



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES\*  
OCTOBER 8, 2021 – 8:30 AM  
SEACLIFF INN  
7500 OLD DOMINION COURT  
APTOS, CA 95001**

The Santa Cruz METRO Board of Directors convened a special meeting as referenced above. The Meeting Agenda Packet can be found online at [www.SCMTD.com](http://www.SCMTD.com) and is available for inspection at Santa Cruz Metro's Administrative offices at 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz, California. \*Minutes are "summary" minutes, not verbatim minutes. Audio recordings of Board meeting open sessions are available to the public upon request.

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- 1 CALL TO ORDER** at 8:34AM by Chair Lind.
- 2 ROLL CALL:** The following Directors were **present**, representing quorum:

<b>Director Jimmy Dutra</b>	<b>City of Watsonville AR 9:00</b>
Vacant	City of Watsonville
<b>Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson</b>	<b>City of Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Director Manu Koenig</b>	<b>County of Santa Cruz AR 8:38</b>
<b>Director Donna Lind</b>	<b>City of Scotts Valley</b>
<b>Director Bruce McPherson</b>	<b>County of Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Director Donna Meyers</b>	<b>City of Santa Cruz <i>Presence visually acknowledged</i></b>
<b>Director Larry Pageler</b>	<b>County of Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Director Kristen Petersen</b>	<b>City of Capitola</b>
<b>Director Dan Rothwell</b>	<b>County of Santa Cruz AR 8:48A</b>
<b>Director Mike Rotkin</b>	<b>County of Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson</b>	<b>UC Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt</b>	<b>Cabrillo College AR 8:42</b>

- 3 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS**  
Hearing none, Chair Lind moved to the next item.

Alex Clifford, CEO, swore in Alta Northcutt to serve as City of Watsonville board member upon the resignation of Director Gonzalez to December 31, 2021.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

- 4. CEO/GM AND BOARD WORKSHOP – LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE WORKSHOP**  
CEO Clifford welcomed the participants and provided a brief background and summary of the strategic plan process. The November committee meetings will be replaced by a continuation of this meeting; that is, a second strategic planning session. Today's focus is on long term/short term policy direction and directives, trust and continued support of the CEO in his management of the day-to-day business and administration. He then introduced Teri Fisher, CEO of Insight Strategies, and Carita

Ducre, Insight Strategies partner, who spoke to the attached presentation engaging the participants at various times.

*Director Dutra departed at 10:40AM.*

CEO Clifford cautioned the assembly that time, money and personnel resources are very real constraints to take into consideration when setting goals, plans, etc.

Ms. Fisher suggested that METRO Marketing develop a script to use with constituents, personal and professional relationships to improve ridership, etc.

After a series of group exercises and frank discussions, Insight Strategies will provide notes to each board member and staff consolidating the discussion and outcome of today's session in preparation of the November 12, 2021 meeting wherein the top five priorities will be identified, projects within each priority will be delineated, urgency of priorities, etc. Director McPherson suggested a rolling six-month review of the goals and priorities thereafter.

- 5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2021 AT 9:00 AM, VENUE (TELECONFERENCE OR PHYSICAL) TO BE DETERMINED**  
Donna Lind, Board Chair

