

# Thoughts from the General Manager



As we entered 2023, recent rainstorms drenched the South Coast, flooded intersections, and closed roads. Once again, MTD employees responded professionally to provide essential public transportation to the community, while simultaneously answering requests for assistance from local authorities. We are grateful by the work of our employees, and the leadership and actions of local first responders to keep our community safe during this crisis.

Reflecting on 2022, there were a number of accomplishments we are proud of, including: the completion of our Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP); the option agreement for our transit-oriented development at the Calle Real site; and the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant to further the agency's zero-emission bus and facility projects.

We are especially proud of the inclusiveness of the SRTP process, which received ample public participation and input from local jurisdictions. The final product will assist MTD with prioritization of public transit resources. There was wonderful news as MTD entered into an Option Agreement and negotiated terms of a subsequent ground lease with a real estate development firm to deliver a transit-oriented, mixed-income housing development at the Calle Real site. The project promises to provide much needed rental housing for our community. Finally, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) awarded MTD over \$14 million in TIRCP funds to acquire additional zero-emission buses, further the agencies electrical infrastructure projects, and much more.

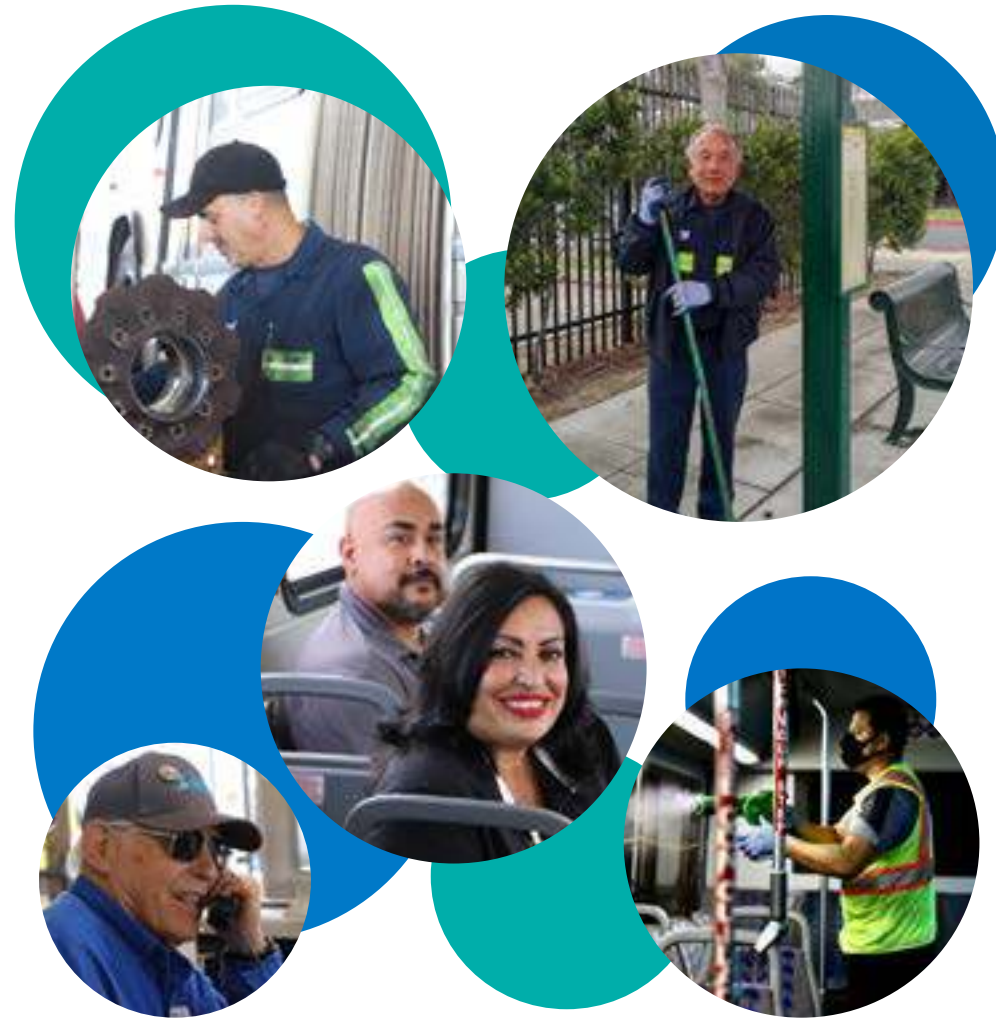
We thank the community and our riders for their continued support of MTD.

**Jerry Estrada**  
MTD General Manager

**Board of Directors**

Dave Davis, Chair  
David Tabor, Vice Chair  
Jen Lemberger, Secretary

Arjun Sarkar  
Chuck McQuary  
Paula Perotte



## The Mission of MTD

is to enhance the mobility of South Coast residents, commuters, and visitors by offering safe, appealing, equitable, environmentally responsible, and fiscally sound transit service.

