

**For Immediate Release**

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**Santa Cruz METRO and Arts Council of Santa Cruz County Unveil the Restored Watsonville Transit Center Mural**

**Santa Cruz, CA (October 26, 2020)** – The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) and the Arts Council of Santa Cruz County announce the Watsonville Transit Center Mural Unveiling Event scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2020 at 11:00AM at the Watsonville Transit Center in Watsonville, CA.

In July 2017, the Arts Council of Santa Cruz solicited project proposals for a competitive grant program, which would offer funds for a community art project. Only non-profit, non-governmental agencies were eligible to receive the funding and the grant required an equal matching share from the sponsor. The Watsonville Police Activity League (PAL) agreed to lead the project and in September 2017, METRO submitted a successful application to the Arts Council, which was awarded funds from the Create Grant Program.

In May and June of 2018, METRO staff conducted a public outreach process to garner public input for the proposed mural design. The majority of comments supporting restoring the existing mural and adding a new section of mural.

In 1999, the Pajaro Valley Housing Corporation sponsored the original 150' mural on a boundary wall separating Watsonville Transit Center from the adjacent residential area. This mural, "United by Pride, Dignity, and Knowledge" features community scenes by the original artist, Guillermo (Yermo) Aranda, and was collaborated with local youth.

After being exposed to the elements over the last 20 years the mural needed some love and our local community rallied together to make this happen and a new additional section to the mural with the assistance of Monterey Bay Murals artist Paul De Worken and local youth volunteers from PAL to restore the painting along with the support from the original artist, Guillermo (Yermo) Aranda.

The mural tells a historical story of the culture and tradition in our local community and it will be appreciated by generations to come. Thank you to everyone who participated in this restoration.

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**About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District:**

Established in 1968, Santa Cruz METRO provides fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Clara County, transporting more than 5 million passenger trips a year. METRO also operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 73,500 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY21 is almost \$55 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today it operates a fleet of 102 buses on 26 fixed-routes. For more information, visit [www.scmttd.com](http://www.scmttd.com).

**About Arts Council of Santa Cruz County:**

A private, non-profit agency that serves thousands of youth, artists, and arts organizations across Santa Cruz County every year. We invest in arts education programs, host the beloved Open Studios Art Tour, and support artists, arts organizations, and the thriving artist community at the Tannery Arts Center. Our mission is to generate creativity, vibrancy, and connection. Together, we're building a stronger Santa Cruz County, where creative expression thrives and the arts are integral to all aspects of our diverse community.