



## **METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) MEETING AGENDA**

**FEBRUARY 15, 2023 – 6:00 PM**

**DUE TO COVID-19, THE FEBRUARY 15, 2023 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED AS A TELECONFERENCE ONLY PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 361 (GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953)**

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING IN PERSON.**

Staff and the public may participate remotely via the Zoom website at this [link](#) or by calling 1-669-900-9128 Meeting ID: 844 1411 2442 Passcode: 036680.

Public comment may be submitted via email to [mac@scmtd.com](mailto:mac@scmtd.com). Please indicate in your email the agenda item to which your comment applies. Comments submitted before the meeting will be provided to the staff before or during the meeting. Comments submitted after the meeting is called to order will be included in the correspondence that is posted online at the meeting packet link. Oral public comments will also be accepted during the meeting through Zoom. Should Zoom not be operational, please check online at [www.scmtd.com](http://www.scmtd.com) for any updates or further instruction.

The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) Meeting Agenda Packet can be found online at [www.scmtd.com](http://www.scmtd.com).

Committee recommendations are subject to action and/or change by the Board of Directors.

### **COMMITTEE ROSTER**

**Jessica de Wit, Chair**  
**Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair**  
**James Cruse**  
**Veronica Elsea**  
**Michael Pisano**  
**Becky Taylor**  
**James Von Hendy**

### **NOTICE TO PUBLIC**

At each meeting, every effort will be made to conclude MAC business by 8:00 PM. If there is concern that an item may not be adequately addressed in the time allowed, Committee members may choose to table the item until the next meeting, move the item earlier in the agenda or to extend the meeting if necessary.

**MEETING TIME: 6:00 PM**

**NOTE: THE COMMITTEE CHAIR MAY TAKE ITEMS OUT OF ORDER**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**

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

- 3.1 Email From Becky Steinbruner Dated 11/06/22 With METRO Response
- 3.2 Emails From Teri Graziani Dated 11/22/22 & 12/01/22 With METRO Response
- 3.3 Email From Shannon Miller Dated 11/29/22 With MERO Response
- 3.4 Email From Brian Mitchler Dated 12/01/22 With METRO Response
- 3.5 Email From Joanne Wright Dated 12/01/22 With METRO Response
- 3.6 Email From Ehsan Khatami Dated 12/07/22 With METRO Response

**4. RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2022**

Jessica de Wit, Chair

**5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**6. UPDATE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (ITS)**

Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director

**7. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE**

John Urgo, Planning & Development Director

- a. Quarterly Ridership Report
- b. Bus Stops
  - i. Update on Braille Bus Stop Signage
- c. Other Projects
  - i. Pacific Station Lobby Access

**8. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO**

**9. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**10. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

**11. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS – WILL BE MAILED ON FEBRUARY 16, 2023**

Elizabeth Rocha, Administrative Specialist

**12. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023 AT 6:00 PM – ADMIN BUILDING, 110 VERNON STREET, SANTA CRUZ (CHECK WWW.SCMTD.COM FOR LOCATION PRIOR TO MEETING)**

Jessica de Wit, Chair

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities**

This document has been created with accessibility in mind. With the exception of certain 3rd party and other attachments, it passes the Adobe Acrobat XI Accessibility Full Check. If you have any questions about the accessibility of this document, please email your inquiry to [accessibility@scmtd.com](mailto:accessibility@scmtd.com). Upon request, Santa Cruz METRO will provide written agenda materials in appropriate alternative formats, or disability related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, to enable individuals with disabilities to participate in and provide comments at/related to public meetings. Please submit a request, including your name, phone number and/or email address, and a description of the modification, accommodation, auxiliary aid, service or alternative format requested at least two days before the meeting. Requests should be emailed to [mac@scmtd.com](mailto:mac@scmtd.com) or submitted by phone to the Administrative Specialist at 831.426.6080. Requests made by mail (sent to the Administrative Specialist, Santa Cruz METRO, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060) must be received at least two days before the meeting. Requests will be granted whenever possible and resolved in favor of accessibility.

**Public Comment**

If you wish to address the Committee, please follow the directions at the top of the agenda. If you have anything that you wish distributed to the Committee and included for the official record, please include it in your email. Comments that require a response may be deferred for staff reply.

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**Elizabeth Rocha-Rocha**

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**From:** Elizabeth Rocha-Rocha  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2022 12:12 PM  
**To:** 'Becky Steinbruner'  
**Subject:** RE: Requesting Lighting for Freedom Boulevard Metro Stops Near Soquel Drive Intersection

Hello,

Apologies for the late response. Please see the below response from the Santa Cruz METRO Planning Department.

