

Director McPherson arrived at 9:25 AM.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ENTIRE SLATE 1 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR DUTRA SECOND: DIRECTOR QUIROZ-CARTER

MOTION DID NOT PASS WITH 5 AYES (Directors Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Newsome and Quiroz-Carter).

Director Dutra removed himself from the committee nominations. Discussion followed on replacing Director Dutra with Director Quiroz-Carter for South County representation. It was decided to leave the vacancies on the Capital Projects and Personnel/HR Standing Committees and allow the new Chair to fill the vacancies.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE SLATE 2 LEAVING A VACANCY ON THE CAPITAL PROJECTS AND PERSONNEL/HR STANDING COMMITTEES WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE NEW CHAIR WILL FILL THE VACANCIES

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler, and Rotkin).

Director Pageler welcomed Director Kalantari-Johnson as the new Chair.

Chair Kalantari-Johnson thanked the Board Members for entrusting her with this responsibility. She plans to approach these processes with a lens on the whole community within Santa Cruz County. She thanked Director Pageler for all of his work on the Board.

Director Dutra left the meeting at 10:00 AM.

6 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Downing expressed appreciation to Danielle Glagola, Marketing, Communications and Customer Service Director, for establishing the METRO Instagram account and posting information on the survey for riders.

7 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit, welcomed the new Board Members and expressed appreciation to Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager, and James Sandoval, SMART Chairperson, Local 0023, for participating in Transit Equity Day on February 4, 2023 and the Transit Equity Week Panel on January 30, 2023. She also thanked METRO for helping with the evacuations during the storms.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, thanked Director Pageler for his work on the Board. He mentioned inflation and the impact it has on delayed infrastructure projects (e.g., North Coast Rail Trail). He is a proponent of railbanking and feels that process will preserve the corridor.

Eduardo Montesino, Bus Operator, recommended going back to two Board meetings a month and removing the standing committees.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

8 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Hearing none, Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

9 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Having none, Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 10.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2023
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF:
 - A. JANUARY 27, 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
 - B. FEBRUARY 10, 2023 FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT STANDING COMMITTEE
 - C. FEBRUARY 10, 2023 PERSONNEL/HR STANDING COMMITTEEMichael Tree, CEO/General Manager
- 10.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF JANUARY 31, 2023
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.4 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI) REPORT FOR 2ND QUARTER FY23 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2022
Chuck Farmer, CFO

- 10.5 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO PARACRUZ OPERATIONS STATUS REPORT FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2022
Daniel Zaragoza, Operations Manager, Paratransit Division
- 10.6 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO SYSTEM RIDERSHIP REPORTS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF FY23
John Urgo, Planning and Development Director
- 10.7 APPROVE: RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Curtis Moses, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director
- 10.8 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DIRECTING THAT THE BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEE MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE TO BE HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager
- 10.9 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF CONTRACT TO CATTO'S GRAPHICS FOR FULL BUS WRAP SERVICES NOT TO EXCEED \$212,204.42
Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager
- 10.10 APPROVE: AUTHORIZE FUNDING OF A PROVISIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST I POSITION IN THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Dawn Crummié, HR Director

General Counsel Sherman made a brief comment on Item 10.8. The Governor is scheduled to lift the state of emergency on February 28, 2023. This item is only a placeholder in case the Governor extends the state of emergency. If the state of emergency is lifted, METRO will be holding in person meetings starting in March.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, expressed the continued need to conduct meetings via teleconferencing.

Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit, congratulated Chair Kalantari-Johnson on her appointment and suggested providing a hybrid option for meetings.

Hearing no further comments, Chair Kalantari-Johnson requested a motion.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR PAGELER

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Director Dutra was absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 11 **APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING AND FUNDING A MAINTENANCE TRAINER POSITION IN THE FLEET DEPARTMENT**
Margo Ross, COO, spoke to this item and the need for a Maintenance Trainer. This position will provide training to the maintenance staff on our electric and fuel-cell vehicles and fuel-charging systems.

ACTION: MOTION TO AUTHORIZE AND FUND A MAINTENANCE TRAINER POSITION IN THE FLEET DEPARTMENT

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR PAGELER

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Director Dutra was absent.