*Directors Henderson, Meyers and Rothwell departed at 1:00PM*

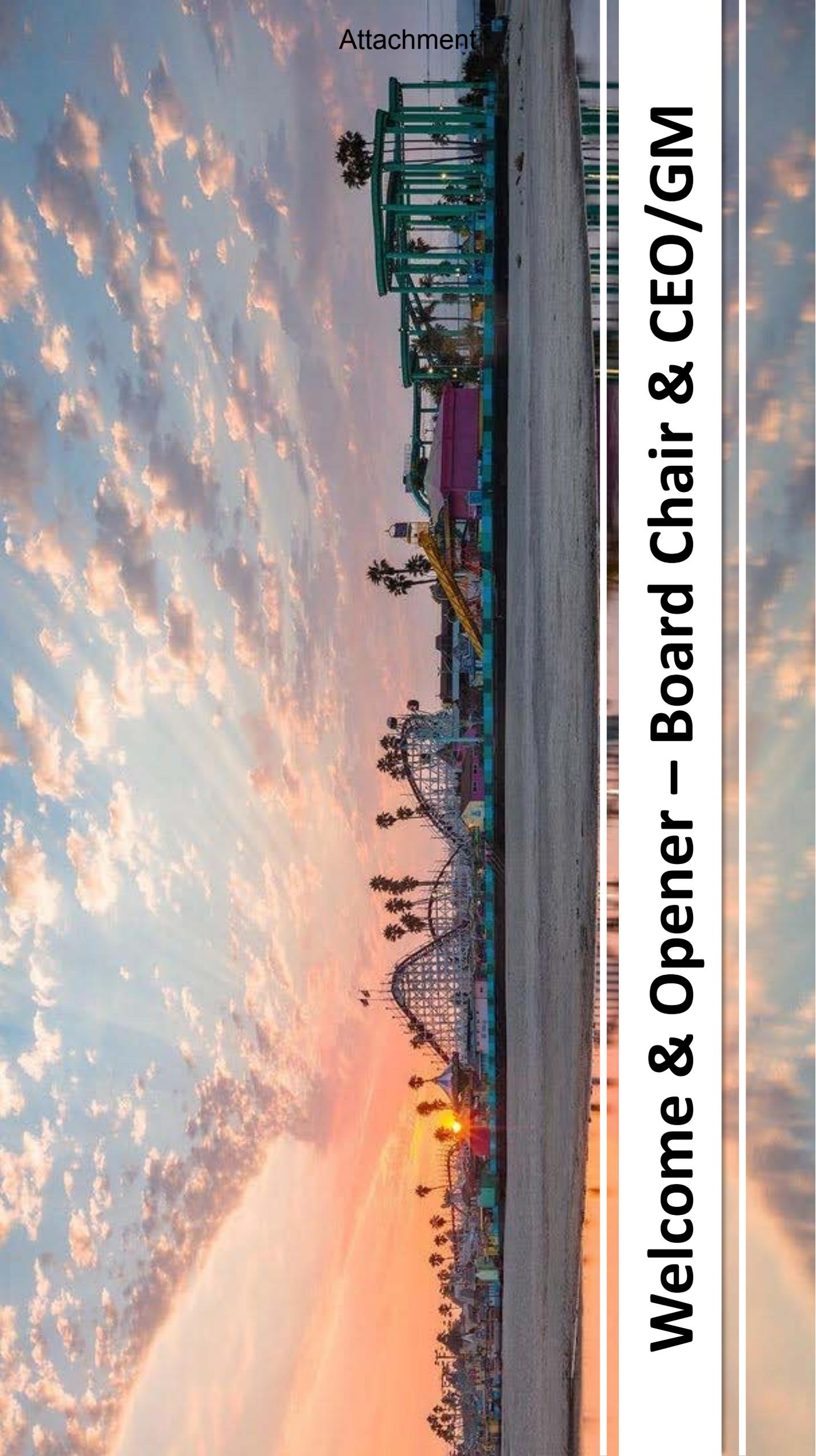
*Director Koenig departed at 1:15PM*

*Director Alta Northcutt departed at 1:25PM*

- 6. Chair Lind adjourned the meeting at 1:35 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Pye  
Executive Assistant



# Welcome & Opener -- Board Chair & CEO/GM



# Surgeon & Janitor



# About Insight Strategies, Inc.



INSIGHT  
STRATEGIES, INC.

