

SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO) BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES* JANUARY 27, 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, January 27, 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.

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1 **CALLED TO ORDER** at 9:00 AM by Board Chair Pageler.

2 SWEAR IN NEW DIRECTORS

Julie Sherman, General Counsel, swore in new and returning Directors Lind, Newsome, Northcutt, and Rotkin.

ROLL CALL: The following Directors were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

Director Kristen Brown
Director Rebecca Downing

Direct Jimmy Dutra

Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson

Director Manu Koenig Director Donna Lind

Director Bruce McPherson AR 9:20

Director Scott Newsome Director Larry Pageler

Director - Vacant Director Mike Rotkin

Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson

Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt

Michael Tree Julie Sherman City of Capitola
County of Santa Cruz
City of Watsonville
City of Santa Cruz
County of Santa Cruz
City of Scotts Valley
County of Santa Cruz
City of Santa Cruz
City of Santa Cruz
City of Watsonville
County of Santa Cruz
UC Santa Cruz
Cabrillo College

CEO/General Manager General Counsel

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today's meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.

5 NOMINATE BOARD OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Chair Pageler introduced his 2023 slate of Officers, Committees, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), and Santa Cruz Civic Improvement Corporation (SCCIC). He noted that he left the third seat on the SCCRTC open to add the City of Watsonville representative when appointed. He then welcomed additional input from the other Board members.

Director Lind nominated the following Directors to her slate: Director Kalantari-Johnson as Chair and Director Brown as Vice Chair, leaving the remainder nominations the same as Slate 1 presented by the Chair.

Director Dutra expressed that more representation from South County is needed and hopes fellow members will keep that in mind when they vote. Ex-Officio Director Northcutt agreed.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOMINATION SLATES PUT FORTH FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE FEBRUARY 24, 2023 BOARD MEETING AND ALLOW ADDITIONAL SLATES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THAT MEETING

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler and Rotkin)

Hearing nothing further, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

6 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Downing expressed gratitude for the invitation to attend the Bay of Life event on January 21, 2023. She thanked CEO Tree for expressing his goals for METRO at the event and felt it made an impact. She also thanked Danielle Glagola, Marketing, Communications and Customer Service Director, for kicking off the One-Ride-At-A-Time Program. The buses on display looked great.

Director Lind commended both CEO Tree and Ms. Glagola for their hard work in representing METRO at the event. Various speakers credited METRO for its support and participation in the program.

Director Koenig commented that the new bus wraps look really good and are going to catch a lot of eyes around the county.

Director Rotkin thanked Ms. Glagola for the publicity METRO has received.

Chair Pageler added it is a terrific program. He also thanked METRO staff who assisted in the evacuation efforts; that support for our community was appreciated.

Director McPherson thanked CEO Tree for reaching out during the evacuations and providing volunteers from his church to help in the storm-related efforts. As far as the event went, it was great having the buses outside for people to see.

Chair Pageler mentioned that Equity Transit is doing a number of events next week in celebration of Rosa Parks. There is a panel discussion on Monday night at the Resource Center for Nonviolence that CEO Tree and Mr. Sandoval will be joining.

7 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rohan Tuli, UCSC student, questioned the methodology METRO used in determining the service reduction hours noted in its response to agenda items 7.1 – 7.4. John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, commented on how the data was calculated and invited Mr. Tuli to reach out to him to discuss further. He added that METRO kicked off its Bus Network Reimagining Plan, a comprehensive operational analysis of all of METRO's service and routes. There is an effort to recruit focus groups at UCSC, which Mr. Tuli has been invited to attend.

Jessica Corona, member of the public, commented on a letter her son previously wrote to the Board regarding Highway 17 Express service and hoped that buses will be able to stop in Scotts Valley during commute times again. Mr. Urgo commented that METRO is planning to restore three AM commute trips and three PM commute trips that will serve both Scotts Valley and San Jose State University (SJSU) and those trips will start March 16, 2023. METRO also reached out to SJSU to fund two late evening trips for METRO to operate. They did not get back to us in time for this bid for the Spring service.

