



# MINUTES\*

MAC MEETING OF OCTOBER 15, 2025

The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting. \*Minutes are “summary” minutes, not verbatim minutes.

1. **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:14 PM by Chair Elsea.
2. **ROLL CALL** - The following MAC Members were **present**, representing a quorum:

**Veronica Elsea, Chair**  
**Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair**  
**James Cruse**  
**Jessica de Wit**

**Michael Pisano**  
**Becky Taylor**  
**James Von Hendy**

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

Mr. Von Hendy mentioned that his term will expire in December 2025 and will not be applying for reappointment to serve on MAC. Mr. Cruse shared his experience with riding a METRO Bus so that staff could look into it further. Lisa, member of the public, shared her experience with riding ParaCruz. She said that fares are high if a rider misses their ParaCruz ride and needs to reschedule. Daniel Zaragoza, Operations Deputy Director, explained that ParaCruz waits five minutes at the destination before leaving. If ParaCruz must return, a \$16 fare is charged. To avoid this charge, riders just need to call ahead and reschedule. Rebecca Downing, METRO Board Chair, thanked the MAC members for their hard work and participation at the MAC meetings. She provided an update that the MAC Ad Hoc Committee met and the Committee recommended extending the nomination period to allow more candidates to apply. She also mentioned that she will be providing a recap of the Week Without Driving event at the next MAC meeting.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

4. **RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 20, 2025**

**MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 20, 2025, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION: PISANO**

**SECOND: DE WIT**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 7 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, Cruse, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy.**

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chair Elsea mentioned the letter in the packet that she wrote to Corey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

6. **UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE NEW METRO WEBSITE AND APPS**

Michael Bois, Communications and Marketing Manager, provided an update on the new METRO website and apps. He reported that METRO is still in the final stages of developing the website. Mr. Cruse requested clarification on aspects of the Transit app and furnished screenshots so staff could review.

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Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

### 7. UPDATE ON THE MOBILITY TRAINING COORDINATOR

Michael Bois, Communications and Marketing Manager, provided an update on the Mobility Training Coordinator position. He reported that more than 30 applications were received, and the position has now been filled. The new Mobility Training Coordinator is expected to start in early November 2025.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

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

John Urgo, Chief Planning and Innovation Officer, reported that the Santa Cruz County Fair took place September 10 – 14, 2025. METRO offered free fares on all trips to the fair on Route 79F (daily), Route 79 (weekends only), and ParaCruz. Riders also received a voucher for a discount on fair tickets. He reported that there were about 1,000 fair boardings over those five days.

Chair Elsea added that riders didn't always know where to catch the fair bus and MAC hopes that staff will improve on that in 2026.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

### 9. UPDATE ON OPERATIONS

Daniel Zaragoza, Operations Deputy Director, provided an update on operations. He mentioned that nine hydrogen buses are currently in service. He mentioned that the temporary hydrogen fueler can fuel 20 buses at a time and that most hydrogen buses are operating on Routes 1 and 2, as well as Highway 17. Deputy Director Zaragoza also mentioned that ParaCruz has provided about 18,000 rides so far this year.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

### 10. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE

#### a. Quarterly Ridership Report

John Urgo, Chief Planning and Innovation Officer, stated that METRO is still working on the quarterly ridership report and that no report is available at this time.

#### b. Bus Stops

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

There are no new updates at this time. METRO will continue to work on this issue.

##### b.ii. Installation of Bus Stops on Islands

Officer Urgo reported that the project is moving into the design phase now but has not started yet. The purpose of the project is to speed up bus service. Discussion continued on bus stops, shelters, and islands.

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### **c. Other Projects**

#### **c.i. Update on Reimagine METRO**

Officer Urgo provided an update on Reimagine METRO. He mentioned that service has increased about 30%. Discussion continued on ridership and service changes related to Reimagine METRO.

#### **c.ii. Update on River Front Transit Center**

Officer Urgo reported that no recent changes have been made to the River Front Transit Center.

#### **c.iii. Update on Pacific Station North**

Officer Urgo reported that Pacific Station North is still scheduled to open in 2026.

#### **c.iv. Update on Watsonville Transit Center**

Officer Urgo reported that the Watsonville Transit Center was currently in the design phase.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Elsea moved to the next agenda item.

### **11. ESTABLISH AND APPROVE THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**MOTION: APPROVE THE 2026 MAC MEETING DATES OF FEBRUARY 18, MAY 20, AUGUST 19, AND OCTOBER 21**

**MOTION: DE WIT**

**SECOND: TAYLOR**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 7 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, Cruse, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy.**

### **12. ELECT THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2026 TERM**

**MOTION: ELECT CHAIR DE WIT FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2026)**

**MOTION: MARTINEZ**

**SECOND: CRUSE**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 7 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, Cruse, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy.**

**MOTION: ELECT VICE CHAIR TAYLOR FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2026)**

**MOTION: DE WIT**

**SECOND: PISANO**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 7 AYES: Elsea, Martinez, Cruse, de Wit, Pisano, Taylor, Von Hendy.**

Donna Lind, METRO Board Director, congratulated the new Chair and Vice Chair, and thanked James Von Hendy for his service with MAC. She also acknowledged the MAC members and expressed appreciation for their hard work and participation at the MAC meetings.

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### **13. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO/GENERAL MANAGER**

None.

### **14. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

None.

### **15. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- Service Planning Updates
- Quarterly Ridership Report
- Update on Reimagine METRO
- Update on Transit Centers (Watsonville Transit Center, Pacific Station North, and River Front Transit Center)
- Mobility Training Coordinator
- Recap of Week Without Driving
- Update on Website & Apps
- Update on Operations
- Chair Semi-Annual Report
- Update on Rapid Corridors Project

### **16. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS**

Vouchers distributed by Elizabeth Rocha, Administrative Specialist.

### **17. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING IN 2026**

Chair Elsea announced the next MAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz.

### **18. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Elsea adjourned the meeting at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rocha

Administrative Specialist