

APPLICATION/PROJECT PROGRAMMING REQUEST

SCCRTC 2025 Consolidated Grants Program (2026 RTIP)

| A. PROJECT INFORMATION | | |
|---|----------------------|--|
| Applicant/Implementing Agency | | Public Agency Sponsor (if different) |
| Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District | | Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation District |
| Contact Name | Phone | E-mail Address |
| Derek Toups | 831-420-2580 | dtoups@scmtd.com |
| Project Title | | |
| 90X Operations/BOS Service | | |
| Agency Priority Number (e.g. 1 of 3) | | 1 of 4 |
| Description and Scope of Work (attach extra pages to fully describe scope) | | |
| <p>This project will provide operating funds for METRO to reestablish Route 90X with 30-minute service on Highway 1 during weekday commute peak periods, reinstating this critical express link between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. This is a true commuter express service and is an essential service for the primarily low-income residents in Watsonville to connect to jobs and opportunities in the northern part of the County. The southern terminus connects with Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) buses, extending connections throughout Monterey County, while the northern terminus connects Santa Cruz County to San Jose and Silicon Valley via Highway 17, making this an important regional connector. METRO is requesting \$650,000 in 99313 FY25/26 99313 LCTOP funding, which METRO intends to match with \$84,250 of FY23 SB125 funds. METRO also intends to apply for METRO’s FY26 99314 LCTOP funds for operational funding to continue to operate this service. See Attachment A_Annual Operator Cost & Consumable Cost</p> | | |
| Location, Limits, Length (attach map(s)/photos separately) | | |
| <p>METRO operates over 479 directional route miles throughout the county. Average trip lengths along the proposed route extend a one-way distance of 17 miles from Watsonville to Santa Cruz. See Attachment B Map of METRO Service.</p> | | |
| Roadway Functional Classification (see Caltrans map link): | Select If Applicable | |
| Summary of Project Benefits, Purpose and Need | | |
| <p>This project will enable METRO to reestablish express bus service on the Highway 1 corridor. This service provides a critical link between areas of persistent poverty in Watsonville with jobs, educational opportunities, and essential services in Santa Cruz. This service is also in line with the vision for the Highway 1 corridor established by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) and the Highway 1/Bus on Shoulders (BOS) program, and the buses will operate on the first BOS facility in northern California, with connections to the Central Coast and Silicon Valley. Based upon the 90X average weekday ridership when the service operated in the first half of FY25, METRO anticipates that resuming the 90X service during peak commute periods will yield an increase of 48,880 annual rides in its first year of operation. This increase in service equates to over 60,000 bus VMT per year and an avoidance of over 624,000 VMT by passenger cars annually. By avoiding the use of diesel or compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, METRO estimates energy reductions equivalent to 13,600 gallons of diesel fuel or over 1.3 million scf of CNG fuel will also be realized as a result of the Project. The resulting annual GHG emission reductions and co-benefits projected for the Project include 291 lbs. of particulate matter under 2.5 micrometers (PM 2.5), and 488 lbs. of reactive organic gases (ROG) removed from the atmosphere as a direct result of the project.</p> | | |

SCCRTC Consolidated Call for Projects (RSTPX, STIP, LPP)

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|--|-----------|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----|
| Funds requested | \$650,000 | Total Project Cost | \$84,250 | Estimated # of Daily Users | 94 |
| Are you able/willing to receive federal funds? | | Yes | | | |
| Was project previously programmed for funds by RTC? | | | No | RTIP ID | |
| Project Cost by Mode (list approximate percentage of total project costs) | | | | | |
| Mode | | % of Total Cost | | | |
| Pavement Preservation (rehab, overlay, etc.) | | | | | |
| Road-Auto serving (not rehab) | | | | | |
| Bicycle | | | | | |
| Pedestrian | | | | | |
| Transit | | 100% | | | |
| Transportation System Management (TSM) | | | | | |
| Transportation Demand Management (TDM) | | | | | |
| Other: <i>Include description</i> | | | | | |
| Total | | 100% | | | |

B. PROJECT BENEFITS/ EVALUATION CRITERIA

Information in this section will be used to evaluate projects. The RTC is required to consider how well projects advance regional, state and federal goals, policies, performance metrics and targets, including how projects will contribute towards implementation of the long-range transportation plan (Regional Transportation Plan) and other state and federal regulations including the California Complete Streets Act of 2008, SB375, the Federal FAST Act. See Attachment 2 of the call for projects for examples of type of information to demonstrate benefits.