Garfield Yang, UCSC student, expressed concern about route inconsistencies and frequencies on and off campus, causing long waits. Mr. Urgo invited Mr. Yang to join the Reimagine METRO effort at UCSC. There will be opportunities for the public to weigh in on how we can make METRO fast, frequent and reliable for everyone.

Director Rotkin expressed concern after hearing Mr. Yang's experiences and added that this is not a good model to get riders to be lifelong transit users. Director Lind suggested METRO share information about the new app being another resource to help riders.

Having nothing further, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

8 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

James Sandoval, SMART Chairperson, Local 0023, thanked the Chair for his leadership and welcomed Director Newsome. He spoke to the slates being proposed and felt Watsonville should have a voice on the executive team. He also commented that he and Director Rotkin have met and discussed issues and figured out how they both can communicate better to collaborate on issues.

He also gave a shout out to everyone at METRO that came together during the storms. It was important to be there for our community. He praised the dedication that the Bus Operators demonstrated during the evacuations.

Director Rotkin thanked Mr. Sandoval for his comments and pointed out that it is not easy to be a union rep and Mr. Sandoval does a great job of representing his members and putting the transit agency front and center to get things done. He's really a good model of how people can be activists and still make a commitment to their employers.

Brandon Freeman, Vice Chair of SMART, Local 0023, endorsed Slate 1 and mentioned that with the upcoming negotiations, it would be nice to have someone

at the helm who has been through this before. He pointed out that the number of operators we have this January is exactly the same as last January. Even though we have hired many new Bus Operators, we also have attrition happening. We are re-adding service not because we have extra Bus Operators but because we are taking on more work with the Bus Operators that we have. He also endorsed the free fare for youth program and felt this will encourage kids to ride the bus.

Director Rotkin commented that the transit agency did a great job in hiring new Bus Operators but Mr. Freeman brought up a good point on attrition. We do have negotiations coming up and it is up to the unions to decide what they want, but as far as the needs of the district, we might think about longevity pay for those who are considering leaving the agency to encourage them to stay.

Director Pageler thanked Mr. Freeman for mentioning the articulated buses coming from San Diego and hopes that will help with the capacity issues on the west side of town.

Jordan Vascones, SEA Chapter President, also endorsed Slate 1. He wants to assure the public that the Admin staff at METRO is making big steps on improving service.

Mr. Freeman invited all the Directors to attend the Service Planning and Review Committee meetings held on the second Tuesday of the month from Noon to 2:00 PM so that they can see what is happening with our planning efforts. Chair Pageler added that Director Downing and he regularly attend this meeting. Director Dutra requested the meeting links in order for other Directors to add it to their calendars.

Chair Pageler encouraged the Directors to ride the buses to gain some understanding of METRO's riders. It will be helpful as we go through the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) process.

9 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS Having none, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 10.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2022 Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF:
 - A. OCTOBER 19, 2022 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
 - B. DECEMBER 16, 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
 - C. JANUARY 13, 2023 FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT STANDING COMMITTEE
 - D. JANUARY 13, 2023 PERSONNEL/HUMAN RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager

- 10.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022 Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.4 ACCEPT AND FILE: ACCEPTANCE OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

 Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.5 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING VEHICLES AND/OR EQUIPMENT AS EXCESS FOR PURPOSES OF DISPOSAL OR AUCTION Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 10.6 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
- 10.7 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN AMENDED RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE FOR THE SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT
 Julie Sherman, General Counsel
- 10.8 APPROVE: AUTHORIZATION TO FUND A SENIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE Dawn Crummié, HR Director
- 10.9 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATUS OF METRO'S DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM Chuck Farmer, DBE Liaison Officer, CFO
- 10.10 APPROVE: CONSIDER ADOPTING A RESOLUTION THAT APPROVES THE SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT ZERO-EMISSION BUS ROLLOUT PLAN AND AUTHORIZES THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO SUBMIT THE ZEB ROLLOUT PLAN TO THE CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INNOVATIVE CLEAN TRANSIT REGULATION

Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning & Grants Program Manager

There was no public comment.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR DUTRA SECOND: DIRECTOR KALANTARI-JOHNSON

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

REGULAR AGENDA

11 PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARD (25 YEARS): MICHAEL MILLER

Chair Pageler acknowledged and congratulated Mr. Miller on his years of service.

