

Letter to the Community



Representative of the South Coast's commitment to environmental stewardship, public transit has received ample community support over the years. That support has best been exhibited by the public's use of MTD's services. Many families, students, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities have come to rely on the transit service provided by MTD.

Providing a clean, comfortable, safe and convenient ride is what we strive to deliver for our passengers every day. At the close of 2023, MTD was concluding a fleet renewal campaign to improve the look of our buses, the riding experience for our patrons, and the reliability of the fleet. Coupled with the renovation of our Transit Center in downtown Santa Barbara a few years ago, MTD has sought to mirror the beauty & appeal of the South Coast within our public transit system.

MTD's new express service, Line 19x, was launched linking Carpinteria, Santa Barbara's Eastside and SBCC, to provide the community with another great alternative for getting around. After a number of difficult years filling vacant bus operator positions, we seem to have reached a turning point and MTD was able to increase weekday service on Line 28.

Above all, working for a public agency requires an individual to embrace a sense of community, and that mission is something MTD truly takes to heart. In 2023, MTD employees were bestowed the Above and Beyond award by their peers in the public transit industry for their response to the January flooding. This was just one incident out of far too many in recent years in which MTD employees did all they reasonably could to sustain service for those in need. We're proud of the commitment our team continues to demonstrate to our community and honored by the support we receive from the public.

Jerry Estrada
MTD General Manager

Board of Directors

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

Arjun Sarkar
Monica Solarzano
Paula Perotte
Alberto Lapuz



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 2024



Fleet Renewal Complete

In an effort to extend the lives of the existing fleet and maintain MTD's assets in a state of good repair, 51 buses received a mid-life renewal over the last 2 years. All buses received MTD's new teal & blue livery painted on the exterior, new matching passenger seating on the interior, new ADA restraint systems, new driver windows, and front console A/C. In addition some buses received new engines, transmissions, suspension, and passenger windows. These improvements will help to provide a safer, more comfortable, & efficient service for our drivers & the community, as well as serve to reflect the beauty of Santa Barbara County for years to come.



Fleet Electrification Planning

In mid-2023 MTD submitted its Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plan to the California Air Resources Board as required by the Innovative Clean Transit regulation. The Plan provides a roadmap for MTD's transition from a renewable diesel fleet to a battery-electric one by 2040. The Rollout Plan highlights MTD's proposed zero-emission bus acquisition schedule, electric vehicle charging infrastructure deployment, and workforce development to support zero-emission vehicle operations and maintenance. The Plan will guide MTD's fleet and operations to a more sustainable future, resulting in cleaner and quieter transit service to the community over the next decade.

MTD is also concluding its California Energy Commission blueprint planning grant. For the past two years, MTD has been working in partnership with the City of Santa Barbara and CALSTART to develop a blueprint for establishing resiliency measures to support MTD's zero-emission expansion. The primary feature of the blueprint is the design of microgrids (to the left is a conceptual design that is subject to change) for MTD's operating terminals. The microgrids will allow MTD to generate its own electricity independent of the utility grid, which would provide resiliency to its electric fleet during grid outages, allowing for uninterrupted service to the community. The blueprint will also serve as a guide to other fleets across the country that are planning for, or engaged in, fleet electrification.



Acquisition of Nine New Flyer Battery-Electric Buses

On October 16th MTD held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate MTD's newest fleet of battery-electric buses (BEBs) and chargers. The nine forty-foot New Flyer BEBs began arriving in late September and will continue rolling in until the end of the year. These are the first forty-foot BEBs in MTD's decades-long operation of electric vehicles (EVs). The nine New Flyer buses increases MTD's BEB fleet to 23 and its overall EV fleet to 40 when accounting for MTD's three electric microtransit vans and 14 Chevrolet Bolt relief cars. The BEBs will begin to be deployed to MTD's routes in early 2024.

Installation of 14 Direct Current Fast Chargers

In partnership with Southern California Edison (SCE) under SCE's Charge Ready Transport Program, MTD and SCE installed 14 ChargePoint direct current fast chargers (DCFC) and supporting electrical infrastructure at MTD's main operating terminal in downtown Santa Barbara. The new chargers enable MTD to charge its medium- and heavy-duty vehicles at a more rapid rate. The 14 DCFCs increase MTD's medium- and heavy-duty vehicle charger count to 29 and its overall EV charger count to 43. The completion of the project marks a major milestone in MTD's continued efforts to operate a 100% zero-emission transit fleet.



Line 19x Launch & Restoration of Service to Line 28

We launched a new express service bus line on Monday, August 28th--the Line 19x (Carpinteria/SBCC Express)! We celebrated the launch with local South Coast leaders by experiencing a bus ride on the 19x firsthand, followed by a press conference at SBCC. You can experience the 19x for yourself and avoid the hassle of traffic and parking and hop on the Line 19x to get to Carpinteria, Milpas Street on Santa Barbara's Eastside, and Santa Barbara City College, with service running year-round except during SBCC Spring & Winter Breaks. It's a one seat ride from Carpinteria & East SB to SBCC, with only 7 stops in each direction, you'll get to your destination sooner while leaving the driving to MTD. Also, starting with UCSB's return to classes on September 25, MTD increased weekday service on Line 28--now with 18 minute headways for most of the day, to better serve the high demand of our student riders.



MTD Receives Recognition

MTD was honored this year with the Above and Beyond award by the California Association for Coordinated Transportation or CALACT for going Above & Beyond in times of emergency, including the winter storms & flooding this past January, as well as an "Alternative Fuel Vehicle Leadership Award" from the United States Department of Energy's Clean Cities Coalition for decades of pioneering work in the battery-electric transit space.



DISTRICT STATS



FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 STATISTICS