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| Project Title: | | 90X Operations/BOS Service |
| Generally, what are the benefits of this project? | | |
| Restablishing the Route 90X will provide a vital service for Watsonville residents to connect to jobs, educational opportunities, and essential services in the northern part of the county and into San Jose via the Highway 17. These buses will be able to utilize the BOS facility to maximize operational efficiency through travel time savings along Highway 1. The additional service operated by METRO will contribute to reduced VMT, as well as energy and emission reductions. | | |
| How does this project address any of the following criteria? | | <i>Projects are not expected to address all of these; if not applicable or not a primary purpose, write "N/A".</i> |
| 1 | Access for All | The southern terminus of the Route 90X connects with Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) buses, extending connections throughout Monterey County, while the northern terminus connects Santa Cruz County to San Jose and Silicon Valley via Highway 17, making this an important regional connector. The route will operate on the first Bus on Shoulders (BOS) facility in northern California, with connections to the Central Coast and Silicon Valley. |
| 2 | Collisions and Safety | The Route 90X will utilize the BOS facilities on the Highway 1, helping to reduce overall congestion-related crashes during rush hour, heavy traffic. The BOS program was carefully studied and implemented through a collaboration between METRO, CHP, and the SCCRTC to mitigate risk from merging and exiting traffic. METRO bus operators will receive safety training METRO's Operations and Safety departments will monitor and evaluate METRO's usage of the BOS facility. |
| 3 | System Preservation & Infrastructure Condition | The Route 90X is a commuter express service that will serve limited stops and utilize BOS, providing METRO riders a more expedient connection between Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Operating the route on BOS will enhance the cost-effectiveness of METRO's transportation system through reduced travel times. |
| 4 | System Performance | The project will assist METRO in reducing greenhouse gases through an increase of 48,880 transit rides eliminating over 624,000 VMT by passenger cars annually. The resulting GHG emissions and co-benefits projected for the Project include over 291 lbs. of particulate matter under 2.5 micrometers (PM 2.5), and 488 lbs. of reactive organic gases (ROG) removed from the atmosphere as a direct result of the project. |
| 5 | Public Health | N/A |
| 6 | Benefits to Equity Priority Communities | METRO's 2019 On-board Survey indicated that approximately 80% of METRO's passengers do not have access to a private automobile and are dependent upon METRO for essential transportation to schools, medical facilities, jobs and shopping. The Route 90X provides an express commuter service for the primarily low-income residents in Watsonville. This service provides a critical link between areas of persistent poverty in Watsonville with jobs, educational opportunities, and essential services in Santa Cruz. |
| 7 | Climate Change and Resiliency | N/A |
| 8a | Funding- Overall Funding Plan: If RTC approves the requested funds, will the project be fully funded? If not, how much additional funding is needed, and what is the likelihood of securing those funds? Please provide a realistic assessment of the project's overall funding security. | If RTC approves the requested funds, METRO will utilize FY23 SB125 funding as a local match. METRO also intends to apply for METRO's FY26 99314 LCTOP funds to continue to fund the project into FY27. After which, METRO will use 5307 funds to continue to operate the service |