12 CEO ORAL REPORT

CEO Tree welcomed new Director Quiroz-Carter to the Board and provided updates on:

- Reimagine Program – This is a 15-month planning project to improve METRO’s system, focusing on reliability and frequency. Jarrett Walker and Associates are working on the existing conditions report and analyzing current ridership, demographics and survey data. Recruitment is under way to establish focus groups to reach various demographics within the community. We will have an online community meeting on March 14, 2023 from 5:00 – 6:30 PM to receive input from the community. April 11-13, 2023 will be a three-day workshop focused on network design ideas. The Board will be invited to a briefing at 4:00 PM each day.
- One Ride at a Time / Youth Cruz Free Programs – Ms. Glagola spoke to her presentation (attached) to update the Board Members on both programs. Director Rotkin requested having the Youth Cruz Free IDs available at the Watsonville Transit Center in addition to the Pacific Station. Ms. Glagola acknowledged the request.
- Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) – This grant has been submitted and asks for a hydrogen fueling station, 24 hydrogen buses, and funding for the Watsonville Transit Center Redevelopment Project featuring 60 affordable housing units.
- Sacramento Meetings on February 21, 2023 – CEO Tree met with Senators John Laird and Dave Cortese, and Assemblymembers Gail Pellerin, Robert Rivas and Dawn Addis. METRO’s goals and the TIRCP grant submitted were discussed and these legislative representatives are strong supporters.
- Bus Operators – METRO has six new Bus Operators going into revenue service and seven new recruits beginning training. I’ve created a special committee that meets regularly to improve the process of bringing on new Bus Operators.
- Newsletter – METRO will introduce a newsletter in March to keep the public informed on various projects at METRO.

Chair Kalantari-Johnson requested information on holding future METRO hybrid meetings. General Counsel Sherman reviewed the Brown Act teleconference and hybrid meeting requirements and will forward this information to the Board Members.

Director Downing requested the meeting on March 14th be recorded and receive a link to that recording afterwards for those that cannot attend in person. Ms. Glagola said she would take care of that.

Chair Kalantari-Johnson thanked Ms. Glagola on her presentation on the One Ride at a Time and Youth Cruz Free Programs. She encouraged other Directors who use social media or have their own newsletters to get the word out on these programs through their networks. She announced that the Aptos Youth Group is doing a celebration and thank you to METRO on the Youth Cruz Free Program. Board Members and METRO staff are invited to attend on March 23, 2023 from 7:00 – 7:30 PM at Aptos High School.

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

13 REVIEW OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

General Counsel Sherman announced that the upcoming labor negotiations with all three of METRO's bargaining units will be discussed.

There were no public comments.

14 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Chair Kalantari-Johnson announced the next regular Board meeting will be held on Friday, March 24, 2023 at 9:00 AM at the Scotts Valley City Council Chambers, 1 Civic Drive, Scotts Valley.

15 RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

Chair Kalantari-Johnson recessed to closed session at 10:38 AM.

Directors Lind and McPherson left the meeting at 10:38 AM.

SECTION II: CLOSED SESSION

16 CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS (GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957.6)

SECTION III: RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Chair Kalantari-Johnson reconvened the open session at 10:50 AM.

17 REPORT OF CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

General Counsel Sherman informed the attendees there was no reportable action.

18 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kalantari-Johnson adjourned the meeting at 10:52 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant

METRO Rebranding Campaign

- In 2022, METRO began the process of updated our fleet with the new brand guidelines when purchasing new buses
- But the agency still needs to rebrand the remaining existing fleet to a more modern design
- To allow riders and the community to better identify METRO and connect to our brand, it is in the best interest of the agency to have consistent branding





