



# INSIDE METRO: THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE TRANSIT

Meet Elmer Torres: The Heart Behind Santa Cruz METRO's Facilities Team. Elmer Torres has been a dedicated part of Santa Cruz METRO for 26 years, keeping the transit system in top shape. But behind his work in facilities maintenance, there's a man filled with music, community spirit, and an unwavering commitment to helping others.

## Elmer's Favorite Quote: "What's for lunch?"

### Tell us a little about yourself, Elmer.

I'm Elmer Torres, the Lead Facilities Maintenance Worker at Santa Cruz METRO. Outside of work, I'm deeply involved in my community as an ordained bishop and senior pastor at the Marina Church of God. I love playing guitar, fishing, and spending time with my family—especially when we make music together.

### What's something surprising about you?

Most people don't know that I'm a pastor and a musician! My wife, daughter, and I lead music in church, and sometimes we perform as a trio. I also officiate weddings and provide free spiritual counseling to those in need. Giving back to the community is a big part of who I am.

### What's your favorite part of working at METRO?

Without a doubt, my crew. We've built a great team in facilities maintenance—we work hard and support each other. It's always fulfilling to get things done as a team and see the impact of our work on the community.

### What's a project you're especially proud of?

Recently, I led my crew in installing 23 bus shelters, benches, and trash cans across the county, thanks to the Clean California Grant. Seeing those improvements in place and knowing we helped create more accessible, comfortable spaces for riders—it felt great.

### How big is your team?

Our department has 19 hardworking people, including 9 custodians, 9 facilities workers, and our manager.

### What do you love about METRO's "One Ride at a Time" bus wraps?

I love all of them! Each one is beautifully designed and adds something special to our transit system.

### What did you do before joining METRO?

I worked as a landscaper, installing irrigation systems. That hands-on experience with construction and maintenance helped prepare me for my current role.

### Why did you decide to join METRO?

Honestly, I needed medical insurance, and METRO offered great benefits. What started as a practical decision turned into a career I truly value.

### What's your work schedule like?

I work Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.—keeping facilities running smoothly!

### Where do you see yourself in ten years?

Retired and dedicating even more time to serving the community. I look forward to helping people however I can.

### Any advice for someone considering a job at METRO?

Come join us! METRO has given me job security for over 26 years, which is incredibly valuable in today's economy. The benefits are excellent, including health care, dental, retirement, and more. It's a great place to build a stable and fulfilling career.

Elmer isn't just maintaining METRO—he's enriching his community every step of the way. His dedication, both at work and beyond, is a true reflection of the heart and soul of Santa Cruz METRO.

*"Elmer is the kind of guy you can always count on. He leads with heart, keeps the team motivated, and takes pride in everything he does. Whether he's tackling a big project or just making sure things run smoothly, he puts in the effort and makes work enjoyable. We are lucky to have him on the team."*

- Rob Willis, METRO's Facilities Supervisor