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| 8b | Committed Funding: What other funding has been secured for the project? | METRO will commit \$84,250 in FY23 SB125 finding for this project. |
| 8c | Leveraging: Will the funds you are requesting from RTC be used to leverage other grants? If so, please identify those grants and the potential funding amounts. If RTC funding is not approved, will any of this other funding be at risk of being lost? | The funds requested in the application are not being used to leverage other grants funds. |
| 8d | Eligibility for Other Grants: Is this project eligible for any other competitive grants? If so, what other grants are reasonably available for this project, and what is the status of those applications? | METRO intends to apply for METRO's FY26 99314 LCTOP funds to assist in operating this service past FY26. |
| 8e | Funding for Cost Increases: How will potential cost increases be funded? What potential funding sources are available to cover unanticipated cost increases? | If the project costs increase beyond the initial estimates then METRO will be able to apply additional SB125 funds as a local match. |
| 8f | Partial Funding: If the RTC approves partial funding or the project costs increase, can the project be scaled to match available funds? | The requested FY2025/26 99313 LCTOP funds will be used to operate the 90X in weekday peak commute periods only with 30-minute headways, rather than providing all day service. If RTC approves partial funding for the project METRO can operate the service with lower frequency or reduce the span even further. However, this will negatively impact the effectiveness of the service as a commuter express service. |
| 9 | Project Readiness and Potential Delivery Risks- | |
| 9a | Schedule: How quickly can the project be implemented to provide benefits to the community? Are there any potential risks that could impact the project schedule? | The implementation period for this project is one year. METRO can only adjust service four times per year and must wait for the start of a new bid to reintroduce the 90X. Additionally, the drivers must be trained to use the BOS facility on Highway 1, which will take an estimated 3 months. METRO will also monitor the service for a minimum of 6 months before making any necessary modifications to the service. The only identified risks that could impact the project schedule are delays in completing the training of all bus operators. However, METRO could still reintroduce the service without using BOS while METRO completes the necessary training. |
| 9b | Deliverability: Describe why your agency is capable of delivering this project. (sufficient staff, project management, performance in past) | The agency successfully operated the 90X as recently as FY25. METRO eliminated the service due to a lack of vehicles availability. However, METRO placed an order for 53 new hydrogen fuel cell buses (FCEBs), of which the agency has already accepted half, and successfully completed the installation of the temporary hydrogen fueling station to allow the agency to operate the FCEBs. |
| 9c | Environmental: Describe any potential environmental issues, mitigations, risks associated with current and future environmental conditions (climate change, extreme weather, seismic) | N/A |
| 9d | Mitigating Risks: What efforts will be undertaken to minimize risks to project implementation. | METRO Operations will allocate adequate resources to METRO Trainers to complete the necessary BOS training for the bus operators. |
| 9e | Other: Describe any other potential risks and plans to mitigate risks. | N/A |
| 10 | Consistency with Complete Streets guidelines and policies: Describe how is project consistent with guidelines and integrates complete streets elements. | Re-establishing the Route 90X and operating it on BOS along Highway 1 will increase the cost-effectiveness of transit operations by reducing travel times along the one-way distance of 17 miles from Watsonville to Santa Cruz. |
| 11a | Public engagement: Was this project identified as a priority by the community? How was it determined to be a priority? How have residents in the project area been involved in the decision-making or project information process to date? | Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, METRO's Highway 1 Express service provided an important link between Watsonville, Cabrillo College and Santa Cruz. The service was suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic following a drop in ridership and a decrease in operating funds. Following a 15-month public and stakeholder outreach process with over 1,000 participants surveyed 70% of responses indicated they hoped to see METRO invest in existing corridors versus expanding service to new areas, and where 50% of non-riders said they would ride METRO if buses came more often. The service was planned for reinstatement in 2024 as a new, limited-stop express service called Route 90X. However, METRO had to suspend the service indefinitely in January 2025 due to a lack of vehicle availability. |

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| 11b | Outreach: Describe how the public and stakeholders were/will be engaged in the development and implementation of the project (e.g. intended outreach methods, activities, pop-up planning events; planning activities at community events; community workshops; design charrettes; online and social media, etc.) | METRO will proactively share key project updates through existing communication channels on its website, through social media and press releases. |
| 11c | Diverse Participation: How will you ensure participation from diverse and historically underrepresented members of the public in project planning? What specific outreach to low-income, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), etc., residents about this project has already been conducted or is planned? | More than 80% of ridership Countywide is "transit dependent", with no transportation other than METRO. Data from METRO's 2019 Onboard Transit Ridership Survey indicate that 65% of METRO's customers earn less than \$24,000. The Watsonville service area comprises eleven U.S. Census Tracts designated as Areas of Persistent Poverty. By utilizing the agency's existing communication channels METRO will be able to share key project updates with low-income populations. |
| 12a | RTP Consistency: If project is included in the approved 2045 or draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Project List, provide RTP Project Number/title | MTD-P57 Bus on Shoulders Operations. MTD-P27 Highway 1 Express Buses. |
| 12b | Consistency with other plans. What other plans is this project listed in, if any? | This project re-establishes express bus service on the Highway 1 corridor, which is one of the primary corridors identified in METRO's Zero Emission Intercity Transit Service Expansion Project. |
| 13 | Scale of Benefits - How many users are expected to use the facility, service or program? What is the source of this estimate? | METRO estimates that the 90X will have an average of 188 weekday boardings. As this is a commuter service we assume that these rides are round trips taken by an average of 94 daily users. |

