

For Immediate Release

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METRO's "One Ride at a Time" Wins Award for Most Innovative Communications Campaign
Campaign Recognized at California Association of Public Information Officers' 2024 EPIC Awards

Santa Cruz, CA (May 14, 2024): The California Association of Public Information Officers (CAPIO) has presented the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) with its prestigious EPIC Award. The award recognizes One Ride at a Time (ORAT), METRO's campaign to showcase the environmental benefits of transit, encourage bus ridership and protect Santa Cruz County's extraordinary natural resources, as the public sector's Most Innovative Communications program of 2024.

CAPIO is the leading statewide organization dedicated to advancing public sector communications across all levels of government. The EPIC (Excellence in Public Information and Communications) Award honors "a communications activity that pushes the limits of innovation, creativity or technology to reach an intended audience," according to CAPIO's website.

"We are delighted that One Ride at a Time is being recognized by our public sector peers," said Corey Aldridge, METRO CEO/General Manager. "We see this campaign as an inspiring example of how individuals and public agencies can creatively work together to accomplish great things in their communities. We truly are stronger together."

ORAT gives bus riders the opportunity to protect the Monterey Bay's extraordinary natural resources just by riding the bus. Thanks to ORAT, every ride on a METRO bus contributes to the agency's 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.

"ORAT links the role public transit plays in protecting the environment with a customer rewards program that allows riders to make donations to local environmental non-profits," said Danielle Glagola, METRO Marketing and Communication Director. "We're proud that CAPIO recognized the innovation and effectiveness of this approach. In its first year, ORAT donated more than \$42,000 and helped propel a 22% increase in bus ridership.

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 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 scmtd.com.