

MINUTES*

MAC MEETING OF AUGUST 20, 2025



The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, August 20, 2025. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting. *Minutes are "summary" minutes, not verbatim minutes.

1. **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:10 PM by Chair Elsea.
2. **ROLL CALL** - The following MAC Members were **present**, representing a quorum:

Veronica Elsea, Chair
Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair
James Cruse
Jessica de Wit

Michael Pisano
Becky Taylor
James Von Hendy

3. **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chair Elsea acknowledged the written communication in the packet. Mr. Martinez shared his recent experience with riding METRO. Ms. Taylor shared a picture on her phone of the Pacific Station North to everyone.

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

4. **RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 16, 2025**

MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 16, 2025 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: PISANO

SECOND: TAYLOR

MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy. Cruse was absent.

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chair Elsea mentioned that she provided an oral semi-annual update to the Board of Directors (Board) at the Board meeting on June 27, 2025. Chair Elsea acknowledged the MAC members and thanked them for their participation in the MAC meetings. She mentioned the items MAC has been working on and reminded the Board that MAC's purpose is to provide advisory support.

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

6. **FY26 AND FY27 FINAL BUDGET UPDATE**

Chuck Farmer, CFO, spoke to the presentation and reviewed the FY26 and FY27 final budget. CFO Farmer focused on the changes that were made to the operating budget. He reviewed the budget summary and walkdown, budget drivers, budget funding sources, transfers, and full-time equivalents (FTE). He also reviewed the operating budget risks and reserves and concluded with the capital budget projects. Discussion followed on hydrogen fuel costs, sales tax measure, buses, and budget drivers. Staff answered all questions and concerns.

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

7. SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR – SEPTEMBER 10 – 14, 2025

Margo Ross, COO, reported that METRO will be participating in the Santa Cruz County Fair September 10 – 14, 2025. METRO will be offering free fares on Route 79F (daily) and Route 79 (weekends only). Riders who take METRO to the fair will receive a discount on fair tickets. Riders obtain this by requesting a voucher from the Bus Operator upon arrival to the fairgrounds. COO Ross mentioned that METRO will have a booth and vehicle on display.

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

8. UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE NEW METRO WEBSITE AND APPS

Margo Ross, COO, provided an update on the new METRO website and apps. COO Ross reported that METRO is currently in the internal testing phase and is hoping to launch the website in the Fall 2025. METRO wants to make sure that the website is working smoothly before the public launch. COO Ross reported that the transit app, Transit Royale, is now live. Transit Royale enables riders with real-time information, automatic detour detection, and more, allowing for a better rider experience. Staff answered all questions and concerns.

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

9. UPDATE ON THE MOBILITY TRAINING COORDINATOR

Margo Ross, COO, provided an update on the Mobility Training Coordinator. COO Ross reported that the job was posted online and METRO is waiting for more applicants before starting interviews. METRO is hoping to fill the position within the next couple of months.

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

10. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE

There are no updates at this time. Margo Ross, COO, provided an update on Operations.

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

11. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

None.

12. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

None.

13. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- Service Planning Updates
- Quarterly Ridership Report
- Update on Reimagine METRO
- Update on Transit Centers (Watsonville Transit Center, Pacific Station North, & River Front Transit Center)
- Update on Mobility Training Coordinator
- Recap of Santa Cruz County Fair
- Update on Website & Apps

- Update on Operations
- Elect New Chair & Vice Chair
- Choose 2026 Dates for MAC Meetings

A motion was made for Chair Elsea to talk with CEO/General Manager Corey Aldridge regarding the frequency of the MAC meetings.

MOTION: CHAIR ELSEA WILL MEET WITH THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER AND ASK ABOUT THE FREQUENCY OF THE MAC MEETINGS AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

MOTION: DE WIT

SECOND: MARTINEZ

MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy. Cruse was absent.

14. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS

Vouchers distributed by Elizabeth Rocha, Administrative Specialist.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Chair Elsea announced the next MAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Elsea adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rocha

Administrative Specialist