D1. NON-INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS/PROGRAMS - DETAILED TASKS, COSTS, AND SCHEDULE

For non-capital projects, summarize tasks/work/activities to be completed; estimated cost/funding for each; and schedule Below is a sample, but update to match work anticipated for your project - ex. preliminary planning, project implementation, public outreach project completion and timeline for each. Add additional lines if needed to reflect all tasks and additional columns if needed to reflect other funding sources.

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Project Title: | 90X Operations/BOS Service |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|

| Task # | Task Title (UPDATE WITH TASKS APPLICABLE TO YOUR PROJECT) | RTC Grant Request* | Fund Source: | | Estimated Local In-Kind Match* | Estimated Total Project Cost |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | | 99313 LCTOP | SB125 | | |
| 1 | Project administration (Cost + Consumables) | \$0 | \$559,514 | \$72,491 | \$0 | \$632,005 |
| 2 | Operator training | \$0 | \$28,110 | \$3,642 | \$0 | \$31,752 |
| 3 | Service planning | \$0 | \$17,134 | \$2,219 | \$0 | \$19,353 |
| 4 | Data collection and analysis | \$0 | \$11,422 | \$1,480 | \$0 | \$12,902 |
| 5 | Operator Bidding | \$0 | \$3,541 | \$459 | \$0 | \$4,000 |
| 6 | Public outreach | \$0 | \$9,915 | \$1,285 | \$0 | \$11,200 |
| 7 | Program evaluation | \$0 | \$20,364 | \$2,674 | \$0 | \$23,038 |
| Totals | | \$0 | \$650,000 | \$84,250 | \$0 | \$734,250 |
| Minimum match = 11.47% of total cost | | | | | | \$ 84,218.48 |

* Use only whole dollars in the financial information fields.

D2. NON-INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS/PROGRAMS - STAFFING

For non-capital projects, summarize tasks/work/activities to be completed; estimated cost/funding for each; and schedule Below is a sample, but update to match work anticipated for your project - ex. preliminary planning, project implementation, public outreach project completion and timeline for each. Add additional lines if needed to reflect all tasks and additional columns if needed to reflect other funding sources.









| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Project Title: | 90X Operations/BOS Service |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|




| Task # | Task Title (UPDATE WITH TASKS APPLICABLE TO YOUR PROJECT) | Estimated Total Project Cost | Staffing - Person 1 | | | |
|---------------|---|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | | | Name | Position-Classification | Estimated Hours | Hourly Rate |
| 1 | Project administration | \$632,005 | | Bus Operator | 14,280 | 44.25 |
| 2 | Operator training | \$31,752 | | Trainer | 706 | 44.97 |
| 3 | Service planning | \$19,353 | | Planner | 351 | 55.10 |
| 4 | Data collection and analysis | \$12,902 | | Analyst | 284 | 45.50 |
| 5 | Operator Bidding | \$4,000 | | Scheduler | 78 | 51.00 |
| 6 | Public outreach | \$11,200 | | Marketing/Publishing | 200 | 56.00 |
| 7 | Program evaluation | \$23,038 | | Planner/Analyst/Scheduler | 456 | 50.53 |
| Totals | | \$734,250 | | | | |

