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**METRO Wins More than \$500,000 in Grant Funds to Improve Bus Stops**  
*Clean CA Program award will help Metro install new bus shelters, benches, and trash cans*

Santa Cruz, CA (Oct. 11, 2023): The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) has been awarded \$508,059 from the Clean CA Program for its Bus Stop Improvement Project. The funds will be used to install 23 bus shelters, 23 bus benches, and 18 trash cans at bus stops across METRO's service area.

The Bus Stop Improvement Project is a collaboration between the Clean CA Program, Caltrans District 5, and METRO. The goal of the program is to increase the cleanliness and attractiveness of bus stops and address critical needs in the transit system while aligning with the California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) objectives on climate action.

"METRO is currently conducting Reimagine METRO, a major effort to reenvision our entire transit network to better serve Santa Cruz County." said Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson, METRO Board Chair. "The bus stop improvements funded through the Clean CA grant were identified through the Reimagine METRO process and the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Intercity Transit Speed and Reliability Study. They will be installed at locations where better amenities will significantly improve our riders experience and encourage more people to ride the bus."

Under the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Intercity Transit Speed and Reliability Study, funded through a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant, identified opportunities for pedestrian, bus stop, and transit priority improvements aimed at elevating the convenience, access, and reliability of METRO's core service. The study, which identified missing bus stop amenities, found that 69% had no shelter and 31% lacked benches.

The bus shelters funded through the Clean CA grant will offer a covered area to protect passengers from rain, extreme heat, and other weather conditions, making waiting for the bus more comfortable. They will include schedules, maps, and route information to help passengers make informed decisions about their journeys. In addition, shelters make transit stops more visible, ensuring passengers know where to wait.

The bus stop improvements will be concentrated in South Santa Cruz County along the Watsonville-Santa Cruz transit corridor. Most METRO riders in this corridor are transit-dependent – seniors, students, people with disabilities and low-income individuals who rely on bus service for their daily transportation needs. Sixty-five percent of the corridor's riders earn less than \$24,000 per year and nearly 60% report riding METRO five or more days per week.

"More than any other segment in our system, the community in the Watsonville-Santa Cruz corridor will benefit from improved bus stops," said Kristen Brown, METRO Board Vice-Chair. "In turn, this will support ridership and provide better transit service for Watsonville, Santa Cruz, and the unincorporated areas of the County."

METRO serves more than 710 bus stops. The agency aims to improve the transit rider's experience by proactively identifying bus stops where shelters and benches would make the most positive impact. METRO removes trash, pressure washes, , and repairs shelters, benches, and trash cans at its stops.

The new trash cans will feature images and messaging from the [One Ride at a Time](#) (ORAT) program. ORAT gives riders the opportunity to protect the Monterey Bay's extraordinary natural resources by simply riding the bus. Thanks to ORAT, every ride on a METRO bus contributes to our partners in protecting the environment, the [Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation](#) and the [Bay of Life Fund](#).

For more information on METRO visit [scmetro.org](https://scmetro.org) or to learn more about METRO's One Ride at a Time program visit [scmetro.org/onerideatotime](https://scmetro.org/onerideatotime).

## **About Us**

### **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 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 electric vehicles
- Increase affordable housing at METRO-owned transit centers to 175 units in the next 10 years.

For more information, visit [scmetro.org](https://scmetro.org).