



History of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

By Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Historical Development of Transit Services in Santa Cruz County

"Public transportation in Santa Cruz County began in 1875 with inauguration of a single horsecar line from the intersection of what is now North Pacific Avenue and Front Street to the beach via Chestnut Street.

"Steam trains were introduced to Santa Cruz County later in that same year, and electric streetcar service followed in the 1890's.

"By about 1920, the automobile began to replace electric cars as the predominant form of transportation. The first buses were introduced in Santa Cruz in 1924 and, only two years later, the last electric car lines were abandoned. Public transit in Santa Cruz continued to grow, reaching a peak in 1949. However, in the postwar years, ridership declined. Routes were shortened and fares increased. Finally, faced with losses of \$1,000 per month, the owners of Santa Cruz Transit offered to give the company to any responsible operator. For a time, the Cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola and the County of Santa Cruz underwrote the company's losses so that service could continue.

"In November 1968, County voters approved a transit district with taxing authority." [1](#)

"The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD) was formed in 1968 to provide improved public transportation in Santa Cruz, Capitola and Live Oak. The boundaries of the District were subsequently expanded to take in the major populated part of Santa Cruz County.

"In September 1970, the District contracted with Santa Cruz Transit Co. to operate its five local lines and the suburban route to Capitola, with the District making up operating losses by means of its taxing power. Six new General Motors coaches were ordered, and when these arrived in July 1971, the District took over operation of the routes. The original system included the old Mission Street, County Hospital, DeLaveaga Park, and Capitola routes, the new (1966) University line through-routed with Seabright-Beach, and two lines inaugurated by the District. The Cabrillo-Aptos line ran along Soquel Drive to Aptos, and the Natural Bridges route served the state park of the same name by way of Delaware Avenue.

"At the beginning of the university's winter quarter in 1973, an additional bus was added to the University-Seabright route nights and weekends. Saturday service was improved on the Mission Street and Capitola lines,

and Sunday service was operated on those routes for the first time in 18 years. Patronage on the University line was taxing the capacity of the small 33-passenger GM's, and three 45-passenger GM's were ordered. When they were delivered, the Aptos line was extended to La Selva Beach, ten miles from downtown Santa Cruz.

"In July 1973, Capitola service was rearranged with alternate routings and the County Hospital line was extended to Harvey West Blvd. A new King Street-Circles route augmented the Mission Street line in the West Cliff district. Morning and evening commute-hour service was improved on most lines in December. University service was reduced during the Christmas recess, but a 20-minute base headway was introduced with the beginning of the new school year.

"Local bus service in Watsonville had been operated by Watsonville Transit System, owned by trucker Charles Manfre, using several 1949 model GM coaches which later ended their days in Santa Cruz. Four lines were operated: Pajaro, East Lake, Freedom-Airport and Corralitos. Charles F. Hushbeck acquired the operation in 1954 and renamed it Watsonville Bus Lines. Despite a fare increase in spring 1955, continued losses caused Hushbeck to end the Corralitos line and cut back the Pajaro line in November 1956. Service to the Freedom area was increased in an effort to bolster riding on the system's heaviest line, but to no avail, and the service was abandoned altogether in December 1961.

"Service was restored to Watsonville in February 1974 by extension of the Cabrillo College-Aptos route and inauguration of two local lines, Airport and East Lake. The Aptos-La Selva Beach segment was turned into a shuttle. Two 30-foot GM's and two more 35-foot GM's were acquired for this service expansion. Hours of service were increased and weekend service was added on the Santa Cruz-Watsonville main line and local lines.

"Two 40-foot GM's were purchased in 1974 to help carry the ever-increasing loads on the University line. A new line extending 14 miles north of Santa Cruz was started to serve Scotts Valley, and the San Lorenzo Valley. January 1975 brought the system's first timetable folder, the assignment of new route numbers, and short-turn service between Santa Cruz and Aptos on the Watsonville line. In April 1975 the East Lake local line was extended from Watsonville across the river to Pajaro.

"Service was again revised and a new timetable issued in May 1975. Lines in Capitola-Soquel-Live Oak were extensively changed. Two through routes were broken into four local loop lines, connecting with a new 41st Avenue Express route operating hourly to downtown Santa Cruz. Capitola local routes got new equipment: two propane-powered 25-passenger Fleetwoods. The Seabright line was revised and a Laurel Street-Beach route was started serving the near slope of Mission Hill and the Municipal Wharf.