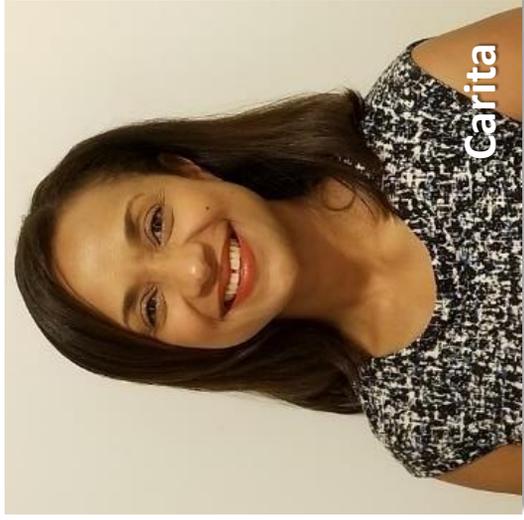
# Meet the Team



Teri



Kevin



Carita



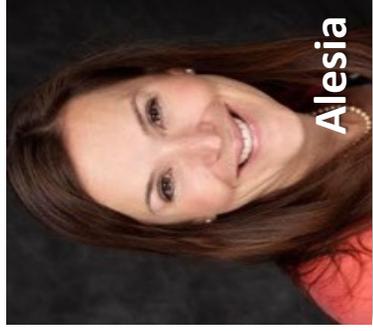
Catie



Axzel



Steve



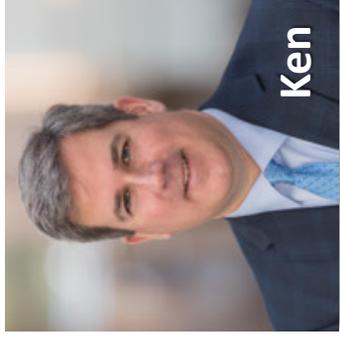
Alesia



Cherise



Janea



Ken



Claire



Joseph



Attachment



Patti

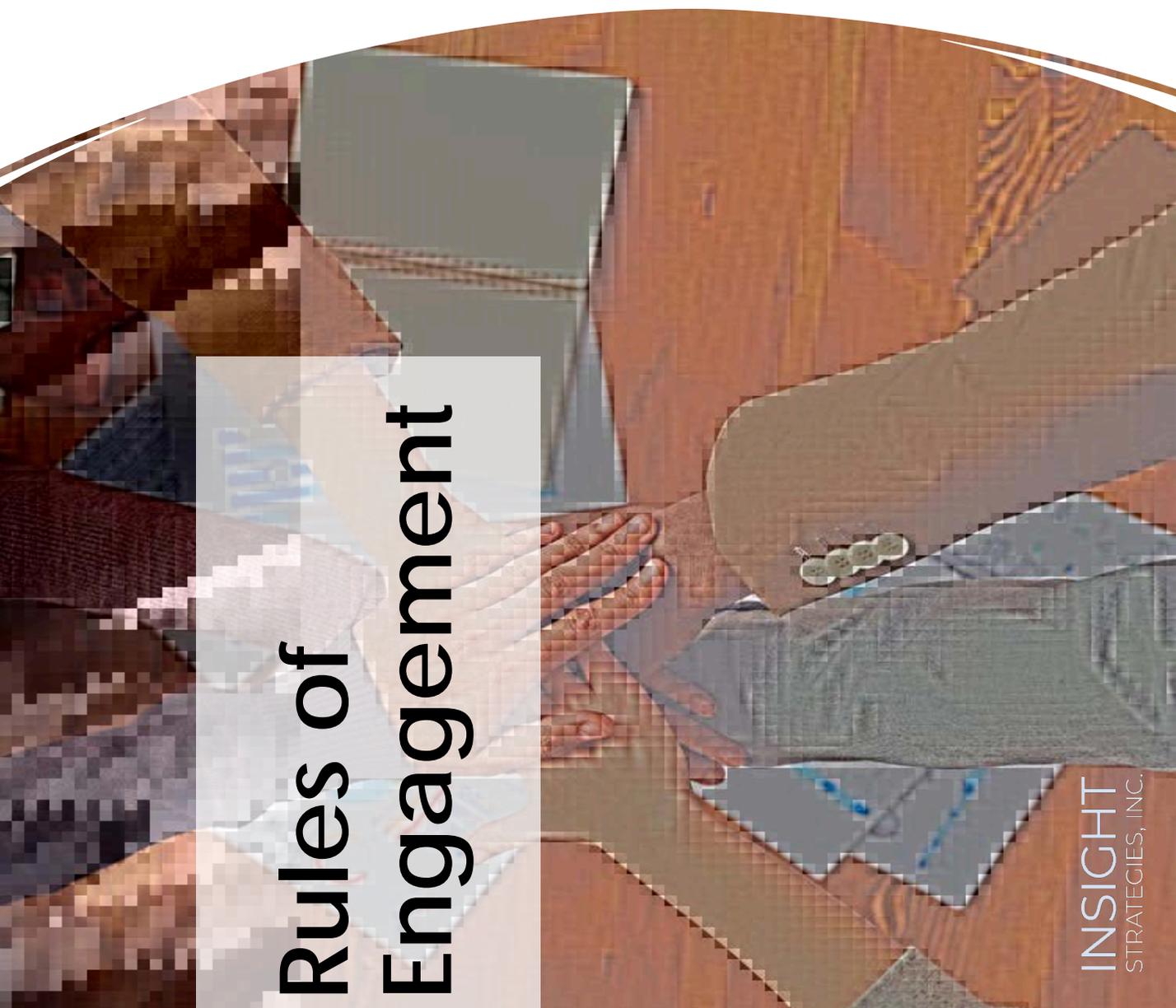
# Insight's Transit/Transportation Clients = 50+ to date



