

**For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Danielle Glagola  
(831) 420-2550  
[dglagola@scmttd.com](mailto:dglagola@scmttd.com)  
[scmetro.org](http://scmetro.org)



**Santa Cruz METRO Supports Earth Day with Free Fares Countywide  
Monday, April 22, 2024**

Santa Cruz, Calif. (April 10, 2024): The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) is supporting Earth Day, by offering free fares countywide on all fixed-route, ParaCruz, and Highway 17 Express services on Monday, April 22, 2024.

Since 2002, METRO has been a leader in adopting a more sustainable fleet of buses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by initially moving to compressed natural gas and hybrid vehicles. In the fall of 2021, METRO furthered its commitment to “going green” by deploying METRO’s first four zero emissions buses (ZEBs) into service and by the end of 2023 the agency had nine ZEBs deployed in the county, with more coming every year. Additionally, in 2023 METRO approved the purchase of 53 hydrogen-powered, fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs), which at the time, was the largest acquisition of FCEBs in North American history.

“I’m proud to be part of an agency that is committed to protecting our local environment and giving back to our community,” said Kristen Brown, METRO Board Chair. “METRO has a long legacy of being a leader in sustainability. That is why we feel it is important to further this commitment by offering free fares this Earth Day and developing programs like One Ride at a Time, that highlight the environmental benefits on using public transportation. I encourage our community to try METRO’s services for free this Earth Day and log their rides via GO Santa Cruz to protect our local environment one ride at a time.”

METRO is celebrating and raising awareness of Earth Day by offering free fares countywide on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, to assist our community in getting to their Earth Day destinations while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This promotion is a simple reminder that everyone has a role in clearing the air and increasing the health of our community by using alternate forms of transportation whether it be public transit, riding a bike, or carpooling to our destinations.

Additionally, METRO will also be participating in the City of Santa Cruz’s Earth Day event taking place Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> in downtown Santa Cruz. Please feel free to stop by our booth or take a tour of one of our electric buses wrapped with images from the Monterey Bay to learn more about the environmental benefits of public transit.

METRO also gives riders the opportunity to protect Santa Cruz County’s extraordinary natural resources just by simply riding the bus via the One Ride at a Time program. Beginning in January 2023, every ride on a METRO bus donates to 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 donation to one of METRO’s local environmental non-profit partners.

If you have not used METRO services in the past we encourage you try us out free while reducing greenhouse gas emissions in support of Earth Day on Monday, April 22, 2024.

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

## About Us

### **Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO)**

Established in 1968, METRO'S mission is to provide easy-to-use, convenient transportation for residents while protecting the environment and building better communities. 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://www.scmetro.org).