Thank you for taking the time to write a suggestion on how to improve safety and security for riders at METRO facilities.

METRO is in the process of finalizing the budget for the next two years. At this time, the Supervisor of Facilities is requesting funding for a solar light project to replace existing solar lighting and install solar lighting at several new stops. Freedom Blvd. is a corridor on which we've received requests for more lighting, previously, so we understand that lighting at these stops would provide increased safety from which many riders would benefit. This request will be forwarded to our Supervisor of Facilities and our Transportation Planner for their consideration on any future solar lighting projects.

Best Regards,

Cayla Hill  
Planning Analyst  
Planning Department, Santa Cruz Metro  
[chill@scmtd.com](mailto:chill@scmtd.com)  
(831) 420-2581

**From:** Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 06, 2022 11:04 PM  
**To:** Metro Advisory Committee <mac@scmtd.com>  
**Cc:** Becky Steinbruner <ki6tkb@yahoo.com>  
**Subject:** Requesting Lighting for Freedom Boulevard Metro Stops Near Soquel Drive Intersection

## This Message Is From an Untrusted Sender

You have not previously corresponded with this sender.

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Dear Metro Advisory Committee,  
I respectfully request that safety lighting be added to the Metro stops on Freedom Boulevard near the Soquel Drive intersection in Aptos for improved public safety.

Last Saturday while working in the nearby WWI Memorial Monument Garden, I spoke with an elderly woman who depends on Metro bus service and regularly uses the stops on both sides of Freedom Boulevard near the Soquel Drive intersection, and Aptos Pines Mobile Home Park. She let me know that she is very fearful when waiting alone at these stops after dark, and wishes there were better security lighting in the areas of the bus stops there.

## COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

When activated, the signal light at the bus stop only alerts a driver that there is someone is waiting in the bus stop, but provides no light for the waiting area itself.

Does Metro plan to improve safety lighting at these two stops on Freedom Boulevard, and other bus stops that are in dark and potentially hazardous areas? Solar-powered lighting seems a viable option.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,  
Becky Steinbruner

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [John Urgo](#)  
**To:** [teri.graziani@sjsu.edu](mailto:teri.graziani@sjsu.edu)  
**Cc:** [Donna Bauer](#); [Cayla Hill](#)  
**Subject:** RE: 17 Express schedule change needed  
**Date:** Thursday, December 01, 2022 12:21:07 PM

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Hi Teri,

Thank you for sharing your concerns - hearing from customers helps us better plan service that meets the public's needs.

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is making several temporary service modifications starting December 22nd. These temporary service changes are being implemented to reduce the long hours worked by operators and decrease service cancellations while maintaining service connectivity on all corridors.

As you know, one such change will be a temporary suspension of service along W Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU). The time savings from removing this routing segment will enable METRO to add three additional peak period roundtrips on the Highway 17 while still reducing the strain on operations.

Regarding Highway 17 service to Scotts Valley, we will look at whether we can have the 5:30 p.m. departure scheduled from Diridon to Pasatiempo and Pacific Station also serve Scotts Valley in winter, or whether we will have to wait until spring. Not every trip can serve Scotts Valley due to the time it takes. There is a 4:40 p.m. departure scheduled that serves Scotts Valley but we understand that may not work for those who have to work until 5:00 p.m. As for the morning, the current schedule has departures from Scotts Valley at 5:57 a.m. and 6:55 a.m. while the new schedule will have departures at 5:57 a.m., 6:46 a.m. and 7:49 a.m.

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

For example, the scheduled outbound Highway 17 arrival at Diridon Station at 7:32 a.m. is met by VTA routes Rapid 500 at 7:35 a.m. (for the same scheduled arrival at SJSU as the Highway 17 trip you are requesting) and Rapid 522 at 7:40 a.m. Both routes serve the same stops as the Highway 17 bus every 15 minutes, with combined departures every 5-10 minutes throughout the day.

We are actively recruiting and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers. We will explore the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU and whether this change can be made for the spring schedule (March) or in subsequent schedule changes.

We understand these changes will inconvenience some customers but we hope that the additional

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

Highway 17 trips and frequent connections to VTA will mitigate some of the impact.