"Each new schedule change brought service improvements as public acceptance of the transit system increased. In September 1975, Santa Cruz-Aptos short-turn service was extended to Watsonville to accommodate increased ridership. A new local, the Pinto Lake route, was started in Watsonville. On the San Lorenzo Valley line, the Scotts Valley branch was extended to Burlwood and became a separate route, with the main line changed to operate non-stop to Scotts Valley via Highway 17. Two extensions from Boulder Creek reached Kings Creek Road via Highway 9 and Forest Pool via Big Basin Way, and a short leg to Felton was added.

"Capitola-Live Oak-Soquel services were again revised in January 1976, when the two Live Oak local lines were again extended to downtown Santa Cruz on the route of the 41st Avenue Express and were through-routed

with the University local line to provide a 15-minute headway. The two Capitola loop routes were then served by a single bus making alternate trips.

"Seven-day service began operating on all 22 routes in March 1976, and weekday night service was added to the University line on school days. The summer schedule added two new routes from downtown Santa Cruz to the northwest hills, looping via Western Drive to the university entrance. In September, two new weekday-only locals were started to link the Capitola Transit Center with Cabrillo College. The outer portion of the East Cliff line was replaced by a new Seabright via East Cliff service providing a more direct route to downtown Santa Cruz. The two existing Seabright routes were revised to terminate at a common loop at East Cliff & 7th Avenue.

"In June 1977, the transfer area at 41st & Capitola was moved across the street to the new sheltered waiting area in the recently completed Capitola Mall. Also, the six 35-foot GM's used on the University-41st Avenue-Live Oak service were equipped with traffic signal actuators to control the lights at Front & Soquel in downtown Santa Cruz to minimize delays.

"Parking is at a premium at the University during the school year and at the beaches in summer. In 1976, the District began the summertime use of excess equipment from University service to provide a beach shuttle. At first a free weekend line using the two Fleetwoods was started between parking lots in downtown Santa Cruz and the Boardwalk. The University's own open minibus tractor-trailer was borrowed to augment the Fleetwoods.

"Memorial Day weekend of 1977 brought the return of the free weekend shuttle, this time connecting Government Center parking lots with the beach via Pacific Garden Mall in downtown Santa Cruz. The line became a daily operation on June 27 and ran until Labor Day. In 1978, the dates were about the same, but bright rainbow bands were added below the windows of the Fleetwoods. New signs bearing maps and timetables were put up at shuttle stops along with rainbow insignia and a "Ride the Rainbow" slogan. A second free weekend shuttle service using one of the 30-foot GM's as started on July 1 to serve Capitola Beach from an unimproved parking lot near Highway 1.

"In another wave of major changes in September 1977, west side routes were revised, three new lines were added on the east side, service hours were extended, and through-routings were altered. Express service was begun on the University line, through-routed with Seabright. Revisions on the west side included replacing the former Natural Bridges and King Street-Circles routes with lines to Mission-De Anza Mobile Home Park, Mission-Natural Bridges, and Beach. The Laurel Street-Beach line was also discontinued, replaced in part by the new Beach line and in part by rerouting of the Western Drive lines.

"On the east side, new lines included the Cabrillo Night route to replace the Cabrillo College routes after 7:00 p.m. by operating over the A route westbound and the B route eastbound, and Portola-East Cliff and Santa Cruz Gardens, both of which connected previously unserved territory with the Capitola Mall.

"Service improvements planned for the Scotts Valley and San Lorenzo Valley lines could not be implemented in December 1977 because the scheduled delivery of six new AM General buses did not take place. While the buses were held at the factory for installation of wheelchair lifts, three buses were leased from Monterey to provide backup equipment for service improvements made in September. The AMG's finally arrived in February but were held out of service by continuing problems with the lifts. With April schedule changes

imminent and summer needs in sight, the three Monterey buses were returned in favor of seven buses leased from the Southern California Rapid Transit District, which ran through the summer in RTD paint.