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# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

January 2023





## Ridership Climbs, Safety Still Top of Mind



MTD's ridership has seen a significant 72% increase over Fiscal Year 21-22 numbers. Unfortunately, in April 2022, due to an ongoing bus operator shortage, MTD made the difficult decision to reduce service by approximately 13%, in order to improve system reliability. Despite these reductions, ridership continues to climb.

MTD continues to hold rider and employee health and safety as our number one priority, and rigorous cleaning and disinfection protocol continue onboard the fleet.

## Open Payments a Success, Soon to be Fleetwide



In July 2021 MTD launched a pilot of open-loop, contactless fare payment on board 18 buses in the fleet. This Tap to Ride system allows riders to tap the bank card or smartphone they already have in their pocket to pay for their bus fare. With a successful pilot now complete, contracts have been awarded to install this system across the entire fleet, with a full launch expected in 2023.

## First 40 Foot Electric Buses on the Way

In early 2023, MTD will reach a major milestone in the electrification journey—the delivery of the first nine 40 foot battery-electric buses. This will bring the fleet to an all-time high of 23 all-electric transit buses, and will allow for integration of these zero-emission vehicles into the community on routes currently powered by renewable diesel. These buses will charge on a bank of 14 new heavy-duty chargers funded with the help of Southern California Edison's Charge Ready Grant Program.

MTD is also working in partnership with the City of Santa Barbara and CALSTART to develop a blueprint for MTD's zero-emission expansion and the design of a resilient energy microgrid, thanks to a grant from the California Energy Commission. This blueprint will serve as an example for other institutions and transit agencies across the nation on how to build clean energy and resilience into our operations.

## Funding MTD's Next Wave

In July 2022 the California State Transportation Agency announced the award of \$14.4 million in Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) funding for a portion of MTD's Next Wave project. The Next Wave project is a suite of capital and operating projects that, taken together, advance MTD into a future where transit on the South Coast is convenient, clean, and competitive. This grant will provide funding for 8 battery-electric buses, 3 battery-electric microtransit vans, transit signal priority software, and electrification and infrastructure improvements at MTD's Terminal 1 and 2 facilities. This funding will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve bus service.

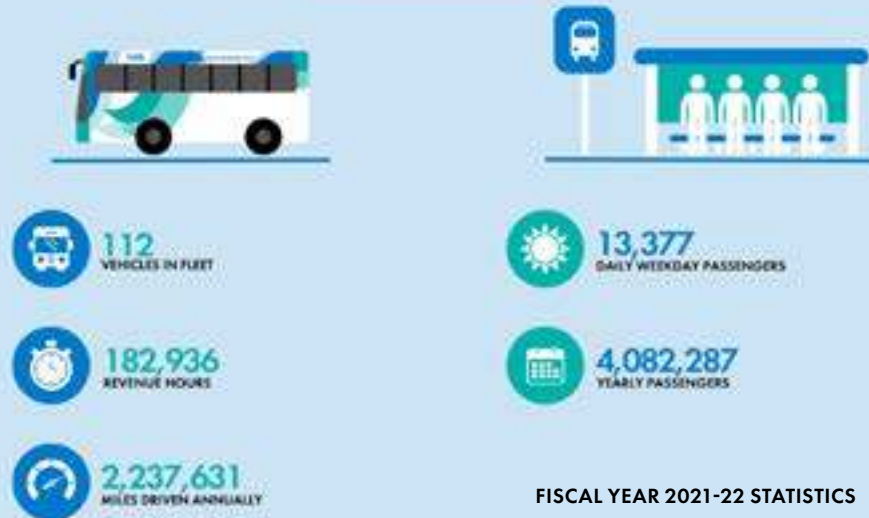


## Room to Grow for Bike Riders

In August 2022, MTD was officially awarded a grant from Measure A's Bike and Pedestrian Program to replace the existing two-position bike racks on the fleet with new three-position racks. Survey data of bus and bike riders revealed that 70% of folks had experienced a bus arriving with a full rack, leaving them unable to bring their bike along for the bus ride. This upgrade will increase bike capacity by 50% systemwide and will allow for better multimodal travel.



### DISTRICT STATS



## Short Range Plan Moves MTD Ahead



In November 2022, the MTD Board of Directors adopted a new Short-Range Transit Plan after a robust community engagement process. Known as MTD Moves Ahead, this plan lays out improvements to bus service that will help guide decision makers as to the prioritization of financial and human resources. MTD looks forward to implementing these improvements.



BEFORE



AFTER

## Fleet Renewal Underway

In an effort to extend the lives of the existing fleet and maintain MTD's assets in a state of good repair, several buses are currently receive a mid-life renewal. Buses are receiving different levels of upgrades, including an updated paint job with MTD's blue and teal livery, new seating, driver console air conditioning, and in some cases, new engine equipment. Fifteen buses have already completed their upgrades, with thirty-six more expected to be completed by March 2024.