JOHN URGO

Director, Planning & Development

T: (831) 420-2537 | [jurgo@scmtd.com](mailto:jurgo@scmtd.com)

Santa Cruz METRO

110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**From:** Teri Graziani <[teri.graziani@sjsu.edu](mailto:teri.graziani@sjsu.edu)>

**Sent:** Thursday, December 01, 2022 10:43 AM

**To:** [boardinquiries@scmtd.com](mailto:boardinquiries@scmtd.com); [mac@scmtd.com](mailto:mac@scmtd.com)

**Subject:** 17 Express schedule change needed

## This Message Is From an External Sender

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Hello All,

I'm sure you have gotten many emails over the past 2 weeks about the cancellation of the 17 Express to SJSU. Now that the schedule has been published, there is a very big problem for many of us who get off work at 5pm and need to use the stops in Scotts Valley. The bus we would take home (the 5:30pm from Diridon) by passes Scotts Valley. Leaving those who live in Scotts Valley, and the surrounding area, commuting home, much more difficult. Some actually walk to the bus! What are they to do?

For me - I would have to wait till the 6:20pm bus (almost 1.5 hours after I get off work). And by the time I get home it will be 8pm. Imagine having family obligations which many of us do. What a horrible schedule. I can't do that because of my family obligation. Just impossible.

I am asking that there be, at the least, **one bus in the morning that goes to SJSU and one bus in the evening that departs SJSU - both serving Scotts Valley. Those being: 6:32am from the SC Metro and 5:25pm we currently have departing SJSU.**

This not only helps those of us at SJSU also many others who work in the downtown corridor. And those who need to use the Scotts Valley stops.

I do recall when service was returning to SJSU there was a schedule with only 1 or 2 buses going to and from SJSU, but they were at the wrong times. Even for others who work in Downtown San Jose. SC Metro listened and was much more generous than we expected by scheduling buses throughout the day. Much appreciated!

Please don't suggest using Pasatiempo. It is already a full parking lot. And it's only going to get worse with the planned schedule. Let me continue to address that stop while I am on it. Is

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

it possible to not have the tech buses use that stop? That way many who live in Santa Cruz, if needing a bus that won't serve Scotts Valley - we have an option. Right now it is hit and miss if there is parking available. And it will only get worse with this new schedule.

To conclude we do all understand the challenges these times have brought. We hope you have some more thought and listen to the riders who, like me, have been riding the 17 Express for years and know the ins and outs challenges of using it to commute to work.

If simple changes are not made then many like me will stop riding. Not in protest, but because it just won't work for us to get to and from work in the times needed. Let's think about the many commuters who work 8am-5pm and ride the 17 Express. And have been long time customers. Let's make the 17 Express a success. Not destroy it.

--

Thanks,

Teri Graziani, **17 Express rider since 2008**  
Media Specialist/Video Producer  
Center For Faculty Development

Student Hunger & Food Pantry Committee

San Jose State University  
One Washington Square  
San Jose, CA 95192-0026

phone: 408-924-4274 e-mail: [teri.graziani@sjsu.edu](mailto:teri.graziani@sjsu.edu)  
office: IRC 310 hours: Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm

*I will be working remotely Thursdays and Fridays.  
I will be logged into my email Monday - Friday 8am-5pm.*

For the latest information, campus messages, resources and FAQs regarding the COVID-19 health crisis, please visit the [SJSU Health Advisories](#) website.

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# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [Teri Graziani](#)  
**To:** [boardinquiries@scmted.com](mailto:boardinquiries@scmted.com); [mac@scmted.com](mailto:mac@scmted.com)  
**Subject:** Keep the 17 Express going to SJSU  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 2:33:12 PM

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## This Message Is From an External Sender

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Hello All,

I am writing to encourage continued service of the 17 Express to SJSU. I have been riding the 17 Express to SJSU since July 1, 2008. Through all types of traffic, and weather and accidents. It's the only way to go! I highly recommend the service to all who live on our side of the hill and work in San Jose. It is much, much safer than driving. Saves on fuel and wear and tear on the car. Most of all - makes life better.

I was very dismayed when the word got out that SC Metro is considering stopping service to downtown San Jose and to SJSU. So many different excuses as to why: not enough drivers, layover area not safe, VTA asking for changes or not supporting 17 Express buses.

The most outrageous excuse - 'SJSU isn't paying us to go there.' What I have to say is, "WHAT?!" All these years I have been paying to ride your buses. So has everybody else. Do you ask San Jose City Hall to pay for 17 Express to stop at their location? Adobe? The Federal Courts? All the other small businesses that riders go to using the 17 Express? Pay Santa Cruz Metro?! I am paying Santa Cruz Metro! We all are!

The 17 Express is a needed service to downtown San Jose and To SJSU. So many ride it. I estimate every time I have been since July 1 2008, that 90% of the time half of the riders go to downtown San Jose. Just about the same going home.

If you stop service beyond Diridon Station then many will drive. If the purpose of public transportation is to keep autos off the road, then you are defeating your purpose by stopping service beyond Diridon Station. Over the pandemic I had a friend who still had to go into the office. She rode the 17. At that time it understandably ended at the Diridon station. She then had to wait for another bus. Going home took much longer. After 2 weeks it just wasn't worth it for her to get home late (7p or later). When before she was getting home by 6pm. So she started driving.