"Improvements to the San Lorenzo Valley service were finally made in April 1978, with headways improved from 60 to 30 minutes between Santa Cruz and Boulder Creek. The line was split at this point, with one branch serving Felton and Kings Creek Road, and the other routed to Forest Pool with extensions to Boulder Creek Country Club and Big Basin.

"In June 1979, voters in Santa Cruz approved "Measure G," which changed the basis of transit support in Santa Cruz County from property tax to a 1/2-cent sales tax. Passage of this measure enabled the District to make a number of service improvements.

"That same year, the two transit systems serving the Monterey Bay region joined in the purchase of 34 advanced-design Flexibles. Monterey Peninsula Transit received 11 buses and Santa Cruz twenty-one 35-foot and two 40-foot buses, all with wheelchair lifts. The District also purchased six 13-passenger lift-equipped vans.

"New routes using the vans were begun June 1979 in rural areas previously unserved by public transit. Day routes to Davenport, Bonny Doon, Branciforte Drive, Glen Canyon and Old San Jose Road began operation on a two-hour headway, seven days per week.

"Three summer recreational routes began operating in May 1979. Two routes provided Park & Ride shuttle service to the Capitola Village and beach area, and one route operated between the Santa Cruz beach area and the Pacific Garden Mall.

"In March 1979, the District extended service hours on many routes to provide later evening service and earlier morning service. Hours for 11 routes were extended to 10:00 p.m. or later, and 11 routes received service extensions to 8:00 p.m. Nine routes received earlier morning service to encourage commuters to take the bus to work.

"In September 1979, three new routes were introduced to previously unserved rural areas in the San Lorenzo Valley. Route 33A-Lompico and 33B-Zayante began operation with two-hour headways while Route 34 served South Felton hourly. All routes operated until 8:00 p.m. seven days per week.

"In January 1980, a new route was started to provide service to Scotts Valley every 30 minutes. Route 36-Big Basin and Route 37-Bear Creek Estates were implemented to extend service north of Boulder Creek to San Lorenzo Park, Bear Creek Estates, and Big Basin State Park. The 41st Avenue Express was converted to a true non-stop express between downtown Santa Cruz and Capitola Mall during daytime hours improve connections with other buses.

"Extensive service improvements in March 1980 included renumbering of most routes to correspond to geographical areas: 1-29 -- Santa Cruz, 30-39 -- San Lorenzo Valley, 40-49 -- North Coast, 50-69 -- Mid-county, 70-79 -- South County.

"Three new routes were added in Watsonville for a total of six local routes. A new Santa Cruz-Watsonville route was added via Capitola Road to provide buses every 15 minutes between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Routes were also improved in Capitola, Soquel, Live Oak, and Santa Cruz, so that most urban areas in Santa Cruz County received bus service at least every 30 minutes.

"Following an extensive survey and public hearing, the District raised the base fare from 25 cents to 50 cents in November 1981 to maintain SCMTD's level of service as grant funds decreased. The senior/handicapped base fare was raised to 25 cents from 10 cents and the price of tickets and passes also increased.

"Also in Fall 1981, the District placed in service 15 new 35-foot Gillig Phantom buses, including four equipped with low-speed rear axles for routes serving the Santa Cruz Mountains.

"With the new fall 1981 schedule, peak-hour commuter-oriented services began, primarily on Route 30-Scotts Valley, Route 35-Boulder Creek, and Route 71-Watsonville via Soquel Drive. The additional trips on Route 71 ran only from Santa Cruz to Cabrillo College. Likewise, the new service on the Boulder Creek route was designed to provide additional trips between Felton and Boulder Creek, with some trips continuing to Santa Cruz." ²

"In 1981-82, to meet the District's goal of improving the efficiency (revenue/cost ratio) of transit operations, four productivity indicators, together with operational standards, were used to perform a route by route analysis of the three major service types - urban collector/express routes, urban local routes, and rural routes. Farebox recovery, passengers per hour, passengers per mile and a utilization ratio are the standards by which route performance was measured. Different values were created for each of the three service types. Staff focused on identifying, then streamlining and cutting back service on the most underutilized routes. Categorically, the underutilized service reductions were early morning and late evening runs." ³

"In January 1982, Santa Cruz County experienced its worst storms and floods in over 100 years. Half the Soquel Avenue bridge in downtown Santa Cruz was destroyed by the rising San Lorenzo River. Rural areas were hardest hit with serious road and bridge damage, particularly in the San Lorenzo Valley. SCMTD provided a bus offering emergency transportation to stranded San Lorenzo Valley residents. Bearing a makeshift Red Cross emblem, the bus proved a valuable asset to assist rescue crews in their evacuation efforts as people and supplies were transported over storm-ravaged roads.