# Session Objectives

1. Understand METRO's current state
2. Discuss strategic planning priorities going forward
3. Create alignment between Board Members
4. Foster alignment between Alex and the Board
5. Delineate roles and responsibilities of board and METRO staff





# Rules of Engagement

1. Be here now
2. No phone/email distractions
3. Participate!
4. Listen actively
5. No formal “actions” will be taken
6. Speak your truth inside the room—*with respect*
7. “I” Statements
8. Take accountability
9. No judgements
10. Start/break/end on time
11. Fun!
12. Take notes!

***If you’re participating virtually, add***

13. Camera on
14. Remain on mute (when not speaking)

# Safety Moment



**Insight's role,  
Your role**

**1 min  
intros (or less!) HELLO**  
my name is

1. How long have you been a METRO Board member?
2. What is your day job or what was your last job?
3. What impact do you want to have (or have you had) as a Board member?
4. Fun fact (*sans* kids, grandkids, or pets!) 😊

Attachment

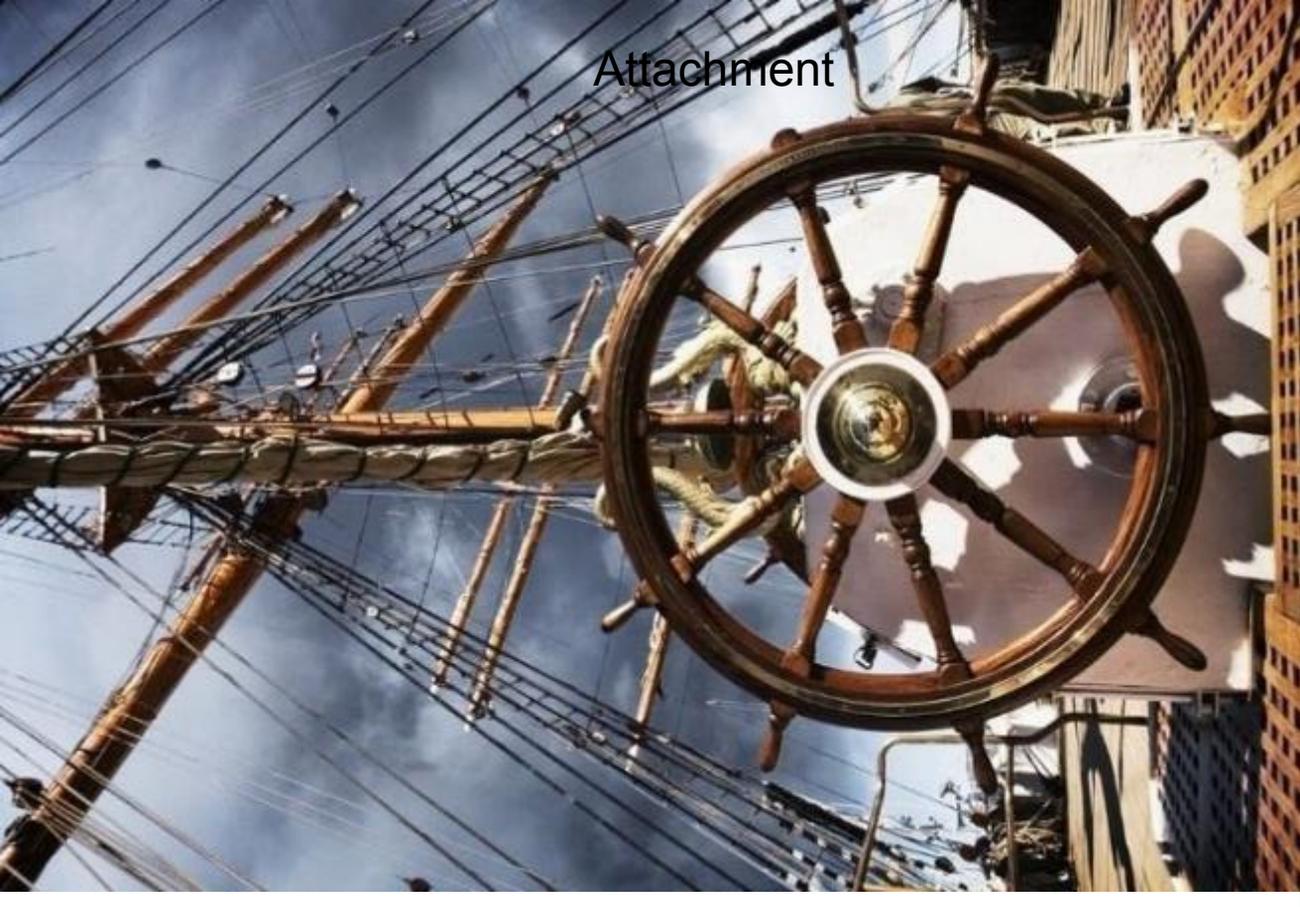


**METRO**  
is a Ship



# METRO is a Ship—Draw a Picture

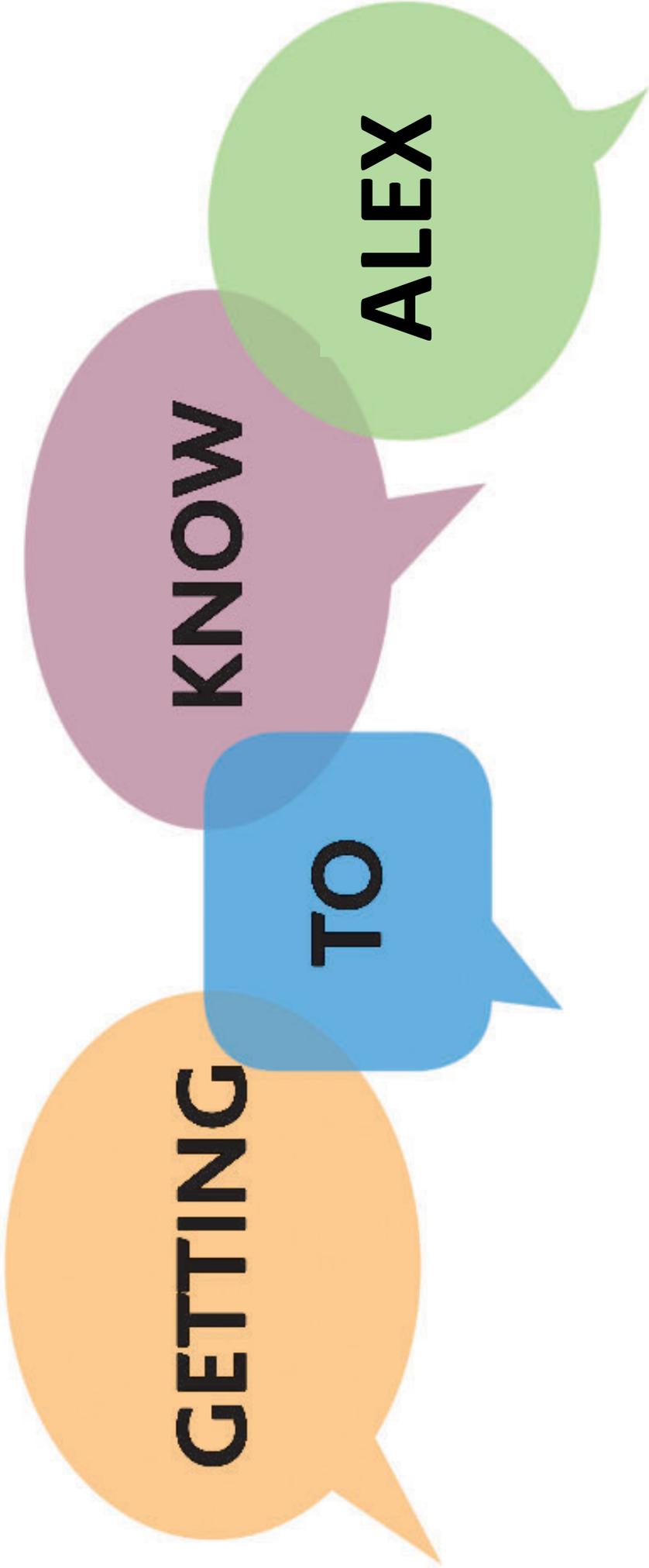
1. What type of ship or boat is it? Why?
2. What condition is the ship or boat in? Why?
3. What speed is the ship or boat going? Why?
4. What's the water like? What's in the water?
5. What's the weather like?
6. What is your destination?
7. Where are you personally on the ship or boat?  
What is your role on the ship or boat? (STAFF)
8. Where is the CEO/GM? Where is the Board?