Protecting Our Monterey Bay

One Ride At A Time

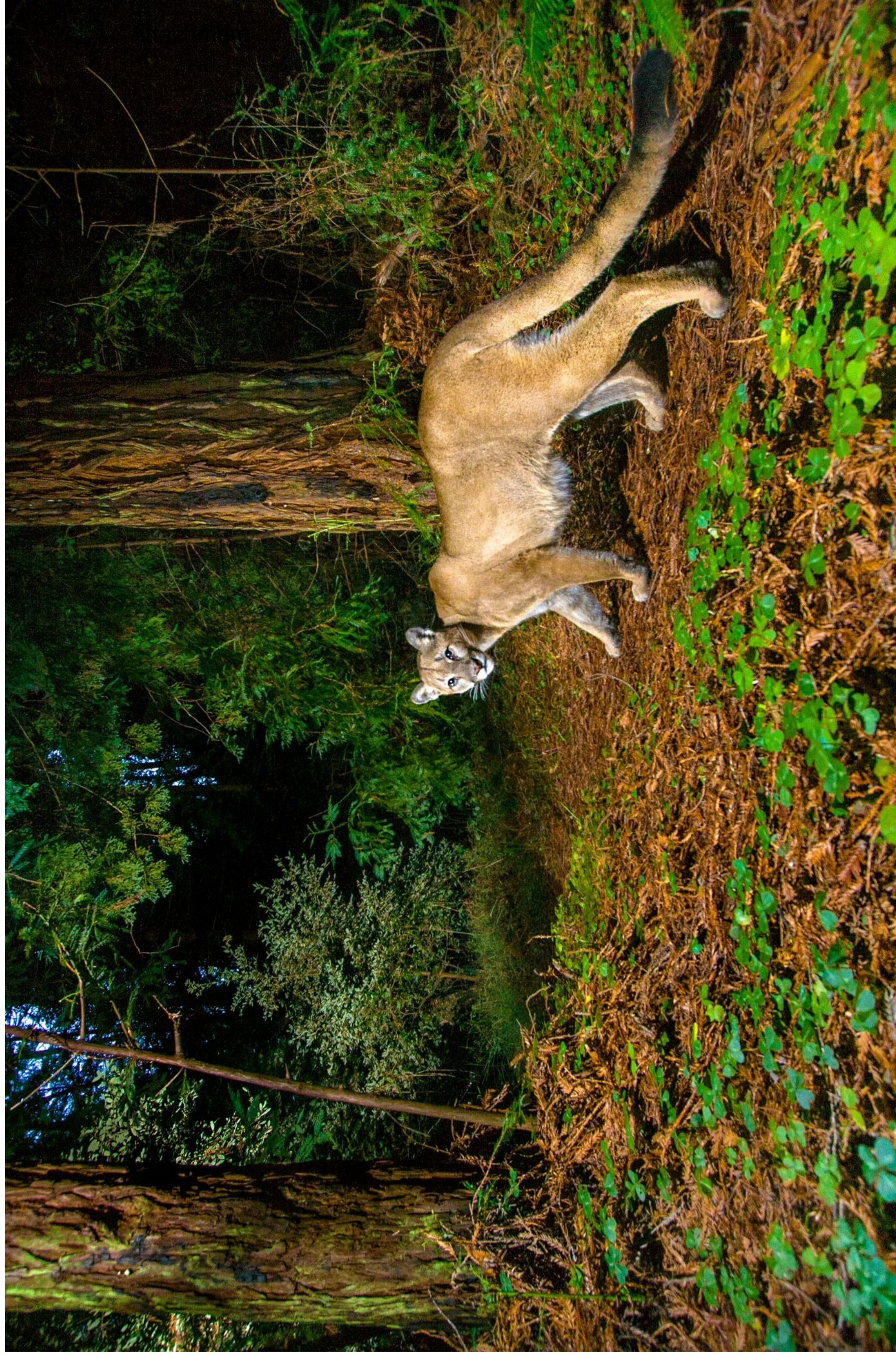
scmtd.com/onerideatotime



METRO's Mission Is to Provide Environmentally Sustainable Transportation

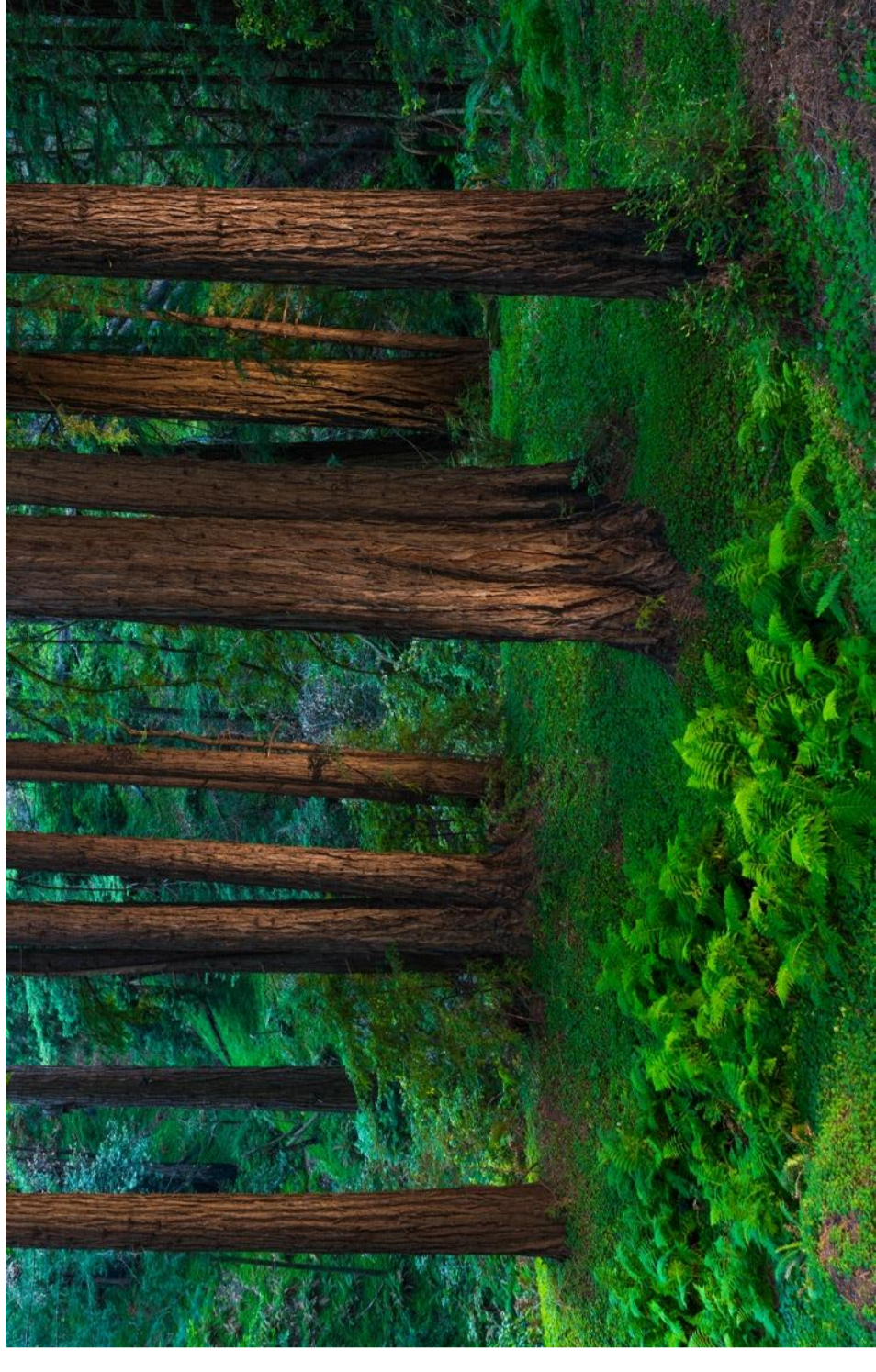
This campaign will:

- Inform the public about the benefits of public transit
- Educate them about the remarkable Monterey Bay
- Inspire people to take action



The Campaign's Goals Are Clear and Ambitious

1. Increase bus ridership
2. Establish METRO as Santa Cruz County's environmentally smart transportation choice
3. Support organizations making a difference in our community



Beginning in January, Every Bus Ride Donates to Our Environmental Partners



Monterey Bay
National Marine
Sanctuary Foundation



BAY OF LIFE
FUND

One Ride At A Time Offers Two Avenues of Support to Our Environmental Partners

METRO Vendors

Under METRO's Social Equity and Community Funding Policy, vendors are encouraged to discount their total contract amount by 5% that will then be donated to the Sanctuary Foundation or Bay of Life Fund on behalf of the One Ride at a Time program

METRO Riders

Through METRO's partnership with SCCRTC's Go Santa Cruz County program, riders can donate \$10 for every 25 logged bus trips to the Sanctuary Foundation or Bay of Life Fund