* Must have current ICR approved by Caltrans to bill for indirect costs


E. CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES

As authorized representative for my agency, I hereby certify that the information contained in this application, including required attachments, is accurate and hereby certify the following:

| Project: | 90X Operations/BOS Service | INITIALS |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | The project implementing agency possesses legal authority to nominate projects and to finance, acquire, construct, and/or implement the proposed project; |  |
| 2 | This project is among the highest priorities for this agency; |  |
| 3 | The proposed transportation investments have received the full review and vetting required by law; |  |
| 4 | Such investments are an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. The agency shall adhere to principles and policies that ensure government oversight and management of the contracting process to ensure taxpayer funds are spent wisely; contracts are not wasteful, inefficient, or subject to misuse; unnecessary no-bid and cost-plus contracts are avoided; and contracts are awarded according to the best interests of California taxpayers; |  |
| 5 | The agency will maintain and operate the property acquired, developed, rehabilitated, or restored for the life of the resultant facility(ies) or activity. I understand that with the approval of the California Department of Transportation, the Administering Agency or its successors in interest in the property may transfer the responsibility to maintain and operate the property; |  |
| 6 | If these new funds are used to replace funds previously committed to this project, the agency will maintain its effort with regard to redirecting those funds to similar transportation projects; |  |
| 7 | The agency will give RTC and California Department of Transportation's representative access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the project; |  |
| 8 | Work on the project shall commence within a reasonable time after receipt of notification that funds have been approved, allocated or obligated, as applicable, and that the project will be carried to completion with reasonable diligence; |  |

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| <p>9</p> | <p>The agency will comply where applicable with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and any other federal, state, and/or local laws, rules and/or regulations;</p> |  |
| <p>10</p> | <p>The agency shall comply with all reporting requirements outlined by FHWA, FTA, RTC, Caltrans, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) or state statute, as applicable;</p> |  |
| <p>11</p> | <p>The agency will commit the funds necessary to ensure this project is fully funded.</p> |  |

Implementing Agency Representative:

Signed  **Date** 9/15/2025
Printed (Name and Title) Corey Aldridge/CEO
Implementing Agency Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

