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Santa Cruz METRO Launches New Transit Service Pilot Program, Cruz On-Demand

Santa Cruz, CA (Friday, April 16, 2021) - The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) announces the launch of a new on-demand transit service, Cruz On-Demand, as part of a pilot project beginning Monday, April 19, 2021. Cruz On-Demand will be METRO's first endeavor into on-demand service and will allow for increased service coverage in Santa Cruz County.

Cruz On-Demand is a shared ride experience on smaller vans, operated by METRO's trained ParaCruz operators, extending METRO's service area 3/4s of a mile from any of METRO's fixed bus routes, excluding Highway 17 and the UCSC campus. Pick-up locations can be any address within METRO's service area and drop-off locations can be anywhere within a three mile radius of your pick-up address. Trips can be booked up to 24 hours in advance. The Ecolane app scheduler will display the next available pick-up time or you can schedule a future trip for later in the day.

Cruz On-Demand trips can be booked by downloading the Ecolane app on a smartphone or by calling METRO's ParaCruz Customer Service Department at (831) 425-4664. During METRO's temporary fare reduction program Cruz On-Demand fares are \$2.00 for trips up to two miles and \$3.00 for trips between two to three miles through September 15, 2021. Customers can also purchase and use a Day Pass in the METRO Splash Pass app or anywhere Day Passes are sold for use on Cruz On-Demand and transferring to METRO's fixed-route service.

"We are excited to launch our Cruz on-Demand pilot project that will allow METRO to increase our service coverage throughout the county, expanding convenient affordable access to addresses within a 3/4s of a mile of METRO's fixed-route service area and dropping them off at their nearby requested location or connecting them to one of our Transit Centers for longer trips. Cruz On-Demand is a great add-on to the services METRO already provides to our community."
- Alex Clifford, METRO CEO/General Manager.

"Whether running a neighborhood errand or connecting to the nearest METRO Transit Center for longer journeys, Cruz On-Demand will provide METRO customers with affordable accessible on-demand public transportation from any address within METRO's service area."- John Urgo, METRO Planning & Development Director

During this estimated yearlong pilot project, METRO will gather customer feedback and make adjustments to this service as needed to increase efficiency and streamline the Cruz On-Demand transit service model.

Whether running a neighborhood errand or connecting to the nearest METRO Transit Center for longer journeys, a Cruz On-Demand vehicle will come to you when you schedule it for service, to any address within METRO's service area, up to a maximum distance of three miles.

METRO continues to follow public health guidelines from official sources such as CDC, State, and local guidance whenever possible to support safe travel. Including cleaning and disinfecting transit vehicles frequently, requiring face coverings, and installing additional safety measures. In addition, METRO puts health first by requiring riders and employees to avoid public transit if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or feel ill.

METRO's Cruz On-Demand transit service is just another way METRO is showing our commitment to our community's recovery from the pandemic. METRO will continue to enforce physical distancing guidance onboard vehicles, and limit the number of passengers onboard at any given time.

For information on METRO's Cruz On-Demand service, visit scmtd.com/ondemand. For instructions on how to download, Ecolane, the Cruz On-Demand booking app, visit scmtd.com/apps.

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About Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District:

Established in 1968, Santa Cruz METRO provides fixed-route and Highway 17 commuter service throughout Santa Cruz County, with limited service connecting to Monterey Salinas Transit at our Watsonville Transit Center and Santa Clara County, transporting more than 5 million passenger trips a year. METRO also operates ParaCruz paratransit service to Santa Cruz County, providing about 73,500 trips per year. METRO's operating budget in FY21 is almost \$55 million and is funded through a combination of farebox revenue, sales tax, and state and federal sources. Today it operates a fleet of 94 buses on at least 24 fixed-routes. For more information, visit www.scmtd.com. Like METRO on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SantaCruzMETRO or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/SantaCruzMETRO.