I know somebody is going to respond back about the buses one can catch at the Diridon Station to get to SJSU. Don't. I've heard it before. Imagine being a person with disabilities on a cold rainy day. Or on a dark morning and later at night. It's just more trouble for them. And they do ride. Many senior citizens ride too. Think about them. The ones I know don't feel safe having to wait for another but at Diridon Station. I'm with them. I've done it before.

Please find a way to keep the 17 Express going to SJSU. It is a needed and well used service.

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# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

Thanks,

Teri Graziani  
Media Specialist/Video Producer  
Center For Faculty Development

Student Hunger & Food Pantry Committee

San Jose State University  
One Washington Square  
San Jose, CA 95192-0026

phone: 408-924-4274 e-mail: [teri.graziani@sjsu.edu](mailto:teri.graziani@sjsu.edu)  
office: IRC 310 hours: Monday - Friday, 8am - 5pm

*I will be working remotely Thursdays and Fridays.  
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# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**Elizabeth Rocha-Rocha**

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**From:** John Urgo  
**Sent:** Friday, December 02, 2022 12:56 PM  
**To:** shannon.miller@sjsu.edu  
**Cc:** Donna Bauer; Cayla Hill  
**Subject:** RE: New Highway 17 schedule -- it is completely appalling

Hi Shannon,

Thank you for sharing your concerns - hearing from customers helps us improve service and meet the public's needs.

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is making several temporary service modifications starting December 22nd. These temporary service changes are being implemented to reduce the long hours worked by operators and decrease service cancellations while maintaining network connectivity on all corridors.

As you know, one such change will be a temporary suspension of service along W Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU). The time savings from removing this routing segment will allow three additional peak period roundtrips to be operated on the Highway 17 while still reducing the strain on operations. Ridership on Highway 17 has doubled over the past year, yet we have only been able to operate half the number of weekday trips compared to pre-COVID. Ridership sampling done between September and November revealed that 75% of customers do not continue past Diridon Station.

Regarding Highway 17 service to Scotts Valley, the current schedule has departures at 5:57 a.m. and 6:55 a.m. while the new schedule will have departures at 5:57 a.m., 6:46 a.m. and 7:49 a.m. We investigated adding the 5:30 p.m. departure scheduled from Diridon to Pasatiempo and Pacific Station also serve Scotts Valley in winter due to the complaints and suggestions we received; however it is scheduled on a shift where the operator works 11 hours, and we are prohibited by contract to exceed that. We will certainly plan to add the Scotts Valley stops in spring (March 15) on the 5:30 p.m. trip. There is a 4:40 p.m. departure scheduled that serves Scotts Valley but we understand that may not work for those who have to work until 5:00 p.m. Parking surveys taken recently at Pasatiempo suggest available capacity on most days, which remains an option for those who park and ride.

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, as I'm sure you're aware, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

For example, the scheduled outbound Highway 17 arrival at Diridon Station at 7:32 a.m. is met by VTA routes Rapid 500 at 7:35 a.m. and Rapid 522 at 7:40 a.m. Both routes serve the same stops as the Highway 17 bus every 15 minutes, with combined departures every 5-10 minutes throughout the day.

We are actively recruiting bus operators and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers. We will explore the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU in the spring.

We understand these changes will inconvenience some customers but we hope that the additional Highway 17 trips and frequent connections to VTA will mitigate some of the impact.

JOHN URGO

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**Elizabeth Rocha-Rocha**

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**From:** Shannon Miller <shannon.miller@sjsu.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 29, 2022 11:00 AM  
**To:** mac@scmtd.com  
**Subject:** New Highway 17 schedule -- it is completely appalling

## This Message Is From an External Sender

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I am writing to object in the strongest terms to the new Highway 17 schedule which no longer goes to SJSU, and which also makes commuting from Scotts Valley almost impossible. First, 1/2 of the riders, at least, go on to San Jose State. Cutting off their connection is unacceptable, and METRO has tried this over and over, and everytime, riders have objected in the strongest of language and METRO has backed down. This needs to happen this time as well. By creating this cutting off of SJSU, more students, faculty and staff will choose to drive because of the additional time to make a connection, to worry about missing a bus, and the inconvenience, even danger, of trying to get to and from campus during late evenings. Second, the new schedule makes an early and late bus available for Scotts Valley riders to get to San Jose, but should include the 8 am bus. The return trip is even more ridiculous. Most people work until 5, but the 5:30 no longer stops in Scotts Valley, meaning you have to leave before your work time ends at 5 or wait until 6:20 to get back to Scotts Valley around 7:30. This is simply not commuter friendly, and it seems to be punishing people for no good reason. It is time to build back ridership, not destroy it though cutting off SJSU, as well as City of San Jose, riders, and to basically abandon riders from Scotts Valley. This is a major issue and needs to be addressed immediately before the new year.