Participation Is Easy for Riders

Desktop

1. Create an account at scmttd.com/gosantacruz
2. Log your bus trips, earning 10 points for each trip
3. Accrue points and make a \$10 donation every time you reach 250 points (25 rides)
4. See your GHG reductions and compete to have the biggest impact

Mobile

1. Download the Commute Tracker app from the App Store or Google Play store
2. Set up your account and select CRUZ511.org
3. Follow the prompts to allow Commute Tracker to automatically log your trips by turning on location tracking
4. When you reach 250 points (25 rides), select a nonprofit partner to receive a \$10 donation



Beautiful Buses Will Generate Excitement and Awareness

METRO has teamed up with renowned photographer Frans Lanting to wrap our buses in his iconic *Bay of Life* images



BAY OF LIFE
Frans Lanting
Chris Eckstrom





One Ride At A Time Launched in January

Jan. 21, 2023

First 2 bus wraps debut at Bay of Life exhibit opening at Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History

Spring 2023

Campaign begins with 9 wrapped buses

March 29, 2023

Official campaign launch and METRO press event hosted at Sanctuary Exploration Center in Santa Cruz

Winter 2024

30 wrapped ORAT buses will be traveling throughout the County

METRO Will Use Its Platforms to Educate the Public

Transit Center displays

Interior bus signage

Website

Social Media

Advertising

Events



One Ride At A Time Is Made Possible by Our Partners

Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary

Bay of Life Fund

Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District



Monterey Bay
National Marine
Sanctuary Foundation

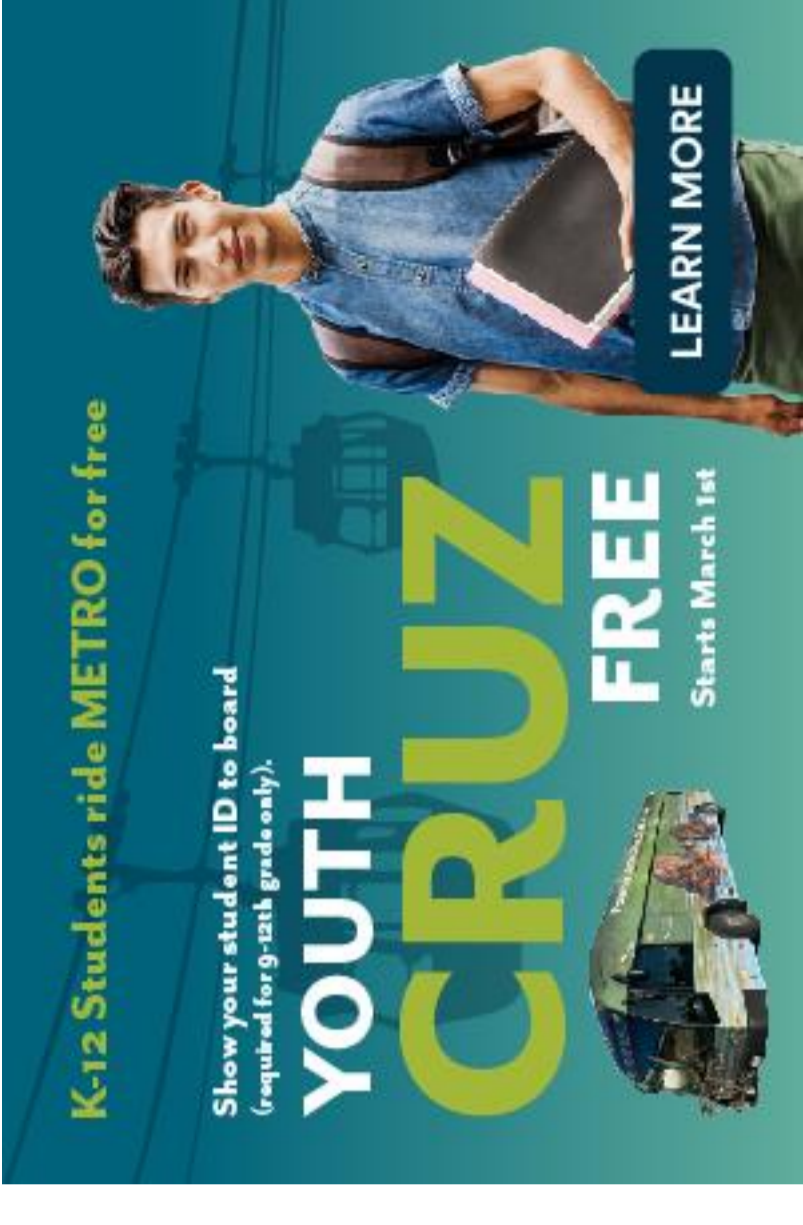


BAY OF LIFE
FUND



Youth Cruz Free Pilot Program

- METRO's first-ever youth ride free pilot program, for an initial one-year period
- Begins March 1, 2023
- Youth Cruz Free eliminates fares in order to increase access and encourage ridership for youth in grades K-12.
- The program will enable youth to ride on all METRO routes (excluding Highway 17 Express) anywhere, anytime.
- Youth Cruz Free Student Validation:
 - **Riders in 8th Grade and under may be asked by the driver to identify their grade level** or the school they attend.
 - **Riders in Grades 9 – 12 will be asked to show ID to the driver.** Riders without a Student ID can validate grade level by getting a special pass from their school or signing up for a free METRO Youth Cruz Free ID.
 - **Get a free METRO Youth Cruz Free ID if you don't have a student ID:** To obtain a METRO Youth Cruz Free ID, please visit the Pacific Station Customer Service window, during business hours, bring a form of ID or proof of grade level, and fill out a Youth Cruz Free On-Demand Form. Please allow at least 5-10 minutes for processing.
 - **First ID is free.** First replacement ID is \$2; further Replacement IDs are \$5.