# Insight's Organizational Health & High- Performance Framework

VISION





# Board Interview Assessment Data

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# 2021 VOB Interview Findings – Summary

## Voice of the Board Assessment 12 Interviews | 7 Questions

1. What are the top 3 things METRO does well?
2. What are METRO'S top 3 areas for improvement?
3. In the next 5 years... What are METRO's highest priority strategies and goals? "Big buckets"
4. What are the greatest challenges/obstacles to achieving these highest priority strategies and goals?
5. Describe what roles the Board plays or should play.
6. What is your feedback for Alex?
7. Catch All?

Attachment

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes: BLUF

## CEO/GM doing a good job

- Pandemic response (kept customers informed; kept employees safe and employed)
- Politically savvy at state & federal levels

Excellent financial stewardship

Communication with Board and public

Courteous drivers, great customer service

## Build relationships with partners

Staying relevant

Electrify and modernize the fleet

Meet the needs of riders in populous areas

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 1. What are the top 3 things METRO does well?

Freq.	Response
8	Finances – dug out of a hole, now we’re in good shape, excellent financial management and grants team
3	Community responsiveness – inform, educate, respond to the community
3	Communication between METRO and the Board
3	Customer service – drivers are committed to passenger experience
2	Retaining employees – including drivers and mechanics, and multiple generations
2	Serving UCSC
2	COVID Response/pandemic management – kept employees safe, no layoffs, kept Board informed
2	Meeting effectiveness – run well
2	Funding/political savvy

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 2. What are METRO'S top 3 areas for improvement?

Freq.	Response
6	Union relationships
4	Meet the needs of riders in populous areas (routes run through but are not convenient)
3	Fleet updates – electrify/modernize/restore
2	Technology (i.e., AVL and APC)
2	Increase and retain ridership

Attachment

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

**3. In the next 5 years...What are METRO’s highest priority strategies and goals? “Big buckets”**

Freq.	Response
8	Electric buses/green emission/zero emission
7	Increasing ridership – especially choice riders
5	Service: More frequent service, more routes, reduce headways, focus on Watsonville/SC connection
5	Financially healthy/stable, funding for pension
3	More efficient routes for long trips (need better options w/o transfers)
3	COVID recovery safe, healthy, employees
2	Bus on shoulder project – dedicated bus lane on Highway 1
2	Union relationships
2	Strong legislative platform, federal and state
2	Regional planning, integrating, engaging in transit/transportation discussions
1	E-bikes/bike-share growth taking up market space
1	Succession/transition planning for C-Suite
1	Technology improvements (AVL and APC)

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 4. What are the greatest challenges/obstacles to achieving these highest priority strategies and goals?

Freq.	Response
8	Funding/financials/pension challenges
4	Rail/trail tension/debate – outcome could affect Metro
4	Relevance/image of public transit as a service worth riding/paying for
3	Staffing: maintaining and sustaining employees
2	Ridership
2	Traffic, road expansion, roads in need of repair, etc.
1	Diversity – more women involved
1	Work with RTC on bottlenecks
1	COVID – new variants and impact on travel

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 7. Catch all.