Shannon Miller

--

Shannon Miller  
Dean  
College of Humanities and the Arts  
San Jose State University  
1 Washington Square  
San Jose, CA 95192-0088  
(408) 924-4300

I acknowledge that SJSU is established within the Thámien Ohlone-speaking tribal ethnohistoric territory, which includes the unceded ancestral lands of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area.

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

Brian,

Thank you for sharing your concerns - hearing from customers helps us better plan service that meets the public's needs.

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is making several temporary service modifications starting December 22nd. These temporary service changes are being implemented to reduce the long hours worked by operators and decrease service cancellations while maintaining service connectivity on all corridors. As you know, one such change will be a temporary suspension of service along W Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU).

The time savings from removing this routing segment will enable METRO to add three additional peak period roundtrips and an additional inbound trip that will serve the Scotts Valley Transit Center on the Highway 17, while still reducing the strain on operations. Regarding additional Highway 17 service to Scotts Valley, we will look at having the 5:30 p.m. departure scheduled from Diridon to Pasatiempo and Pacific Station also serve Scotts Valley in the spring. There is a 4:40 p.m. departure scheduled that serves Scotts Valley but we understand that may not work for those who have to work until 5:00 p.m. As for the morning, the current schedule has departures from Scotts Valley at 5:57 a.m. and 6:55 a.m. while the new schedule will have departures at 5:57 a.m., 6:46 a.m. and 7:49 a.m. All trips will continue to serve the Pasatiempo Park and Ride, which could be an option for those rider who live in Scotts Valley (<https://cruz511.org/drive/park-and-ride/>).

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

For example, the scheduled outbound Highway 17 arrival at Diridon Station at 7:32 a.m. is met by VTA routes Rapid 500 at 7:35 a.m. (for the same scheduled arrival at SJSU as the Highway 17 trip you are requesting) and Rapid 522 at 7:40 a.m. There is a 5:23 p.m. VTA Route 22 that would get you to Diridon to meet the 5:35 p.m. Highway 17 bus you currently take from San Fernando and 7th. In the winter, VTA Routes 64A at 4:30 p.m., 522 at 4:32 p.m., and 22 at 4:23 p.m. are all scheduled to meet the 4:40 p.m. Highway 17 departure. These routes run every 15-20 minutes. These routes serve the same stops as the Highway 17 bus every 15 minutes, with combined departures every 5-10 minutes throughout the day. For

We are actively recruiting and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers in the coming year. We will explore the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU and whether this change can be made for the spring schedule (March) or in subsequent schedule changes. We understand these changes will inconvenience some customers but we hope that the additional Highway 17 trips and frequent connections to VTA will mitigate some of the impact.

Cayla Hill  
Planning Analyst  
Planning Department, Santa Cruz Metro  
[chill@scmttd.com](mailto:chill@scmttd.com)  
(831) 420-2581

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [Brian Mitchler](#)  
**To:** [boardinquiries@scmted.com](mailto:boardinquiries@scmted.com); [mac@scmted.com](mailto:mac@scmted.com)  
**Subject:** Winter Highway 17 Route Changes  
**Date:** Thursday, December 01, 2022 3:25:09 PM

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## This Message Is From an External Sender

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Dear Metro Board and Advisory Committee,

I am supremely disappointed in your upcoming Highway 17 route changes. As a 30+ year rider, commuting from Santa Cruz to SJSU daily, I have seen many changes over the years, but none as myopically wrong as those slated to take effect Dec 22nd. Dropping service to Downtown San Jose and SJSU - in the MIDDLE OF WINTER - is going to be a terrible blow to your bread-and-butter commuter ridership.

While I have heard the many attempts to justify these changes (driver shortages, VTA coverage of the routes, etc), these all seem to be very weak post-decision rationalizations. I doubt any of the decision makers have ever actually commuted by bus to/from work, or you would realize that. I can say with certainty that you will lose riders when you implement these changes, and you will struggle mightily to regain them even if you eventually reinstate the service.

There is just no way to understand your decisions to drop downtown service, as well as dropping Scotts Valley service, around the key commuting hours. Your primary commuter group rides a bus to get them to work around 7 or 8 AM and they leave work around 4 or 5 PM to catch their bus. There's no way this group is going to switch to using VTA for the downtown-Diridon legs, especially with the other changes you've made, when the VTA time schedule is so unreliable.

