

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) is currently seeking a dynamic, experienced, and innovative individual to serve as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO will continue to lead Reimagine METRO's initiatives which will allow METRO to serve the region as a world class organization focused on innovation, sustainability, accessibility, and quality of life. Located in the beautiful county of Santa Cruz, California, METRO provides directly operated fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service to 3.5 million passengers throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Santa Clara County and those services provided by Monterey-Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center. METRO also directly operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 77,000 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY24 will be approximately \$70 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today METRO operates a fleet of 69 CNG buses, 21 diesel buses, 10 hybrid buses, and 4 battery electric buses operating on at least 24 fixed-routes and 32 paratransit vehicles.

At the start of 2023, METRO stepped in to support residents impacted by several flooding and landslide events offering free evacuation services. Additionally, METRO launched Youth Cruz Free, a program that strives to increase access and ridership through free service for K-12 students and One Ride at a Time where a portion of fare revenue is donated to environmental conservation. METRO also received a significant grant award via California's Transit and Intercity Capital Rail Program (TIRCP), which will allow the agency to purchase 24 zero emission hydrogen buses as well as the fueling infrastructure that will make METRO an industry leader in the hydrogen bus space. As part of this grant, METRO will also be able to expand services along Highways 1 and 17 and construct affordable housing at METRO's Watsonville Transit Center and a bike hub at Pacific Station in downtown Santa Cruz.

METRO ended the 2023 year by announcing a new 3-year initiative, known as Wave Service, which will transform transit in the Santa Cruz region. Building off of strong engagement and support from the community, METRO will redesign transit services in two phases. The Wave Service is anticipated to double service to 7 million rides per year by adding 43% more service, with 15-minute all-day service that is faster, more frequent, direct and reliable. Wave Service will also directly benefit the community with reduced congestion, new job creation, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and greater accessibility across the region.

METRO is incredibly proud to partner with local, state and federal partners to deliver powerful transit services to the community and is proud of the community engagement and support it receives. In order to support this innovative approach and Metro's commitment of delivering impactful world class transit services, METRO will prepare for a sales tax initiative in 2026 that will support its dynamic growth and support of affordable housing, accessibility and the environment.

#### ABOUT SANTA CRUZ:

Santa Cruz County, located along California's central coast between San Francisco and Monterey and featuring forests of iconic California redwoods, has been named one of the best

places to live in California. Santa Cruz County has a top-rated education system, augmented by the University of California at Santa Cruz (with an enrollment of 19,000 students and a campus that is situated on 2,000 acres overlooking scenic Monterey) whose student make up a significant portion of METRO's ridership. The top-quality education, as well as a wide array of outdoor activities and entertainment with an urban-suburban feel that makes it a great location for families. Santa Cruz County provides an exceptional quality of life with over 29 miles of pristine beaches, majestic redwood forests, an abundance of outdoor activities, a thriving wine industry, and temperate year-round weather.

Abbott Square Market in downtown Santa Cruz is a vibrant, creative space for families, featuring local art, classes, and interactive displays. The iconic Santa Cruz boardwalk features two amusement rides that are National Historic Landmarks among other rides, games, free exhibits, and more, all within view of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary which is home to a diverse range of marine wildlife. Among Santa Cruz's six state parks is Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, a historical preserved forest with 40 acres of towering, old-growth redwoods. Downtown Santa Cruz, Capitola Village, and the Santa Cruz Wharf all offer unique shopping and dining districts featuring locally made items, specialty shops, and more.

