

## **For Immediate Release**

Contact:  
Danielle Glagola  
(831) 420-2550  
[dglagola@scmttd.com](mailto:dglagola@scmttd.com)



## **METRO Welcomes New Board Chair and Vice Chair**

MARCH 7, 2023 — SANTA CRUZ, CA — Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) today announced its Board of Directors has appointed Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson as Board Chair and Kristen Brown as Vice Chair at its February 24th board meeting. Both positions serve one-year terms.

The new appointments come during METRO's focus on growing ridership by supporting Santa Cruz County's community and environment with programs like [Youth Cruz Free](#), a program which allows K-12 students to ride METRO for free, and [One Ride at a Time](#), which enables METRO riders to help protect the environment by earning rewards that benefit the [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation](#) and the [Bay of Life Fund](#). Additionally, METRO is under development on 248 affordable housing units on METRO owned properties.

Kalantari-Johnson becomes METRO Board Chair during her third year of her first term on the Santa Cruz City Council, where she has shown her commitment to economic recovery, affordable housing, community wellness and social equity. As a consultant for community-based organizations during the last two decades, Kalantari-Johnson has led efforts to bring in funds and form partnerships to address issues such as immigration rights, juvenile justice, youth homelessness and substance abuse prevention.

"It's an honor to be selected as Chair of the METRO Board, especially as we launch new programs for riders and tackle the important issues of climate change and affordable housing for workers," said Kalantari-Johnson.

In addition to becoming METRO's Board Vice Chair, Kristen Brown is currently serving her second term as a member of the Capitola City Council. In 2020, Brown served as Mayor of the Capitola City Council. Brown has extensive experience creating partnerships and advancing the policy goals of community organizations, local and federal government agencies, and private businesses.

METRO also welcomes two new Board appointments, Scott Newsome from the City of Santa Cruz and Vanessa Quiroz-Carter from the City of Watsonville.

In March, METRO will begin hosting hybrid Board of Director meetings, including both in-person and Zoom-based options. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on Friday, March 24 at 9 a.m. at the Scotts Valley City Council Chambers, 1 Civic Center Dr. Scotts Valley. The meeting will also be available via Zoom. For more information about upcoming Board meetings, visit the [2023 meeting calendar](#).

**About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO)**

Established in 1968, METRO'S mission is to provide environmentally sustainable transportation to Santa Cruz County. METRO directly operates county-wide, fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service, with connections to Santa Clara County and Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center. The agency also operates ParaCruz paratransit service. Today METRO operates a fleet of 94 buses on at least 24 fixed routes and 32 paratransit vehicles.

Every ride on a METRO bus takes cars off the road, significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and supports economic opportunity and quality of life in our community. Moving into the future, METRO strives to meet the following goals:

- Increase transit ridership to 7 million trips annually within the next five years
- Transition to a zero-emissions fleet with a mix of hydrogen and battery electric buses
- Develop 175 affordable housing units at METRO-owned transit centers over the next decade

For more information, visit [scmtd.com](http://scmtd.com) Follow METRO on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

###