How about a compromise? Leave the primary commuting trips in the morning and evening with the same downtown terminus and drop the rest of the downtown trips. Also leave the primary commuter hour trips serving Scotts Valley. You will still lose some riders, especially students, but at least you can maintain your core commuter ridership.

I have paid a lot of money to Metro to commute to work over the years ( $\$130/\text{month} \times 12 \text{ months} \times 30 \text{ years} = \$46,800$ ). It seems to me that the type of rider I represent should be your primary service objective for this route from an income-reliability stage. Dropping the service as you are doing this Winter is completely unreasonable for your core service base. Metro should do everything they can to get Santa Cruz drivers out of their cars and into buses. These changes will definitely do the opposite.

Sincerely,

Brian Mitchler

---

*Brian Mitchler*

*Tower Card Manager*

San Jose State University

408-924-1863

408-712-7120 cell

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [Cayla Hill](#)  
**To:** ["joanne.wright@sjsu.edu"](mailto:joanne.wright@sjsu.edu)  
**Cc:** [John Urgo](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Suspension of Highway 17 Route to downtown/SJSU  
**Date:** Friday, December 02, 2022 11:58:54 AM

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Joanne,

Thank you for sharing your concerns.

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is making several temporary service modifications starting December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The implementation of these temporary service changes will reduce the long hours worked by operators and decrease service cancellations while maintaining service connectivity on all corridors. As you know, one such change will be a temporary suspension of service along W Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU).

The timesaving from removing this routing segment will enable METRO to add three additional peak period roundtrips on the Highway 17, while still reducing the strain on operations.

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

For example, the scheduled outbound Highway 17 arrival at Diridon Station 6:38 am can transfer with the VTA Rapid 500 at 6:52 am and VTA Route 64A at 6:48 am. There is a 4:32 pm and 5:02 pm VTA Route 64A that would get you to Diridon to meet the 4:10pm and 5:30 pm Highway 17 bus in the winter. These routes serve the same stops as the Highway 17 bus every 15 minutes, with combined departures every 5-10 minutes throughout the day.

We are actively recruiting and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers in the coming year. We will explore the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU and whether this change can be made for the spring schedule (March) or in subsequent schedule changes. We understand these changes will inconvenience some customers but we hope that the additional Highway 17 trips and frequent connections to VTA will mitigate some of the impact.

Cayla Hill  
Planning Analyst  
Planning Department, Santa Cruz Metro  
[chill@scmtd.com](mailto:chill@scmtd.com)  
(831) 420-2581

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [Joanne Wright](#)  
**To:** [mac@scmttd.com](mailto:mac@scmttd.com)  
**Subject:** Suspension of Highway 17 Route to downtown/SJSU  
**Date:** Thursday, December 01, 2022 3:45:34 PM

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## This Message Is From an External Sender

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Hello,

I, and fellow, loyal, regular riders of Highway 17 Express (I have been riding the bus since 2015 when I started working at SJSU--I even rode during the pandemic), are dismayed that Metro is suspending all downtown routes from/to Diridon effective December 21, the beginning of winter. I have watched ridership to downtown San Jose and San Jose State University grow since things have opened up from the pandemic and the buses started going back downtown again. There are SJSU employees and students using the bus on a regular and increasing basis to get from Santa Cruz to downtown San Jose and SJSU. I take the very first bus each morning that leaves the Metro Center at 5:43 a.m. I arrive at the SJSU stop around 6:45 a.m. It has been wonderful to be able to once again get the Highway 17 bus in front of campus either at 4:27 p.m. or 5:25 p.m. for the return trip home after a long day.

It would be greatly appreciated if Metro could retain service to/from Diridon to downtown/SJSU at least for the first couple of buses in the mornings and for the end of workday. You have very loyal riders for these buses and being able to efficiently get to work and school and back home again is something we do not take for granted. We also appreciate the drivers very much. Please reconsider the suspension of all of your service to downtown San Jose and SJSU.

Respectfully,

Joanne Wright

--

Joanne M. Wright, J.D., [SHRM-SCP](#) | Senior Associate Vice President  
San José State University | University Personnel  
One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0046  
Direct Line: 408-924-2458 | Fax: 408-924-2425  
Email: [joanne.wright@sjsu.edu](mailto:joanne.wright@sjsu.edu) | Website: [www.sjsu.edu/up](http://www.sjsu.edu/up)





# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**From:** [Cayla Hill](#)  
**To:** ["ehsan.khatami@sjsu.edu"](mailto:ehsan.khatami@sjsu.edu)  
**Cc:** [Donna Bauer](#); [John Urgo](#)  
**Subject:** RE: SCMTD's Proposed Hwy 17 Service Changes  
**Date:** Thursday, December 08, 2022 7:48:55 AM

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Ehsan,

Thank you for sharing your concerns.