12 RETIREE RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR: CATALINO S. VASQUEZ Chair Pageler acknowledged and congratulated Mr. Vasquez on his retirement.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RETIREE RESOLUTION AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR LIND

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

13 APPROVE: YOUTH RIDE FREE PILOT PROGRAM

John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, spoke to the item. This is a 12-month pilot program waiving fares for youths Kindergarten -12th Grade with a proposed launch in March 2023. The intent of this program is to support METRO's goal of increasing transit ridership, expanding access to opportunities and resources for youth, and support equity by eliminating the fare burden for youth, many whom come from low income households. The program would allow K-12 youth to ride free on METRO's local service anytime and anywhere that METRO operates, excluding Hwy. 17.

In order to facilitate an easy rollout, we do not plan to require a specific fare card or special documentation. Youths Grade 9-12 can show a Student ID when boarding the bus. Youths Grade 8 and under may be asked to identify their grade level or the school that they attend.

Discussion followed on the financial impact of the program, pursuing sustainable funding sources beyond the pilot stage, and outreach to all school districts, parents, and youth groups in the county.

Several Directors expressed enthusiasm for the program and the positive impact it will have on the environment, traffic congestion during school commute times, and freeing up money for schools that are now buying annual passes for students. They requested materials that they could hand out to the public in an effort to help with the rollout.

CEO Tree said he is excited about this project. METRO has a robust marketing plan for the rollout. You'll see a lot of media attention and a lot of information going to the school districts and the students.

There was no public comment.

ACTION: APPROVE THE YOUTH RIDE FREE PILOT PROGRAM

MOTION: DIRECTOR DUTRA SECOND: DIRECTOR KALANTARI-JOHNSON

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

14 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) SEMI-ANNUAL UPDATE FOR 2022

Chair Pageler mentioned that the MAC Chair and Vice Chair were unable to attend today's meeting so encouraged the members to review the report in the agenda packet.

There was no public comment.

15 CEO ORAL REPORT / COVID-19 UPDATE

CEO Tree welcomed Director Newsome to the Board and looks forward to meeting with him to discuss METRO. He requested General Counsel Sherman to review the newly enacted alternate teleconferencing rules established by AB 2449. General Counsel Sherman spoke to this item and shared her screen with the attached document. There are two instances where AB 2449 allows Board Members to participate remotely—"just cause" and "emergency circumstances" and reviewed their definitions. These instances can only be used twice a year per body that a Board Member serves on. She also reviewed the procedural rules that must be applied in these circumstances.

Discussion followed on the pros/cons of having hybrid meetings. CEO Tree said he'd review it with the IT staff and report back at the February Board meeting with a recommendation.

CEO Tree continued with his update and informed the public that in spite of a rough couple of months with the UCSC strike and the storm events and modifying schedules as needed, there have been a lot of great things that happened at METRO:

- Storm efforts Sharing slides (attached), CEO Tree described staff's efforts in sandbagging, Bus Operators and Mechanics working around the clock, moving buses from the flooded yard, the evacuations of YMCA Camp Campbell and Willowbrook Residential Care Facility, and ParaCruz working 24/7 during the evacuations.
- One-Ride-At-A-Time Program The ultimate goal is to raise money to protect the habitat of the Monterey Bay and Santa Cruz Mountains. This will be achieved through the sustainability policy and METRO's partnership with RTC.
- Reviewed in detail the three goals METRO is trying to achieveincrease ridership, buy zero-emission buses and develop housing units on METRO property.
- Recruiting We have six in training who will soon be out on the road.
 We have 52 applications from the latest recruitment.
- Automatic Vehicle Location System on track to be completed in February 2023.
- Automated Passenger Counter Project on track to be completed in July 2023.

 Triennial Review – Chuck Farmer, CFO, is leading this review. It kicks off in February and then culminates with a report in September to the Board.

Director Rotkin thought the Federal Transit Administration had changed the life of a bus for replacement from 12 to 14 years. Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning and Grants Program Manager, said the life cycle of a bus is 14 years but a third of our fleet is beyond useful life.