1. Metro's employees love their work. It shows up in how they think about the community and want to respond. They believe in this work. They want public transportation to be the way we exist.
2. Appreciate the leadership for taking time to recognize the folks who are working. When they put "You are essential" on the sides of the buses, at stops, I appreciate that.
3. Happy to be on this Board.
4. Being on the Board doesn't "light me up."
5. Take the lead on succession planning. Have had lots of retirements lately.
6. Question for Alex: What is your legacy move on this agency?
7. He does a good job communicating things that are happening (i.e., accidents, electric buses) but are there other ways to get Board members to contribute? Leverage Board members more.
8. I enjoy being on this Board.
9. We need to make sure Alex feels valued and part of the team.
10. It's hard to get to know each other virtually.
11. Remove politics from decisions.
12. This is a great first step in building a relationship between Alex and Board.
13. It's very business as usual. No opportunity to get to know each other and our expertise. If we knew each other's strengths, we could leverage them.

Attachment

# Insight's Insights on METRO's Opportunities

- Serve growing population of UCSC
  - What about servicing the UC Santa Cruz past 10pm
- Relevancy – e.g., pop-up ads on Instagram, geo-tracking, climate action response, etc.
- Attract choice riders where they are (ex: ads in parking lots)
- Obtain funding for METRO as an evacuation system during wildfires
- Electric buses – establish backup sources of power for charging during natural disasters
- More proactive engagement/integration with RTC
- What else?

Attachment

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

6. Feedback for  
Alex, if you have  
any

# YOU SPOKE, WE LISTENED



# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## Board Positive Feedback to the CEO

1. Attends METRO events. If METRO is putting it on, he's there.
2. Doing the best he can with the resources at his disposal.
3. He's done a superb job running the organization.
4. Grateful for his openness/willingness to meet and provide information.
5. He's the perfect person for right now. Confident. Knows how to run a transit agency. Good at policy/advocacy.
6. He does a superb job of advising the Board on big issues, i.e., financials, big decisions, policies, fair supervisor of the people below him.
7. He's done a great job with the agency (operationally, fiscally, etc.) Can see that he's trying! His efforts are noticed.
8. He's effective, attentive – good communication style and pandemic response.
9. Feel proud of the work he's done.
10. He's outstanding.

Attachment

# Industry Update – Quick Hit

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# SWOT<sup>2</sup> Analysis

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# SWOT<sup>2</sup> Analysis

**Strengths** –Compared to other like organizations, what does **METRO** do that is excellent? On a scale of 1-10, it would be rated an 8, 9 or 10. (Data to support)

**Weaknesses** –Compared to other like organizations, what could be improved? On a scale of 1-10, it would be rated a 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4. Weaknesses are within organizational control. (Data to support)

**Opportunities** –What opportunities exist for **METRO** that will better enable it to achieve its mission, and vision, achieve continued success and relevance?

**Threats** –What threats exist that could inhibit **METRO** from achieving its mission and vision? Threats are outside of an organization's control, i.e. Economic, Competitive, Policies, Trends, Funding, etc.

**Don't forget Trends!**

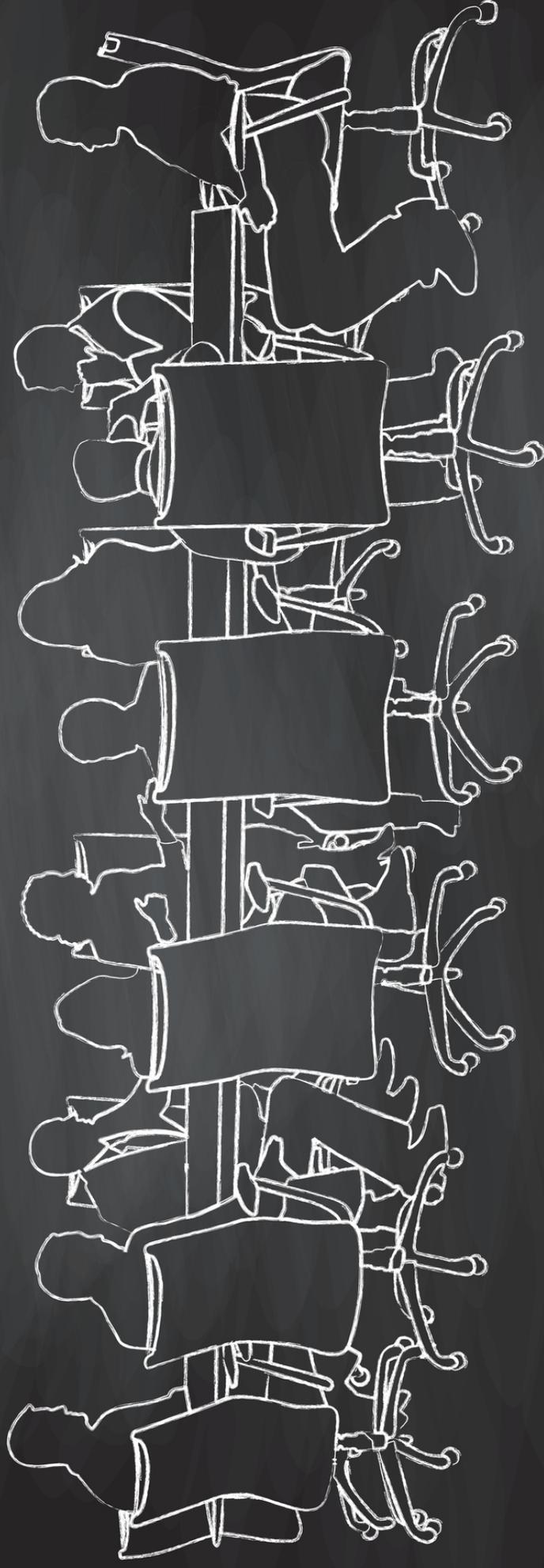
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# SWOT<sup>2</sup> - Thought Starters