METRO connects residents and visitors to all that Santa Cruz County has to offer. The agency has been providing services to the region since 1968 with the mission of providing a public transportation service that enhances personal mobility and creates a sustainable transportation option in Santa Cruz County through a cost-effective, reliable, accessible, safe, clean, and courteous transit service. A valuable community partner, METRO is taking a proactive approach to tackle many of the region's challenges including accessibility, affordable housing and the environment by continually improving and expanding its services through innovation and expansion. The CEO will work with the 13-member Board of Directors (11 voting members, 2 ex officio) to expand revenue sources that will allow it to continue this excellence of service to the Santa Cruz community. More details about METRO can be obtained by visiting the agency's website at <http://www.scmttd.com>.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the CEO assumes full responsibility for the administration, management and development of the METRO. The CEO makes recommendations to the Board regarding the business affairs of METRO, assumes the leadership role in executing the decisions of the Board and has overall responsibility for the functioning of METRO to include the operational, maintenance, financial, human resources, and information technology departments. This position represents METRO's interests as directed by the Board in legislative matters and is responsible for maintaining positive and productive relationships with the public, employee unions, state, federal and local agencies, as well as transit districts within the state and throughout the country, METRO's state and federal lobby/advocacy representatives and transit industry professional organizations such as APTA, CTA, CTAA and CalACT.

Most importantly, the CEO serves as METRO's representative and spokesperson to the community and stakeholders. METRO's CEO must be open, engaging, responsive, and communicative with all stakeholders. The CEO must be present in the community and working to ensure that METRO maintains its image and reputation as an innovative, responsive and responsible partner to the community. The CEO must be solutions-oriented and strive to develop win-win approaches to complicated challenges facing the region.

As such, the incoming CEO at METRO will be responsible for the following, in addition to other duties and responsibilities that may arise during the term of the CEO's employment.

- Accountable for the overall leadership and management of the agency including establishing management objectives and delivering METRO's mission to provide transit service that is cost-effective, reliable, accessible, safe, clean and courteous.
- Provides strategic leadership and direction to the fixed route and ParaCruz operations, maintenance, finance, transportation planning, human resources, information technology, construction and general administrative functions.
- Manages assets and infrastructure including vehicles, facilities and related equipment and ensures that assets are managed in a way that is safe, efficient and cost-effective.
- Facilitates and assists in the development and implementation of budgets and balances agency needs and objectives with limited financial resources.
- Seeks to understand current and/or potential problems and concerns at all levels of the organization and works with management staff to develop solutions.
- Maintains and constantly strives to strengthen a collaborative relationship with external stakeholders and understands the interests of local business and industry, community, community groups, local and federal government as well as the public.
- Acts as the official and informal liaison with a wide variety of local, state and federal professionals and officials in order to identify and obtain new and innovative funding sources.
- Supports the local region as a partner in first response to natural disasters and other emergencies by providing transit services and other resources when necessary.
- Represents METRO at national, state and local meetings of transit professionals, legislators and citizen's groups and works to promote the best interests of the agency.
- Engages regularly and maintains a strong working relationship with the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC).
- Demonstrates knowledge of current industry trends and practices in transportation and mobility and the ability to implement best practices and innovative initiatives and technologies in order to achieve METRO's performance goals.
- Prepares or oversees the preparation of reports and correspondence to provide information the Board may need to address issues of concern to the public or the successful functioning of METRO.
- Provides the Board with information related to the transportation industry and assists the Board with the development of objectives that would best meet the needs of the public while maintaining a strong organization.
- Empowers and mentors employees at all levels of the organization to work toward and achieve METRO's mission, goals and objectives and maintains a culture of respect and inclusion throughout the agency.

- Demonstrates an understanding of negotiation and collective bargaining agreements and the ability to maintain a positive working relationship with union leadership and represented and non-represented employees.
- In collaboration with human resources, oversees employee benefit programs including retirement programs, insurance plans and other employee benefit programs.
- Ensures management and staff have the resources necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Fosters a collaborative, engaging, supportive and appreciated working relationship with labor and between management and labor by engaging in a thoughtful, meaningful dialogue where all parties are able to be heard and decisions take into account the interests of everyone at METRO.
- Promotes and enforces Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action programs.
- Promotes compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and works with staff to encourage disability awareness.
- Ensures the safety and reliability of METRO by establishing and enforcing safety and performance policies and procedures.
- May act as METRO's representative with radio, television and social media venues.
- May make presentations at legislative, transportation and governmental events.
- Performs other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The incoming CEO should possess or be capable of quickly learning the following knowledge and skills.

