

For Immediate Release
Date: January 26, 2021
Contact: Danielle Glagola
(831) 420-2550
dglagola@scmttd.com
scmttd.com



Santa Cruz METRO To Receive Additional COVID-19 Emergency Funding

Santa Cruz, CA (Tuesday, January 26, 2021) - The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) announces that METRO will receive additional funding through the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA).

On December 21, 2020 both the House and Senate approved a \$1.4 trillion bill to fund the federal government through September 2021 and \$900 million in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA). Included in the CRRSAA funding relief package is \$45 billion for transportation, which includes funding for transit, passenger rail, and private transportation providers. Of that bill \$14 billion will go to transit agencies nationwide and is broken down to \$13.27 billion for 49 U.S.C. § 5307 grants (including the 49 U.S.C. § 5337 formula) to urbanized areas, \$50 million for 49 U.S.C. § 5310 grants for seniors and persons with disabilities funds, and \$678.65 million 49 U.S.C. § 5311 grants to rural areas.

This emergency funding can't come soon enough as transit agencies nationwide are facing a deficient due to declines in ridership from the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in agencies having to make hard decisions in regards to layoffs and service reductions while still trying to provide an essential service to their communities.

The new Coronavirus Response and Relief Act (CRRSAA) will be awarded to transit agencies that fall within a specific threshold, that being only agencies that haven't already reached their additional funding cap, limited to 75% of the transit agency's 2018 operating budget. Calculated by adding the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocation for FY2020 and the CRRSAA allocation for FY2021.

Thankfully, for METRO this means that our agency will receive much needed funding to assist us in continuing to provide service to our community in reaching essential services and jobs over the coming year.

Per the allocation cap, METRO's additional funding is based on 2018 operating expenses totaling to nearly \$46 million, setting our 75% cap at \$34 million in CRRSAA funding. Accounting for the \$21 million in funds that were already awarded to METRO through the CARES Act, METRO will receive roughly \$13.5 million in CRRSAA funding to be applied to operating costs.

This additional emergency funding has been advocated by transit agencies, associations, and advocates nationwide as well as members of our federal and local governments and we would like to thank everyone who has championed for this bill, including specifically California's Congressman Panetta and Congresswomen Eshoo who made this funding possible for METRO and other transit agencies. This additional funding will go a long way in heeding possible layoffs and service reductions and allow METRO to continue providing an essential service to our community.

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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.scmtd.com.