<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do we do well?</li><li>• What are our assets?</li><li>• What are our core competencies?</li><li>• What successful experiences do we have – what did it take to achieve those successes?</li><li>• Etc.</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses (internal)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do we need to do better?</li><li>• What training, tools and technology do we need that we don't have?</li><li>• Where do we lack resources?</li><li>• What problems keep reoccurring?</li><li>• What communication and organizational issues exist?</li><li>• Where are the process issues?</li><li>• Etc.</li></ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are new needs of our customers?</li><li>• What future trends exist?</li><li>• What industry trends exist that we can leverage and/or address?</li><li>• What political and social trends can we address?</li><li>• What new technology could we capitalize on?</li><li>• Where can we improve service?</li><li>• Where can we offer more services?</li><li>• What are process opportunities?</li><li>• Etc.</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Threats (external)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where are we vulnerable?</li><li>• How are we perceived?</li><li>• How can technology be a threat?</li><li>• What economic trends could impact us?</li><li>• What social and market trends could impact us?</li><li>• What policies could impact us?</li><li>• Etc.</li></ul>

Attachment

# Roles & Responsibilities



# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 5a. Describe what roles the Board plays

Freq.	Response
10	Oversee/advise/manage Alex
7	Represent constituents; hold staff accountable to meet what was promised to the public/Sounding board for the public/Community liaisons
4	Financial solvency/ensure METRO stays within its budget
2	Guide policies and direction of Agency
1	Performance reviews for CEO
1	Still learning that!
1	Tours, employee recognition

9.2B.33

# 2021 VOB Interview Themes

## 5b. Describe what roles the Board *should* play

Freq.	Response
4	Outward facing/advocating for their communities through transit and vice versa
2	Ride the system
2	Should not be focused on the day-to-day
1	Be more informed about the community/ridership
1	Better utilization in sub-committees
1	Strategic planning/development of the organization
1	Research/fact check
1	Meet more often/regularly to discuss goals

9.2B.34

# Board Roles & Responsibilities Best Practices

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic direction oversight</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial oversight and stewardship</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Represent constituents; hold staff accountable to meet what was promised to the public/Sounding board for the public/Community liaisons</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the transit industry and METRO specifically</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocate the benefits of transit back to the constituency</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CEO Effectiveness and Performance Evaluation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guide and review policies</li></ul>

**9.2B.35**

# Insight's Recommendations to the Board

1. Board Member onboarding and orientation
2. Structured and objective approach to CEO Performance Evaluation
3. Get to know each other and Alex better
4. Board to get to know the system and staff

**9.2B.36**

Attachment

# Cathedral

9.2B.37

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STRATEGIES, INC.

Attachment



# Next Steps & Session Evaluation

# what's next?



**You can find us at:**

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**9.2B.39**

**Insight's Organizational Health & High-Performance Framework©**

