

## For Immediate Release

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### **METRO Celebrates the Remarkable Success of Reimagine METRO Phase 1**

*A Transformation in Santa Cruz County Transit has Boosted Ridership by over 23%*

Santa Cruz, CA (May 22, 2024): Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) is thrilled to announce the remarkable success of Reimagine METRO Phase 1, reflecting a significant increase in ridership and productivity across various segments of the community. This success is a direct result of the service changes and improvements that were implemented on Dec. 21, 2023.

Key Highlights of Success from METRO's First Wave of Service Changes (Reimagine Phase 1):

- Overall, FY-24 Q3 ridership surged by an impressive 23% after the launch compared to prior METRO ridership (FY-23 Q3).
- Specific segments also witnessed substantial ridership growth, with UCSC, Cabrillo College, and K-12 ridership escalating by 27.1%, 26.8%, and 147.6%, respectively.
- Productivity, measured as riders per revenue hour, increased by 23% year over year.

These achievements are even more meaningful when we consider that in the public transit industry, increases in service typically lead to a decline in productivity due to the time required for customers to adapt to the new service. However, METRO findings show that productivity rose in tandem with ridership, indicating that METRO customers readily embraced the service changes.

The successful implementation of Reimagine METRO Phase 1 has substantially enhanced the quality and accessibility of transit services within Santa Cruz County and is a testament to METRO's commitment to providing efficient, innovative, and sustainable transit solutions for our community. Details of the specific service changes can be found on METRO's website at [scmetro.org/reimagine](https://scmetro.org/reimagine).

"METRO is grateful for the unwavering support from our community as we work to enhance our transportation system for everyone.," remarked Corey Aldridge, METRO CEO/General Manager. "It's rewarding to see our community embracing the additional service we have implemented. We remain committed to creating a more accessible, reliable and environmentally friendly transit system. We look forward to showcasing even more service and increased frequency this summer and fall."

METRO is set to rollout even more service improvements this summer and fall, including 20% more service starting June 20<sup>th</sup>. This will include 15-minute frequency on Route 1 from 6am –

9pm, 30-minute frequency on the Highway-17 Express during peak periods, and 30-minute frequency on Route 90X on weekdays and hourly on the weekends.

Ride the next wave with METRO.

For more information on METRO visit [scmetro.org](https://scmetro.org) or to learn more about Reimagine METRO visit [scmetro.org/reimagine](https://scmetro.org/reimagine).

## **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 104 buses on 20 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).