"In the wake of the storms, bus service to many areas in the county was disrupted. While most routes were in service by Spring 1982, many storm-related detours affected South Felton, Branciforte, rural Soquel and the outlying areas surrounding Boulder Creek. The hardest hit area was Lompico, where mudslides closed Lompico Road, virtually isolating this rural community. Bus service to Lompico was not restored until the summer, nearly six months after the storms.

"In September 1982, in the face of diminishing federal and state operating subsidies, the District implemented several minor cutbacks of early and late runs with substandard ridership. Four bus trips prior to 7:00 a.m. were discontinued in Santa Cruz and Capitola. Twelve evening and night runs were discontinued on the 4-Harvey West, 5-DeLaveaga, 8-County Hospital, 31-Branciforte, and 65-Live Oak routes.

"Also implemented in the fall of 1982 were minor route and schedule changes in the San Lorenzo Valley. Routes 33A-Lompico and 33B-Zayante were combined into one route serving West Zayante Road and Lompico hourly, rather than every two hours. The Boulder Creek main line was pulled back from Boulder Creek Country Club to Forest Pool on weekdays to improve ontime performance. Local Boulder Creek routes (36 and 37) were rescheduled to depart at :15 and :45 to improve connections with the mainline Boulder Creek bus.

"Extensive service improvements were implemented in March 1983, primarily in South County and on the interurban lines. All routes in Watsonville and Freedom were revamped and, with the addition of one bus,

local service was provided within one quarter mile of the entire Watsonville urban area. The headway in the Aptos-La Selva Beach route was lowered from 60 to 30 minutes through deployment of additional buses.

"Route 70-Watsonville, inaugurated in March 1980, was discontinued in March 1983, and its service reallocated. Local service on this line between Cabrillo, Capitola, and Santa Cruz was replaced with the new Route 69B-Cabrillo. Local service on the heavily-traveled Capitola Road was increased to every 15 minutes. Express service formerly provided by Route 69 between Capitola and Santa Cruz was reduced from 15- to 30-minute service, but the route was extended to Watsonville. The new Route 93-Watsonville/Santa Cruz Express provided the first transcounty express service with only five in-route stops and 45-minute travel time. (A sixth stop was added later.)

"The University Express was converted to local service and its buses integrated into the regular schedule. Route 1-University now provides 7.5-minute service (eight buses per hour) between downtown Santa Cruz and the UCSC campus, the highest level of service in the county." ⁴

"In mid-1983, service reductions were made to increase productivity and reduce operating costs. Reductions focused on weekend service where frequencies were reduced and start times made later. Mid-day service on weekdays was also cut in Davenport, Branciforte and Boulder Creek. Other changes in 1983 were primarily small-scale routing adjustments. Route 75-Green Valley was extended to serve Wheelock and Casserly roads and the Route 93 Express began limited weekend service on a one-hour headway.

"In 1984, the Mesa village area in Watsonville was added to Route 75 Green Valley. Other significant changes included the addition of Route 38 Quail Hollow during the school-term to connect Zayante and South Felton with San Lorenzo Valley schools.

"Rural night service was added from Metro Center to Davenport and Bonny Doon, and also to Felton, Lompico and Zayante.

"Other changes in Fall 1984 added time on Mission Street and Western Drive routes, and added peak hour service on the University, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville routes.

"In Fall 1985, some late-night and early-morning trips were eliminated from routes serving Aptos/La Selva and Airport via Bay Village, which had low ridership. Commuter express service to the new Park and Ride lot on Soquel Drive at Highway 1 was postponed due to delays in releasing the lot by Caltrans.

"In Fall 1986, SCMTD learned that the State Transportation Assistance (STA) account had been de-funded, eliminating some \$551,000 in the District's operating assistance. The District met this budget shortfall by making reductions, including staffing. While SCMTD was able to preserve service levels, improvements on routes 1 and 30 scheduled for fall had to be abandoned.