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is making several temporary service modifications starting December 22. The implementation of these temporary service changes will reduce the long hours worked by operators and decrease service cancellations while maintaining service connectivity on all corridors. As you know, one such change will be a temporary suspension of service along W Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU).

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

We are actively recruiting and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers in the coming year. We will explore the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU and whether this change can be made for the spring schedule (March) or in subsequent schedule changes. We understand these changes will inconvenience some customers but we hope that the additional Highway 17 trips and frequent connections to VTA will mitigate some of the impact.

There next few Board Meetings will be held on Zoom (December 16, January 27, and February 24), so you can attend remotely. The next board meeting that the public can attend in person is on March 24. Please attend any one of these meeting to relay your concerns regarding Highway 17 service to SJSU to the METRO Board of directors.

Best regards,

Cayla Hill  
Planning Analyst  
Planning Department, Santa Cruz Metro  
[chill@scmttd.com](mailto:chill@scmttd.com)  
(831) 420-2581

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**From:** Ehsan Khatami <[ehsan.khatami@sjsu.edu](mailto:ehsan.khatami@sjsu.edu)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 07, 2022 3:52 PM  
**To:** [boardinquiries@scmttd.com](mailto:boardinquiries@scmttd.com); [mac@scmttd.com](mailto:mac@scmttd.com)

# COMMUNICATIONS TO MAC

**Cc:** AS Transportation Office Mailbox <[transportation@sjsu.edu](mailto:transportation@sjsu.edu)>; [nnguyen@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:nnguyen@cityofsantacruz.com); [destranero@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:destranero@cityofsantacruz.com)

**Subject:** SCMTD's Proposed Hwy 17 Service Changes

## This Message Is From an External Sender

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Dear Board and Advisory Committee Members:

I am a faculty member at SJSU and am writing to request for the reevaluation of plans to cut the Hwy 17 Express route from San Jose Diridon Station to downtown San Jose. I have been riding bus 17 since I joined SJSU over eight years ago and am witnessing everyday my colleagues and students from SJSU taking advantage of this great public transportation option.

I learned about this proposed change from SJSU's Transportation Solutions and am writing to voice my concern because I cannot attend SCMTD's next BOD meeting in Dec 16 due to travel plans.

I believe that reducing the route to end, and start, at the Diridon Station in San Jose is not the solution to SCMTD recent driver shortage issues. In fact, I am confused about this matter as I have also learned that at the time of this cut, more times will be added to the hwy 17 schedule!

I strongly believe that such a measure will hurt the Transit District financially. I am not sure if SCMTD has done any surveys or obtained any reliable statistics as to how many Hwy 17 Express commuters rely on the tail end of the route after Diridon station to get to work or school. From what I observe everyday on the bus, about half of the riders who board in Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley get off in downtown San Jose and about half of passengers on the way back board the bus in various stops in downtown San Jose. Catching transit buses from Diridon to SJSU and back will force a significant percentage of riders, including myself, to consider other means of transportation. It is the fastest way for SCMTD to lose customers!

I am strong proponent of public transportation and believe that Hwy 17 Express is one of the few success stories in the Bay Area. I already have to walk for ~20 minutes in Santa Cruz from home to my station and back, however, I take comfort in the fact that I can get things done on my laptop during the 1 hour+ I spend in the bus. Like many others, riding Hwy 17 Express would no longer be a preferred option for me if the proposed cut is implemented. It will just not be worth the time, and I will have to drive my car, perhaps carpooling with my other bus 17 colleagues to SJSU.

I, along with my other SJSU colleagues who I see regularly on the bus, am strongly opposed to this measure and am calling for SCMTD to reevaluate the proposed cuts.

Best regards,  
Ehsan Khatami

-----  
Associate Professor  
Department of Physics and Astronomy  
San Jose State University  
Office: SCI 312  
Tel: 408-924-5235  
URL: <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/ehsan.khatami/>

cc. SJSU Transportation Solutions, SC City Transportation Manager and Engineer

# MINUTES\*

MAC MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2022



The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, October 19, 2022. The meeting was held via teleconference. \*Minutes are "summary" minutes, not verbatim minutes.

1. **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:01 PM.

2. **ROLL CALL** - The following MAC Members were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

**James Von Hendy, Chair**  
**Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair**  
**James Cruse**  
**Jessica de Wit AR 6:02 PM**

**Veronica Elsea**  
**Michael Pisano**  
**Becky Taylor**

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

Hearing none, Chair Von Hendy moved to the next agenda item.