Youth Cruz Free Pilot Program

Helping students get to school, work, and play.

Starting March 1st, show your student ID to board for free (highly suggested for grades 9-12).

No student ID? Get a special pass from METRO's Customer Service Window at Pacific Station in Downtown Santa Cruz.

Learn more at scmttd.com/youthcruzfree

For questions, contact METRO's Customer Service Department at (831) 425-8600. Agents available via phone 7 days a week, 8AM - 5PM or email youthcruzfree@scmttd.com.

METRO recommends that parents accompany children under 46" in height on the bus.



K-12 Students can now ride Santa Cruz METRO for free

No registration necessary with Student ID. To obtain a METRO Youth Cruz Free ID, please visit the Pacific Station Customer Service window, during business hours, bring a form of ID or proof of grade level, and fill out a Youth Cruz Free On-Demand Form. Please allow at least 5 - 10 minutes for processing. (1st ID: Free, 1st Replacement ID: \$2, Additional Replacement ID: \$2). *Excludes Highway 17 Express Service.



YOUTH CRUZ FREE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Who qualifies for METRO's Youth Cruz Free Pilot Program?

A: Youth, grades K-12, receive free fares on METRO services throughout Santa Cruz County, excluding Highway 17 Express Service.

Q: When does the Youth Cruz Free Pilot Program start and end?

A: Youth Cruz Free begins March 1, 2023 and will run as a one-year pilot program until February 29, 2024. After the term of the pilot program, METRO will review the success of the program to determine the next steps.

Q: What form of validation is required for the Youth Cruz Free Pilot Program?

A: Riders in 8th Grade and under may be asked by the driver to identify their grade level or the school they attend. Students may be asked to provide a Student ID if one is available. Riders in Grades 9-12 will be asked to show their ID to the driver. No registration is necessary with a Student ID.

Q: If I don't have a student ID, how can I receive free fares for Youth Cruz Free?

A: Riders without a Student ID, can validate grade level by:

- Getting a special pass from their school or
- Obtaining a METRO Youth Cruz Free ID at the Pacific Station Customer Service Window in Downtown Santa Cruz, during business hours, Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM (closed for breaks and lunches). For help, call Customer Service at (831) 425-8600.

- METRO Youth Cruz Free ID Cost: 1st ID: Free, 1st Replacement ID: \$2, Additional Replacement IDs: \$5
- To obtain a METRO Youth Cruz Free ID, please visit the Pacific Station Customer Service window, during business hours, bring a form of ID or proof of grade level, and fill out a Youth Cruz Free On-Demand Form. Please allow at least 5-10 minutes for processing.