Director Kalantari-Johnson thanked CEO Tree, staff and Bus Operators for the storm response. The communication was effective and timely. Also, thank you for bringing up METRO's three goals and sharing the progress being made. I think it is helpful to see the big milestones we are making. She noted that the Pacific Station North has 24 affordable housing units and asked about the other two projects. CEO Tree said they are shaping up to be 100% affordable housing as well. Director Kalantari-Johnson added that she imagines one of the challenges in recruiting Bus Operators is the lack of housing so it may be beneficial for METRO to explore that option for employees in these developments.

Director Koenig echoed a great job with the three goals. I think you are doing a great job overall with providing leadership to the organization and making it easy to understand and communicate with the public what METRO is doing. I'm excited to hear we can get 60 units at the Live Oak site and the Watsonville project looks awesome, too.

Michael Pisano, MAC Member, thanked CEO Tree for the presentation and to provide housing for METRO Bus Operators and staff would be a great help.

16 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Chair Pageler announced the next regular board meeting will be held on Friday, February 24, 2023 at 9:00 AM via teleconference.

17 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Pageler adjourned the meeting at 11:02 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer Executive Assistant

COVID State of Emergency and Remote Meetings

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Legislature provided local agencies flexibility to conduct virtual Board meetings under Assembly Bill 361 (AB 361). AB 361 allows legislative bodies of local agencies to use abbreviated teleconference procedures when there is a declared State of Emergency *and* either state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, *or* whether as a result of the emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health and safety of attendees.

In October 2022, Governor Newsom announced that the COVID State of Emergency would end on February 28, 2023. A governor-declared State of Emergency is a necessary predicate for remote meetings under AB 361. As such, beginning March 2023, local public agencies' Board and Committee meetings must be in person.

Absent the State of Emergency, individual Board members sitting on a legislative body of a local agency will have two choices if they want to participate remotely: (1) use the traditional Brown Act teleconference rules, or (2) after January 2023, use newly enacted alternate rules established by AB 2449.

"Traditional" Teleconference Rules

Under traditional Brown Act rules, the following rules and restrictions apply to Board members who participate in Board and/or Committee meetings by teleconference:

- A quorum of the members of the legislative body must be within the boundaries of the local agency.
- The agenda must identify the teleconference location.
- The agenda must be posted at the teleconference location.
- The teleconference location must be accessible to the public.
- The public must be allowed to participate in the meeting from the teleconference location.

New Teleconference Alternative for 2023 – AB 2449

In September 2022, the Governor signed new teleconference rules into law that went into effect January 1, 2023. These new rules are in addition to, not instead of, traditional Brown Act teleconference rules. These new provisions are somewhat onerous, however, so they may not be a practical alternative for Board members to meet virtually as a matter of practice. Nonetheless, there now exists an alternative to the traditional Brown Act teleconference rules.

Under the new alternative teleconference rules, the following rules and restrictions apply to Board members who participate in Board and/or Committee meetings by teleconference:

- A Board member may only participate by teleconference either for "just cause" or in "emergency circumstances"— and must notify the agency at the earliest opportunity.
- For "just cause" absences, the member must publically announced at the start of the meeting the reason for remote participation, and the agency does not need to take any action for allow its member(s) to attend remotely.