"Other service changes, involving no added cost or a cost savings, were made as planned. Several early morning or late evening underused trips were eliminated on Routes 73-Airport, 77-and 78- Industrial, and 79-East Lake.

"The underused Route 60B-Soquel was eliminated and the time saved was redirected to provide service on 17th Avenue in Live Oak. Backup school-term service was adjusted on the Boulder Creek and University routes to provide maximum coverage during peak hours.

"In winter, running times were shortened on Western Drive and Mission routes. One trip of Route 8-County Hospital was dropped. Service in the Shady Oaks-Sunny Hills area of Watsonville was transferred from Route 75 to Route 74-Airport via Bay Village. Other changes included a new afternoon trip on Route 38-Quail Hollow and several timepoint changes.

"Extensive changes were made in Spring 1987 to departure times of routes serving San Lorenzo Valley schools. Several trips of Route 7-Beach were made wheelchair-accessible.

"Alternate hourly trips of Route 61A-Dominican Hospital were directed to serve new stops on the Dominican Hospital grounds, dropping service to the 7th Avenue-Rodriguez area. The direction of Route 61B-Dominican Hospital was reversed to serve the hospital via 41st Avenue and Soquel from Capitola Mall.

"In summer, service on East Cliff Drive between 30th and 41st was switched to Route 67 both inbound and outbound to improve schedule adherence on Route 68.

"Weekday service on Route 1 was removed from Walnut in summer beginning in 1987. The Beach route was changed to use Leibrandt Street year-round, rather than just during winter, and lift accessibility was increased on the route. Other changes in timepoints, etc. did not materially affect service.

"Changes in fall included deletion of two trips of Route 2-Western Drive. A night trip of Route 3B-Mission was diverted to serve Skills Center employees of Wrigleys. Some morning and evening service was curtailed on several routes serving Capitola and Soquel.

"In winter, service in Watsonville was completely rerouted. Local routes and schedules were changed to improve connections. Service on Route 71 increased to four trips hourly during the day and school-term-only service from Metro Center to Cabrillo was eliminated.

"Service was reduced on a few routes for improved productivity and lower operating costs. Deletions included some service on Route 3A-Mission, Routes 31-El Rancho and 32-Glen Canyon, and Swanton Road school-term service on Route 40-Davenport. Early morning and late evening service on Route 54A-Aptos/La Selva was curtailed and minor routing changes were also made.

"In Spring 1988, service connecting the University directly with West Santa Cruz was begin [sic] experimentally. Service on Route 35-Boulder Creek was extended, with one trip from Felton Fair to Metro Center in the evening, and a morning trip from Mountain Store to Felton Fair for White Oak Continuation School students.

"Minor changes were made in summer to timepoints on routes serving Zayante, Davenport, 41st Avenue, Cabrillo, and Corralitos. Route 8 was renamed to "Emeline." Route 33-Zayante reverted to its former routing of East Zayante outbound and West Zayante inbound.

"One weekend trip of Route 36-Highway 9 North was deleted.

"In the fall of 1988, the District found itself facing rising operating costs and declining state and federal funds. The District found it necessary to increase its base fare in September. It was the first fare increase since 1981. Base fare was increased from fifty to sixty cents, with corresponding increases in other fare categories.

"To reduce costs, SCMTD changed from a system of four to three service changes per year. (No service changes were made at the winter bid.) The experimental service direct to campus from west Santa Cruz was made a permanent route named 11-UC/Westside.

"Minor changes that fall included elimination of some weekend trips on Routes 33, 34, and 35, and re-routing of Route 69C-Cabrillo through Capitola Village at night.

"In the spring of 1989, extensive changes were made.

"The District took delivery of 25 lift-equipped New Flyer buses, allowing it to increase accessible service on many routes.

"Eighteen trips were added to University service, reducing average school-term headways to five minutes during the day, and a late-night 12:45a.m. trip was added both weekday and weekend during school-term months.

"Route 3A-Mission service was extended to weekends. The route also began serving the Lighthouse Loop in West Santa Cruz, which had previously been served by Route 7-Beach. There were minor trip cuts on routes 3B and 3C Mission.

"Route 5-DeLaveaga was changed so that only two morning and two afternoon trips would be made to Harbor High School. Other trips on the route loop through the Prospect Heights neighborhood.