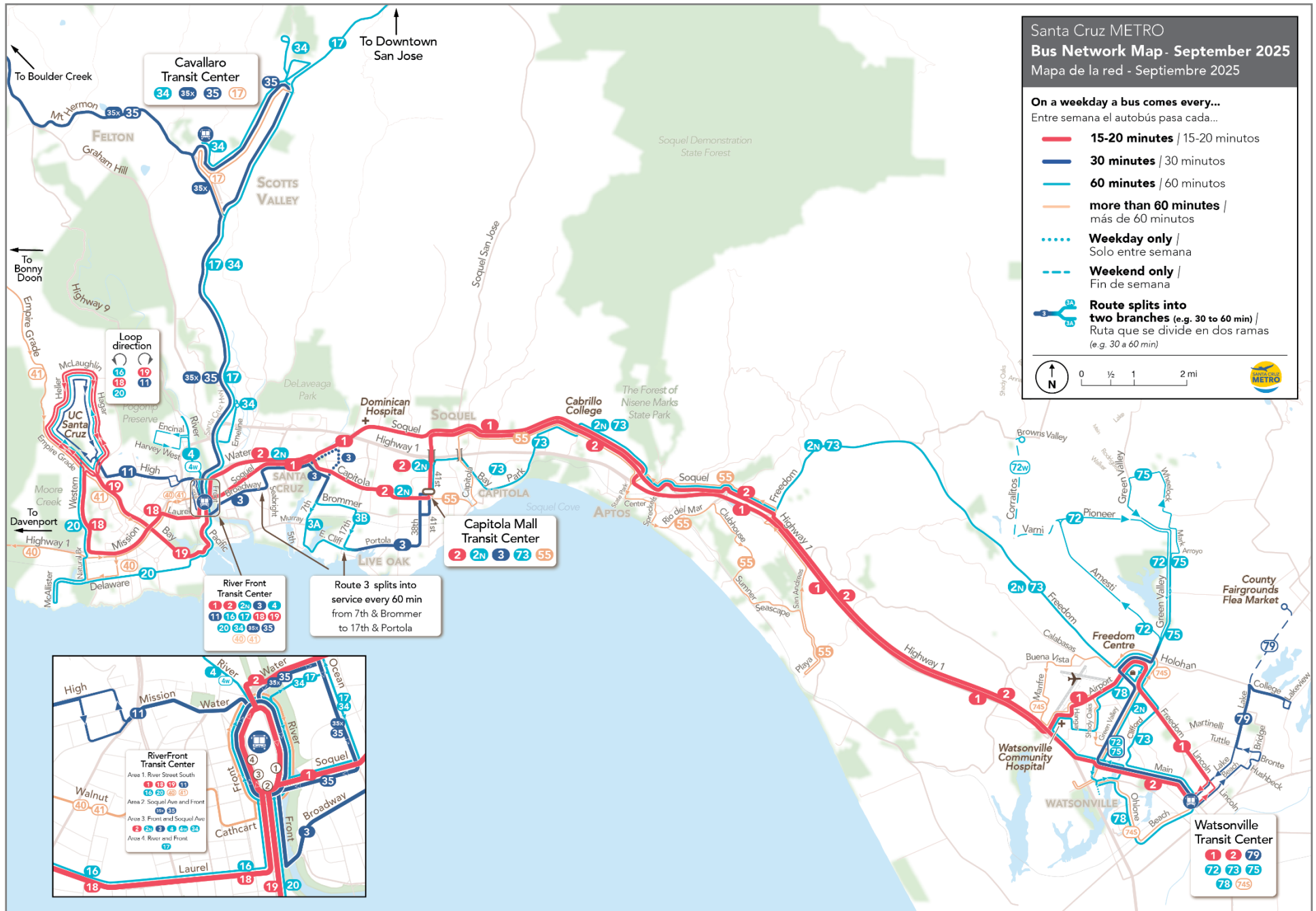
Project Sponsor – if different

Signed _____ **Date** _____
Printed (Name and Title) Sarah Christensen/Executive Director
Sponsor Agency Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation D

| | Average Bus Operator Cost (linked to Labor Fringe tab for noted year)* | Consumables (fixed/variable costs for the buses like fuel/repairs) | Cost + Consumables |
|------|--|--|--------------------|
| FY26 | 98,733 | 27,668 | 126,401 |

FY24 Actual

| | | |
|---|----|-----------|
| Fixed Route Total Revenue Hours (RSH), from Transit Fact sheet: | | 187,427 |
| Average Number of Bus Operators for the Year (as per HR Staffing Report): | | 188 |
| RSH per Bus Operator: | | 1,000 |
| Hours: | | 13% |
| Total Hours per Bus Operator per Year: | | 1,125 |
| System Average miles per hour: | | 19.3 |
| Miles per Bus Operator per Year: | | 21,710 |
| Cost Per Mile: | | |
| Mobile Materials and Supplies (Fleet 4100): | \$ | 3,413,514 |
| Fixed Route Total Revenue Miles, from Transit Fact Sheet: | | 2,678,401 |
| Cost Per Mile: | \$ | 1.27 |
| Consumables per Bus Operator per Year: | \$ | 27,668 |



Santa Cruz METRO
Bus Network Map - September 2025
 Mapa de la red - Septiembre 2025

- On a weekday a bus comes every...**
 Entre semana el autobús pasa cada...
- **15-20 minutes** | 15-20 minutos
 - **30 minutes** | 30 minutos
 - **60 minutes** | 60 minutos
 - **more than 60 minutes** | más de 60 minutos
 - ⋯ **Weekday only** | Solo entre semana
 - - - **Weekend only** | Fin de semana
 - Route splits into two branches** (e.g. 30 to 60 min) | Ruta que se divide en dos ramas (e.g. 30 a 60 min)

0 1/2 1 2 mi

Cavallaro Transit Center
 34 35x 35 17

Loop direction
 16 19 18 20

River Front Transit Center
 1 2 2N 3 4 11 16 17 18 19 20 34 35x 35 40 41

Route 3 splits into service every 60 min from 7th & Brommer to 17th & Portola

Capitola Mall Transit Center
 2 2N 3 73 55

Watsonville Transit Center
 1 2 79 72 73 75 78 743

RiverFront Transit Center
 Area 1: River Street South
 1 2 3 4
 Area 2: Soquel Ave and Front
 1 2 3 4
 Area 3: Front and Soquel Ave
 1 2 3 4
 Area 4: River and Front
 1 2