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METRO Applauds “Green” Benefits from California’s Regional Hydrogen Hub

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Grant could support “green” hydrogen-powered buses for Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz, CA (Oct. 20, 2023): The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) celebrates the selection of the [Alliance for Renewable Clean Hydrogen Energy Systems](#) (ARCHES), a statewide hydrogen hub initiative in California, as a key recipient of funding from the DOE’s Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs program. Last week, the DOE announced that ARCHES has been awarded \$1.2 billion. As part of the ARCHES team, METRO, and the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) aim to deploy “green” hydrogen-powered, fuel-cell electric buses (FCEBs) in Santa Cruz County.

“METRO is proud to be a partner of ARCHES and play a role in its success,” **said METRO Board Chair, Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson.** “This program will help Santa Cruz County, California, and the nation grow the clean energy economy and transition to a zero-emissions transportation sector.”

ARCHES’ intention is to only fund the production and use of “green” hydrogen that has been produced with renewable resources and that meet or exceed federal carbon intensity requirements on a life cycle emission basis. All electrolytic hydrogen projects that receive funding support will have to meet ARCHES criteria. Proposals will be evaluated based on ARCHES vetting criteria and overall GHG, local air quality, state environmental goals, and community impacts. ARCHES will use mechanisms that are recognized by state and federal authorities to track that electricity used to produce hydrogen is renewable and to evaluate hub carbon intensity.

The rollout of the Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs marks a significant step toward the Biden Administration’s goal of creating a network of clean hydrogen producers, consumers, and infrastructure to deliver hydrogen at a cost of \$2/kg by 2026 and \$1/kg by 2031. The Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs program, established as part of the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, aims to accelerate the use of hydrogen in multiple carbon-intensive sectors, including transportation, and catalyze a wave of new investments from both public and private sectors.

“METRO has set an aggressive goal to be 100% emissions-free by 2037,” **said METRO Board Vice Chair, Kristen Brown.** “The selection of ARCHES as a Hydrogen Hub by the DOE may greatly assist in our efforts to meet the state of California’s clean energy mandates ahead of schedule.”

“Hydrogen fuel cell technology will play a key role as transit agencies like METRO continue to modernize their fleets to meet California’s ambitious climate goals,” **said ARCHES CEO, Angelina Galiteva.** “We look forward to working with METRO over the next few months as we finalize projects and set timelines for project implementation with the Department of Energy.”

This partnership with ARCHES exemplifies METRO’s commitment to environmental stewardship, innovation, and a greener future.

To also support METRO’s efforts, as an environmentally focused community partner, METRO also gives riders the opportunity to protect the Monterey Bay’s extraordinary natural resources just by simply

riding the bus via the [One Ride at a Time](#) (ORAT) program. Thanks to ORAT, every ride on a METRO bus contributes to our 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.

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 94 buses on 24 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.