Q: What age requirements are there for youth riding alone?

A: METRO recommends that youth 46" or below in height be accompanied by a parent/guardian, at the parent/guardian's discretion. If riding alone, youth must be able to follow METRO's Code of Conduct policy and be responsible for themselves. METRO does not assume responsibility for youth traveling alone.

Q: How can I view METRO's routes and schedules?

A: METRO posts all system maps, routes, and schedules on our website at scmttd.com, just click the "Route" header in the navigation bar. Additionally, METRO publishes our maps and schedules quarterly in our Rider's Guide, Headways, available throughout the County and at METRO Transit Centers. A PDF version of Headways is also posted to scmttd.com. You can find other useful trip-planning tips by visiting scmttd.com/en/riders-guide/planning-your-trip.

Q: How can riders stay up to date with route alerts and schedule changes? Does METRO offer any real-time route alerts?

A: METRO keeps riders informed of route changes through several platforms:

- Schedule-by-Stop Alerts:** Allows riders to search for any location (Bus Stop or Transit Center) and view today's schedule at that location in complete detail, or text message the location to receive the immediate schedule. Visit scmttd.com/connect to learn more.

- Subscriber Alerts:** Subscribers receive route alerts via email or text message regarding delays, schedule changes, general information, and upcoming agency events. Visit scmttd.com/connect to learn more.

- scmttd.com:** METRO News Bulletins (button at the top left of scmttd.com home page) or directly at scmttd.com/en/metro-news-bulletins shows service alerts such as traffic delays and detours.

- Real-Time Route Information:** Stay tuned! METRO will be releasing its Real-Time Route Information System in Spring 2023.

Q: What rules should I follow to ride the bus?

A: For the safety of you, other riders, and our operators METRO does ask all riders to follow our Code of Conduct Policy while onboard our vehicles, at Transit Centers, and bus stops. Please visit <http://scmttd.com/en/riders-guide/riding-tips> for details.

To view METRO's complete Code of Conduct Policy visit scmttd.com/Code-of-Conduct

Q: What is METRO's One Ride at a Time program and how can I participate?

A: Beginning in January 2023, every ride on a METRO bus donates to our partners in protecting the environment, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and the Bay of Life Fund thanks to Go Santa Cruz. Make your impact today. 25 logged rides = \$10 donation. To learn more and register visit scmttd.com/oneridetatime.

Q: Who should I contact if I have a question?

A: METRO's Customer Service Department is here to assist you 7 days a week from 8 AM - 5 PM by phone at (831) 425-8600 or by email at youthcruzfree@scmttd.com.

To see additional FAQs, visit scmttd.com/en/agency-info/faq.



To learn more visit scmttd.com/youthcruzfree



K-12 Students ride METRO for free

Show your student ID to board (required for 9-12th grade only).

YOUTH CRUZ FREE

Starts March 1st



LEARN MORE

Los estudiantes de grados kínder a 12 viajan en METRO gratis (required for 9-12th grade only).

¡LOS JÓVENES VIAJAN GRATIS!

Empieza el 1 de marzo



APRENDA MÁS

¡LOS JÓVENES VIAJAN GRATIS!

Programa piloto de tránsito (FAQ) para estudiantes de primaria y secundaria

El objetivo principal de este programa es proporcionar un servicio de transporte gratuito para los estudiantes de primaria y secundaria en Santa Cruz County, California. Este programa es una iniciativa piloto que comenzará el 1 de marzo de 2023 y durará un año. El programa está sujeto a cambios sin previo aviso. Para obtener más información, visite scmttd.com/youthcruzfree.

El programa de tránsito gratuito para estudiantes de primaria y secundaria (YOUTH CRUZ FREE) es un programa piloto que comenzará el 1 de marzo de 2023 y durará un año. El programa está sujeto a cambios sin previo aviso. Para obtener más información, visite scmttd.com/youthcruzfree.

El programa de tránsito gratuito para estudiantes de primaria y secundaria (YOUTH CRUZ FREE) es un programa piloto que comenzará el 1 de marzo de 2023 y durará un año. El programa está sujeto a cambios sin previo aviso. Para obtener más información, visite scmttd.com/youthcruzfree.