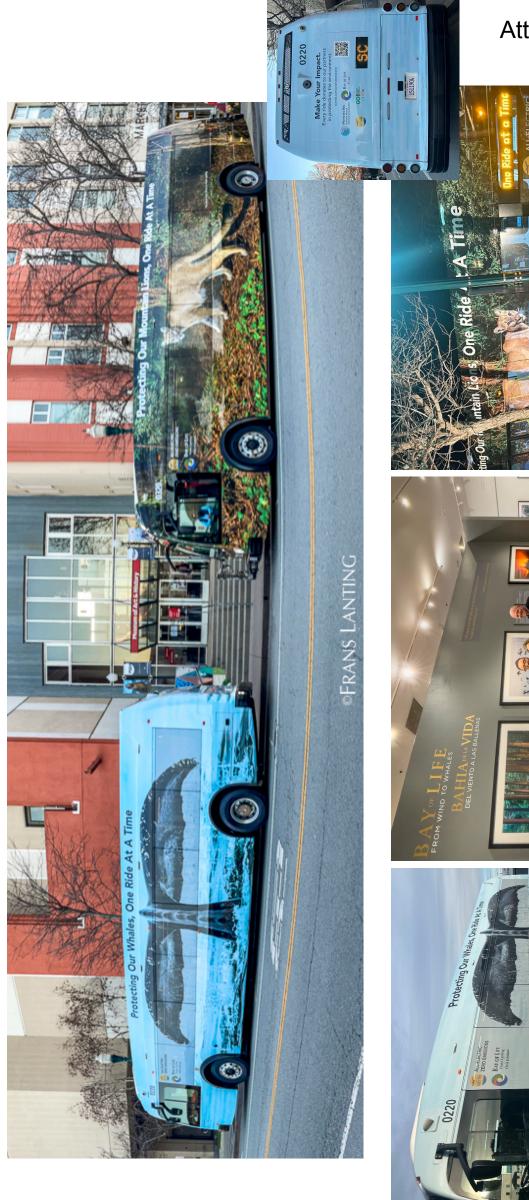
- "Just cause" is defined as any one or more of the following:
 - Childcare or family caregiving
 - Contagious illness
 - o A need related to a physical or mental disability as defined by statute
 - o Travel while on official business for a state or local agency
- If the absence does not fit these four reasons, the absence is considered an "emergency circumstance" and must be approved by the Board.
- A Board member may only teleconference under these "just cause" and "emergency" provisions twice in a calendar year (20% of the number of regular meetings). For members who sit on committees, members may use these circumstances twice per body on which they serve (i.e., Board (twice per year) and committee(s) (twice per year per committee).
- For emergency circumstances approval, "the legislative body may take action on a
 request to participate remotely at the earliest opportunity. If the request does not allow
 sufficient time to place proposed action on such a request on the posted agenda for the
 meeting for which the request is made, the legislative body may take action at the
 beginning of the meeting."
- An "emergency circumstance" is defined as: ""a physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending the meeting in person."
- For both "just cause" and "emergency" circumstances, the following rules apply:
 - At least a quorum of the Board must participate in person at a location accessible to the public.
 - If a Board member participates remotely, the local agency must set up a two-way system for the public to participate remotely.
 - The agenda must identify and include an opportunity for all persons to attend and address the legislative body via the two-way system and at the in-person location.
 - If an event disrupts the ability of the legislative body to broadcast the meeting to the
 public, or prevents members of the public from offering comment using the two-way
 system, the legislative body cannot take further action on agenda items until the
 broadcast is restored.
 - The teleconferencing Board member must participate through both audio and visual technology.
 - The teleconferencing Board member must disclose whether any individuals over the age of 18 are present in the room at the remote location.

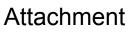
Local agencies may hold "hybrid" meetings in which members of the public and staff participate remotely, and Board members—and anyone else—participate in person. Similarly, local agencies may continue to livestream/broadcast (i.e., one-way transmission rather than two-way "zoom") meetings to the public for convenience.















Three Key Goals at METRO

- Increase ridership 100% to 7 million rides a year within 5-years
- Buy Zero Emission Vehicles Moving Forward
- Develop 175 housing units on METRO property within the decade

Ridership

- One Ride At A Time Project
- Youth K-12 ride free pilot project
- Short and Long Term Planning for fixed route system (Reimagine METRO)

opportunities coming from university and other students, adjustments KEY: Speed, Frequency and Reliability of the bus system. Major to the fixed routes and service in Watsonville.

Buy Zero Emission Vehicles Moving Forward

 At beginning of the fiscal year 30% of fleet had an average age of 20 years.

Progress:

- 12 hydrogen buses in queue at manufacturing facility with a variety of funding sources.
- 5 battery electric buses funded through federal grant and ordered
- 4 hydrogen buses awarded in recent federal grant
- 12 hydrogen buses in upcoming grant with hydrogen station

Develop More Than 175 Housing Units

- 124 housing units at Pacific Station North in downtown Santa Cruz
- 60 housing units at property owned by METRO at Soquel and HWY 1. To be developed with ParaCruz facility
- 60 housing units at Watsonville Transit Center