4. **RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 17, 2022**

**MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 17, 2022 AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION: PISANO**

**SECOND: CRUSE**

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

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)**

Hearing none, Chair Von Hendy moved to the next agenda item.

6. **UPDATE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (ITS)**

Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director, provided a status update on the ITS project with Clever Devices. The FAT (Factory Acceptance Testing) phase was completed. Installation can now begin on a mini fleet of 12 buses to test the system. After the mini fleet, it will be moved to the rest of the fleet.

Mr. Pisano and Chair Von Hendy congratulated Director Holly on his accomplishments on moving the project forward.

Director Holly reported that APC's (Automated Passenger Counters) will be going to the Board of Directors, this includes crowd information. Mr. Pisano asked if it will include bike rack information. Director Holly replied that it will not at this time. Mr. Cruse asked if handicapped information would also be included. Brandon Freeman, Bus Operator, replied that it is not included because it is not currently funded. Mr. Cruse asked when will the software be available. Director Holly replied that we are experiencing some supply chain issues, but hope to have it soon.

7. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Margo Ross, COO, reported that there have only been two positive COVID-19 cases in the last sixty days at METRO. We are currently out of the outbreak status at all of our facilities. We had a vaccination clinic to provide METRO staff with the flu shot and booster for COVID-19. Curtis Moses, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director, added that we are complying with the more relaxed regulations.

## **8. RECAP OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR**

Margo Ross, COO, reported that METRO attended the Santa Cruz County Fair. We had two tents, one with a newly wrapped Gillig bus and the other with a ParaCruz van. METRO staff was on site throughout the week to answer questions, provide tours of the bus, and assist with prizes. Route 79F was created and ParaCruz service was extended to serve the fairgrounds the week of the fair. Free fares were offered on all trips to the fair on route 79F and ParaCruz.

## **9. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE**

### **a. Quarterly Ridership Report**

John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, said the quarterly ridership report will be going to the Board of Directors in November. Overall, ridership increased. We ended FY22 with ridership at 55% pre-COVID levels and we are now closer to 70% pre-COVID levels.

### **b. Bus Stops**

#### **b.i. Update on Braille Bus Stop Signage**

Director Urgo reported that there have been and will continue to be conversations with Veronica Elsea and others on this item.

### **c. Other Projects**

#### **c.i. Pacific Station Lobby Access**

Director Urgo reported there has been no change on the Pacific Station Lobby Access.

#### **c.ii. Schedule Change Requests for Highway 17**

Director Urgo said there are no changes for the Winter schedule, but we will look at that again for the Spring schedule. We will have a better picture of ridership after mid-November.

#### **c.iii. Cavallaro Transit Center TVM Issues**

Director Urgo said that there have been some functionality issues of the TVM's. Currently, none accept chip cards. We have been in contact with our vendor and our TVM's will not be upgraded to accept chip cards. The connectivity issues with some TVM's and credit card payments are due to problems with the internet connection and service. IT and Operations are looking into it and are in communication with the service provider to improve connectivity.

Mr. Pisano asked about the ridership for the two weeks that METRO offered free fares and how it was funded and where it was advertised. Director Urgo replied that ridership was successful, funded through general revenue, not grant funded, and advertised on various channels. Discussion continued on TVM's and the long-term vision for fares.

## **10. ESTABLISH AND APPROVE THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**MOTION: APPROVE THE 2023 MAC MEETING DATES OF FEBRUARY 15, APRIL 19, AUGUST 16, AND OCTOBER 18.**

**MOTION: TAYLOR**

**SECOND: PISANO**

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

**11. ELECT THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2023 TERM**

**MOTION: ELECT CHAIR DE WIT FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2023)**

**MOTION: PISANO**

**SECOND: MARTINEZ**

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

**MOTION: ELECT VICE CHAIR MARTINEZ FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2023)**

**MOTION: PISANO**

**SECOND: DE WIT**

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

**12. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO**

None.

**13. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

None.

**14. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- Update on ITS
- COVID-19 Update
- Service Planning Updates
- Update on Braille Bus Stop Signage
- Pacific Station Lobby Access

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager, joined the meeting at this time. The MAC members welcomed CEO/General Manager Tree and introduced themselves. Chair Von Hendy asked CEO Tree what direction he would like to take METRO. CEO/General Manager Tree provided a brief overview of his goals are for METRO.

**15. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS**

Elizabeth Rocha, Administrative Specialist, will mail out the vouchers on Thursday, October 20, 2022 to all members in attendance at this meeting.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM. Meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rocha  
Administrative Specialist