"Running time on Route 6-Seabright was extended to 30 minutes, and all trips were routed to serve Community Hospital.

"A 12:15 a.m. trip was added to Route 7N-Beach night.

"A new Route 12-UC/Yacht Harbor Direct was initiated to link campus with the yacht harbor district in Live Oak.

"Routes 31-El Rancho and 32-Glen Canyon were replaced by new routes 23 and 24, linking Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley via El Rancho and Glen Canyon roads. Service to the Burlwood-Navarra area previously served by routes 31 and 32 was given to new Scotts Valley routes.

"Three new routes to Scotts Valley replaced the old Route 30. Route 25 traveled on Highway 17 outbound and Graham Hill Road inbound. Route 26 traveled in the reverse direction. Some trips of both routes served the Vine Hill and Burlwood loops. Nighttime service (Route 27) operated on the old routing.

"Minor trip deletions were made in 35-Boulder Creek.

"In Capitola, Route 56-Depot Hill was changed to serve the Jewel Box area inbound only, while adding service to the new post office in Capitola; and running time was extended to 35 minutes. Running time of Route 57-Capitola/Soquel was extended to 30 minutes. Route 58-Park Avenue was changed to serve Jade Loop outbound only, and to serve the new Capitola post office.

"Running time of Route 60-Soquel was extended to 30 minutes. Route 61A was renamed Route 61-Dominican, given a 30-minute running time, and re-routed to serve both the Paul Minnie loop and Dominican Hospital on all trips.

"Running time on all four Live Oak routes was extended to 35 minutes in both directions during the day while remaining at 25 minutes at night.

"A new Route 78-Harkins Slough, running weekdays only, was begun to serve the labor camp at Tierra Alta.

"In the summer of 1989, Routes 3B and 3C-Mission were changed to use weekday routing all week. Four trips each during midday were deleted from Routes 25 and 26 Scotts Valley. Minor timepoint changes were made in Live Oak routes and in Route 69C Cabrillo.

"As federal and state revenues continued to decline, the District found it necessary to increase the base fare in September 1989 from \$.60 to \$.75.

"In October 1989, the entire region was struck with an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1. The earthquake wiped out many roads and bridges, as well as the two major state highways (1 and 17) leading into Santa Cruz County. Transit operations personnel stayed on the job in the hours and days following the earthquake, and emergency service and detours were set up so that county residents could continue to have access to transportation.

"Emergency bus service over Highway 17 was begun, through the joint efforts of SCMTD and Santa Clara Transit.

"One year after the earthquake, most bus routes had returned to normal, as bridges were rebuilt and roads repaired.

"However, the District continued to experience financial problems. The problems caused by declining federal and state revenues were exacerbated by a decrease in revenue from the local sales tax. Local sales tax revenue comprises 50% of the District's operating budget, and when the downtown shopping areas in Santa Cruz and Watsonville were devastated by the earthquake, sales tax revenues dropped.

"In March 1990, the District was forced to raise the base fare to \$1.00, cut expenses, and lay off managerial, administrative, and operations personnel. In December 1990, the District reduced its service by 28%. In order to accomplish this service reduction, the District hired ATE Management and Service Company, Inc. to study the system and propose a redesign that would reduce service by the required amount.

"Almost every route in the system was affected by the redesign. Some routes were completely eliminated, and some were extensively rerouted. In many cases, headways (the time between buses) was increased. On many routes, the daily span of service (hours of operation) was decreased.

"After the route reductions of December 1990 were implemented, the District has implemented minor route changes in the West Side of Santa Cruz, and on Route 6 Seabright, in order to better serve residents of two residential facilities for seniors and people with disabilities.

"In 1991, only minor service adjustments were made to the schedule to fine-tune the major service redesign that was implemented in 1990.

"In 1992, only minor timepoint adjustments were made to the schedule. No significant service additions or deletions were made to the District's directly-operated service. A few trips were added to the Highway 17 Express Service, and routing was extended to a Park and Ride lot in San Jose.

"In 1993, only minor adjustments were made to the schedule for fixed-route service. However, in 1993 the District began to operate paratransit service according to the regulations of the Americans With Disabilities Act. The District contracts with CTSA, Inc., a non-profit transportation service provider, to provide a coordinated paratransit program. CTSA in turn contracts with private taxi operators, to provide service in addition to CTSA's.

