

Transportation
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SC Transit center plans approved

Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District Friday approved final plans for a new transit center on lower Pacific Avenue.

"It has been in design for 1½ years," said Scott Galloway, general manager of the transit district. "Not only is it a bigger bus center but it will extend the mall," he said.

The new center, located on the site of the former Penney's Auto Center, already has been approved by the Santa Cruz City Council.

The selection of that location was made to end the congestion on Soquel Avenue, between the Mall and Front Street.

As designed, the center is expected to have the capacity to hold 20 buses at a time and serve up to 1,800 passengers per hour.

When it opens, the number of parked buses is expected to be around 14 with 1,200 people waiting in the open lobby and along the bus lanes.

The two-story building will house transit offices upstairs and commercial shops downstairs, including a restaurant. Galloway said the plan will next go out to bid, and then construction will begin.