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of public administration, business management, budgeting, procurement, accounting, and public transit operations.
- Trends, innovations, best practices and technologies in transportation and mobility.
- Preparing for, undertaking and successfully delivering a sales tax initiative by working with all local and regional partners.
- Navigating a supportive yet politically diverse landscape to achieve support around the expansion of public transit services which will directly improve accessibility to transportation, affordable housing and environmentally friendly alternatives to mobility.
- Alternative fuel technologies including hydrogen, battery electric buses and other zero-emission fleet options, as well as the infrastructure needed to support such technologies.
- Transit oriented development (TOD) and how to maximize the use of public transit as a means of building affordable housing in a sustainable dense manner which also offers other essential services to the community.
- Financial management in a complex operating environment including operating and capital budgets, funding, revenue management, asset management, employee benefit programs, long-term fiscal planning needs, and compliance with federal, state and local regulations.
- Transit District facility service, management, and maintenance.

- Fare-free service and the impacts on ridership, budgets and service.
- Federal, state and local laws, ordinances and regulations pertaining to public transit operations.
- Labor relations including negotiation, collective bargaining agreements, and working with union leadership.
- All aspects of program and project management from planning to delivery and implementation.
- Regulations and procedures applicable to obtaining financial grants for public transportation.

Ability to:

- Manage transit operations in a complex operating environment.
- Plan, organize and direct all METRO activities.
- Achieve and implement a strategic plan as adopted by METRO's Board of Directors.
- Provide and implement a strategic vision for the agency along with long-term and short-term objectives in coordination with the Board of Directors.
- Maintain a collaborative, productive and transparent relationship with the Board of Directors.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with elected officials, other governmental and transit agencies, the business community, organized labor, senior and disabled communities, public constituencies, the press and social media applications.
- Build partnerships and work closely with elected officials, government agencies, the business community and other critical stakeholders to develop, launch and lead a successful campaign for a sales tax initiative in 2026.
- Coordinate regularly with executive staff to manage work and meetings with directors and staff with a schedule that honors the time of others. Keep executive staff apprised of out-of-office time. Respond to staff requests and communications promptly so they may proceed or adjust to CEO expectations.
- Evaluate, and prioritize programs and projects together with the management team establishing, with them, an acceptable pace with adequate staff levels to accomplish agency objectives, projects and tasks accurately and on schedule.
- Initiate opportunities for directors to participate in industry and leadership trainings. Encourage networking with other transportation entities, local governments and agencies. Effectively communicate in public, at meetings and with media sources both orally and in writing. Resolve conflict and balance different ideas and viewpoints in order to make decisions that are best for the agency.
- Build consensus and communicate a common vision for the agency among the Board, staff, labor, internal and external groups.
- Achieve buy-in and support from labor by listening, engaging and being responsive and taking into account their input and interests.
- Think strategically about innovative funding solutions such as rent sharing revenues from joint ventures such as TOD.
- Establish management objectives and plan programs to accomplish them.
- Select, supervise, motivate, mentor and evaluate personnel and maintain a positive and collaborative working environment for employees at all levels.
- Interpret and analyze fiscal, operational and planning data, user reactions and governmental regulations.
- Collect and utilize data and metrics in order to make informed decisions and improve agency performance.

- Develop technical expertise in working with and controlling activities of a variety of consultants.

#### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Graduation from an accredited college with a bachelor's degree in transportation, transportation management, business administration, engineering or a related field. Seven (7) years of increasingly responsible management experience at an organization of comparable nature, complexity and size to METRO. Experience in obtaining and administering state and federal funding is desirable. Experience which demonstrates substantial knowledge and abilities pertinent to specific job functions may be substituted for the education requirement.

Must be able to work extended hours as needed, often outside regular business hours as required by the Board and the demands of the job. Possession of, or the ability to obtain and maintain a California Class C driver's license. Must pass requisite background check.

To submit a resume and cover letter, please reach out to Gregg Moser, Principal at K&A, at [gmoser@kapartners.com](mailto:gmoser@kapartners.com).