"In 1994, two commuter express routes, Route 20 Aptos/Scotts Valley and 21 Westside/Scotts Valley were added on an experimental basis, with funding from the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. Commuter service was also added in the San Lorenzo Valley, the Harvey West Industrial Area, Santa Cruz and Watsonville.

"In 1995-96, Route 12 University Direct was added. This route was initially funded by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District. When the funding expired, the route was so successful and carried such high ridership levels that the service was continued at District expense. Routes 20 and 21, on the other hand, failed to develop high levels of ridership, and those routes were discontinued." [5](#)

Appendix with tables showing service changes and ridership totals

TABLE I-1 [from FY 1984-1988]

MAJOR SERVICE CHANGES FY 71-72 through FY 81-82

1971	Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District took over actual operations of bus service in Santa Cruz County. Eight routes served Santa Cruz, Live Oak, Capitola, UCSC and Cabrillo College.
1973	Weekend and Evening Service on three lines.
1973	Aptos - Rio del Mar and La Selva Beach were annexed to SCMTD.
1974	Freedom area was annexed to the District.
1974	Watsonville was annexed to the District. New Service: Airport, East Lake Blvd. and San Lorenzo Valley.
1975	New Service: Pinto Lake, 41st Avenue Express. Service Extensions on 3 lines. Service Revisions on the Capitola, Soquel, Live Oak, Seabright and Santa Cruz - Aptos - Watsonville routes, Boulder Creek to Felton and Kings Center.
1975	San Lorenzo and Scotts Valley areas were annexed to the District.
1976	Seven day services on all 22 routes. Weekday Night Services on the University route. New Service: Santa Cruz T.C. to the Upper Westside area and Western Drive; Seabright via East Cliff Drive; and Summer Beach Shuttles.
1977	Capitola Transit Center moved to Capitola Mall. Major revisions: Westside of Santa Cruz; 3 new lines on the Eastside of Santa Cruz; service hours extended on several routes; Cabrillo night service. Express Service on the University line.
1978	Corralitos was annexed to SCMTD.
1978	Service Improvements: Service to Felton and Big Basin.
1979	Service Extensions: Bonny Doon, Año Nuevo, Davenport, Lompico, Zayante, Glen Canyon, Branciforte Drive, County Hospital, Soquel. Extended Hours on eleven routes. Special Service: Capitola, Santa Cruz Beach Shuttles.

1980	New Service: Local Boulder Creek routes; 41st Avenue Express, Watsonville via Capitola; Watsonville, Capitola and Live Oak areas.
1981	New Service: San Andreas route. Special Service: Live Oak Shuttle.
1981	Additional Service: Peak hour backup service during the school term, Monday through Friday on: Route 30, Scotts Valley Route 35, Boulder Creek Route 36, Highway 9, North Route 70, Watsonville via Capitola Road Route 71, Watsonville via Soquel Drive" ¹

SCMTD's ridership has more than doubled from FY 1977-78 to FY 1986-87, increasing by 101 per cent from approximately 4.3 million to 8.5 million passengers (unlinked). The largest increase (52 per cent) occurred between FY 1977-78 and FY 1978-79 in conjunction with the passage of a transit sales tax and major service expansion.

**TABLE I-2 [Table I-1 from FY 1989-1993]
SCMTD RIDERSHIP 1977-1987**

Fiscal Year	Revenue Passengers (linked)	Total Passengers (unlinked)	Per cent Change
1986-87	6,422,784	8,542,303	-1.4
1985-86	6,510,876	8,659,465	+5.3
1984-85	6,180,746	8,220,392	+5.0
1983-84	5,888,620	7,851,493	-7.7
1982-83	6,373,988	8,502,251	-2.9
1981-82	6,628,953	8,759,310	+4.2
1980-81	6,364,457	8,407,448	+4.6
1979-80	6,084,917	8,038,175	+24.1
1978-79	5,215,902	6,479,608	+52.5
1977-78	3,400,000	4,250,000	---

The ridership decline in 1982-83 and 1983-84 was probably due to elimination of Live Oak and Santa Cruz beach shuttles (the Santa Cruz Beach shuttle was reinstated in 1985), a recessionary economy, lower fuel costs, the 1981 fare increase, service reductions, and declining ridership counts from Cabrillo College and UCSC.

