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METRO to Purchase 57 Zero-Emissions, Fuel Cell Electric Buses
Procurement will be largest hydrogen bus acquisition in U.S.

Santa Cruz, CA (Sept. 22, 2023): Today Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District's (METRO) Board of Directors unanimously approved the purchase of 57 hydrogen-powered, fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs). This procurement will be the largest acquisition of FCEBs in North American history. The move exemplifies METRO's commitment to environmental stewardship, innovation, and a greener future.

"METRO has a long standing commitment of being an environmental partner to our community and now thanks to METRO Board and staff, we can further enhance this commitment with the largest single fuel cell electric bus purchase in North America," said **METRO Board Chair, Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson**. "Making METRO a national leader in environmentally-friendly public transportation and a key environmental community partner."

METRO expects to start taking delivery of the 57 new FCEBs in late 2024, which includes forty-eight (48) 40 ft. buses and nine (9) 60 ft. articulated buses. Most of which will be deployed in the Watsonville service area, which the agency has committed to fully serving with zero-emissions vehicles from this historic purchase.

The new vehicles will replace ageing compressed natural gas (CNG) and diesel buses, converting 59% of METRO's fleet to zero-emissions. This will support the transition of 100% of METRO's fleet to zero-emission technology years ahead of the deadline set in the state's Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) Regulation.

Currently, 10% of METRO's fleet is composed of zero-emissions buses (ZEB). This single purchase will jump that total to over 69%. Taken as a whole, converting over 69% of METRO's CNG and diesel fleet to zero-emissions FCEBs will result in a total GHG emissions reduction of 1.2 million MTCO_{2e}.

"METRO has set an aggressive goal to be 100% emissions-free by 2037," said **METRO CEO/General Manager Michael Tree**. "The purchase of these buses is a vital piece of our climate action plan to meet the state of California's clean energy mandates."

In a related project, METRO will also construct a hydrogen fueling station to support the ZEB transition of the agency's 94-bus fleet. Future upgrades to the hydrogen fueling station will allow enough capacity to support the zero-emissions fueling needs of local partner agencies and others.

The FCEB procurement is made possible, in part, through \$20.4 million in grant funding from the Federal Transit Administration's FY23 Bus and Bus Facilities program and a \$38.6 million award from the California State Transportation Agency's Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). METRO has also applied for \$27 million from the California Air Resources Board's Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust, which is administered by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

In June, METRO committed to purchase the FCEBs from North American bus manufacturer New Flyer. In August, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved METRO's request to purchase the FCEBs using 2023 TIRCP award funds.

To also support METRO's efforts, as an environmentally focused community partner, METRO also gives riders the opportunity to protect the Monterey Bay's extraordinary natural resources just by simply riding the bus via the [One Ride at a Time](#) (ORAT) program. 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](#) through the [GO Santa Cruz](#) ridesharing incentive program. To participate, riders simply need to log 25 rides to make a \$10 contribution to one of METRO's local environmental non-profit partners.

For more information on METRO visit scmetro.org or to learn more about METRO's One Ride at a Time program visit scmetro.org/onerideatatime.

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.