"However, ridership levels since 1984-85 have generally shown steady gains, probably due to easing recessionary influences, intensified marketing efforts, and service improvements. The slight decline in FY 1986-87 may be due to cutbacks in underused routes made in the fall of 1986." [2](#)

"Ridership:

"In the past, the District calculated ridership based on a complex formula derived from passenger revenues received, and the number and types of passes sold. The formula contained assumptions about the number of times that each pass would be used.

"In 1988, The District changed its fare structure. In doing so, the assumptions about ridership levels based on the old revenue based formula were no longer completely accurate.

"Beginning with FY 1988-89, the differentiation between linked and unlinked trips has been dropped. It is no longer possible to accurately estimate the relationship between lined and unlinked trips. Comparisons between years prior to 1988 and years after 1989 should not be made because ridership was derived using a formula for years before 1988.

"Starting with ridership data for FY 1992-93, ridership is estimated using an average fare per passenger, divided into passenger revenue. This average fare figure was determined using a statistically valid sampling technique done once every five years as required by the Federal Transit Administration. This average fare per passenger figure is accurate only for the time that the current fare structure is in effect. Therefore, ridership for 1992 and prior years cannot be recalculated because a different fare structure was in effect. Although it appears that a 5.4% ridership increase has occurred, it is likely that ridership was actually undercounted prior to 1993.

"Ridership for the District's regular, fixed route service is listed below, along with a table showing ridership on the Highway 17 Express Service, which is operated under a joint powers agreement with Santa Clara Transit. A new table has been added showing ridership on the ADA Paratransit Program.

**TABLE I-3 [Table I-1 from FY 1997-2001]
SCMTD RIDERSHIP - Intra-County Service, Fixed-Route**

Fiscal Year	Revenue	Passenger Trips	Percentage Change
1995-96	N/A	6,638,512	+0.1%
1994-95	N/A	6,631,042	+1.8%
1993-94	N/A	6,512,168	+0.3%
1992-93	N/A	6,490,438	+5.4%
1991-92	N/A	6,159,576	-5.1%
1990-91	N/A	6,488,888	-4.0%

1989-90	N/A	6,759,427	-6.0%
1988-89	N/A	7,188,778	N/A
1987-88	6,530,113		+1.7%
1986-87	6,422,784		-1.4%
1985-86	6,510,876		+5.3%
1984-85	6,180,746		+5.0%
1983-84	5,888,620		-7.6%
1982-83	6,376,688		-3.8%
1981-82	6,628,953		+4.2%
1980-81	6,364,457		+4.6%
1979-80	6,084,917		+16.7%
1978-79	5,215,902		+53.4%
1977-78	3,400,000		

**Table I-4 [Table I-2 from FY 1997-2001]
Highway 17 Express Ridership**

Fiscal Year Passenger Trips Percentage Change

1995-96	177,611	+0.9%
1994-95	175,964	+3.2%
1993-94	170,556	+4.3%
1992-93	163,453	+2.3%
1991-92	159,777	-6.9%
1990-91	171,581	N/A

Table I-5 [Table I-3 from FY 1997-2001]

Paratransit Program Ridership

Fiscal Year Passenger Trips Percentage Change

1995-96	37,814	+32.6%
1994-95	28,516	+65.3%
1993-94	17,250	+120.0%
1992-93	7,840	N/A" ³

Footnotes

¹ Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan Updates*: Fiscal Years 1984-1988, p. I-1.

² Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan Updates*: Fiscal Years 1989-1993, pp. I-1 - I-5.

³ Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan Updates*: Fiscal Years 1984-1988, p. I-2.

⁴ Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan Updates*: Fiscal Years 1989-1993, pp. I-5 - I-6.

⁵ Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan*: Fiscal Years 1997-2001, pp. I-5 - I-11.

Source

Excerpted from: Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan Updates*: Fiscal Years 1984-1988, 1989-1993 and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District. *Short Range Transit Plan*: Fiscal Years 1997-2001.

It is the library's intent to provide accurate information, however, it is not possible for the library to completely verify the accuracy of all information. If you believe that factual statements in a local history article are incorrect and can provide documentation, please contact the library.