



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)  
CAPITAL PROJECTS STANDING COMMITTEE AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 7, 2018 – 1:00PM  
METRO ADMIN OFFICES  
110 VERNON STREET  
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060**

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**MEETING TIME: 1:00PM**

NOTE: THE COMMITTEE CHAIR MAY TAKE ITEMS OUT OF ORDER

- 1 CALL TO ORDER**
- 2 ROLL CALL**
- 3 ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM AGENDA / ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS**

**4 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CAPITAL PROJECTS  
STANDING COMMITTEE**

This time is set aside for Directors and members of the general public to address any item not on the Agenda, but which is within the matter jurisdiction of the Committee. Each member of the public appearing at a Committee meeting shall be limited to three minutes in his or her presentation, unless the Chair, at his or her discretion, permits further remarks to be made. Any person addressing the Committee may submit written statements, petitions or other documents to complement his or her presentation. When addressing the Committee, the individual may, but is not required to, provide his/her name and address in an audible tone for the record.

**5 UPDATE ON PACIFIC STATION RELATED STUDIES**

Barrow Emerson, Planning and Development Director

**6 ADJOURNMENT**

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**DATE:** December 7, 2018  
**TO:** Capital Projects Standing Committee  
**FROM:** Barrow Emerson, Planning & Development Director  
**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PACIFIC STATION RELATED STUDIES**

## **I. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

**That the Capital Projects Committee receive a presentation and recommend to the full Board that they:**

- A) Hold in abeyance decisions about moving forward with detailed planning activities until summer 2019, pending completion of studies that will identify possible METRO financial responsibilities related to the station; and,**
- B) Recommend to the City of Santa Cruz that they preserve the opportunity for a right turn pocket from Front Street to Laurel Street for UCSC bound buses.**

## **II. SUMMARY**

- To further understand the opportunities related to future Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) operations in downtown Santa Cruz, METRO, in conjunction with the City of Santa Cruz (City), recently contracted for two separate consultant engagements.
- The *Downtown Transit Operations Analysis* reviewed the overall strategic approach to providing METRO bus service in downtown Santa Cruz to identify whether there were opportunities for additional operating efficiencies and improved customer convenience.
  - The study determined that the current route structure and number of routes operating in downtown were appropriate and that an off-street facility is the most efficient way to operate.
  - In addition, the study suggested that METRO needs 22-24 bays at Pacific Station.
  - The study also noted that there is no additional bay consolidation opportunity with the introduction of Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL).
- The *Conceptual Layout Drawings* exercise developed concepts that suggest that 24-26 bays could possibly be accommodated on the expanded site (including the NIAC building and City-owned parking lot on Pacific Avenue), including possible bays immediately adjacent to the station on Front Street. Further detailed findings from this exercise are noted in Section III: Discussion/Background.

- Pending a viable project funding package, METRO staff may in the future recommend pursuing a 24-bay (minimum) facility, acknowledging the future uncertainties related to Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), electric bus charging, the ongoing ability to have the current on-street bay on Pacific Avenue, and the potential for METRO to host current and future private inter-city transit services at Pacific Station.

#### Next Steps

- METRO and the City met recently to discuss the financial viability of a redevelopment of this site. The City has indicated that, based on square footage available for development and accommodating METRO's spatial needs for ancillary uses, there is an upwards of a \$10 million shortfall to make the project market viable, which the City is unable to fund.
- METRO's capacity to contribute to the global project is limited to METRO-owned land and the \$1.5 million in PTMISEA funding that METRO currently has on hand. METRO's current position is that every bus-eligible capital dollar should continue to be programmed towards replacing the approximately 60 buses that have reached the end of their useful life.
  - However, METRO is aware that it may have additional financial responsibilities related to Pacific Station, as noted in Section III: Discussion/Background that might impact capital funding priorities.

METRO and the City recommend, rather than abandon the redevelopment concept at this time, that decisions on the path forward be held in abeyance until the summer of 2019 when the above three issues are resolved and the cost and timing of any required improvements and/or mitigations are more certain.

#### Pacific Avenue Access/Egress for METRO Buses

Staff requests that the Capital Projects Committee recommend that the METRO Board, in order to preserve the future potential for METRO buses to utilize Front Street to Laurel Street to access UCSC rather than via Pacific Avenue, encourage the City to review the potential for a right turn pocket at this location as a condition of plan approval for the current proposed project at this location.

### **III. DISCUSSION/BACKGROUND**

METRO and the City of Santa Cruz have been working together since 2001 to identify the best long term plan for METRO operations in downtown Santa Cruz, including services and facilities. Redevelopment of the Pacific Station site has been discussed, as there are rehabilitation activities under consideration by METRO and there are City interests in urban revitalization in downtown Santa Cruz.

To further understand the opportunities related to future METRO operations in downtown Santa Cruz, METRO, in conjunction with the City, contracted for two separate consultant engagements:

*Downtown Transit Operations Analysis*

This study reviewed the overall strategic approach to providing METRO bus service in downtown Santa Cruz and provided an analysis of our operating protocols to identify whether there were opportunities for operating efficiencies and improved customer convenience. This analysis was intended to answer four key questions. The questions and their answers are summarized below.

- *Do all bus routes that currently serve downtown need to serve downtown?* The answer is yes. UCSC students form a compact commuter shed, with over 70 percent living west of the San Lorenzo River according to UCSC data. The number of students living elsewhere is not sufficient to justify a route to UCSC that bypasses downtown. Pacific Station is also a logical terminus for longer routes serving south county locations.
- *Are there efficient and effective ways to serve downtown other than with a single major transit center?* The study has confirmed that an off-street hub operation in downtown Santa Cruz is the most effective option to provide bus service given the origins and destinations METRO serves. There is no workable alternative in Santa Cruz. Typical alternatives are multiple transit centers at the edges of downtown connected by a very frequent shuttle and on-street “super-stops.” Denver is an example of multiple transit centers connected by a free shuttle on a downtown transit mall that operates every five minutes, but its downtown is orders of magnitude larger than downtown Santa Cruz, making the expense of a frequent shuttle difficult to justify. On-street “super-stops” are rare in downtowns because of the impact on parking availability.
- *Is an off-street terminal needed and what is its appropriate size?* The answer is yes; an off-street terminal is needed. Off-street terminals are common in downtowns similar to Santa Cruz, as shown by the peer analysis. Based on existing schedules and changes to where certain buses hold over, this analysis recommends 22-24 bays in Pacific Station, including 14 active bays, 4-6 bays for holdover buses and 4 bays for future system growth.
- *Can AVL technology facilitate “hot-berthing” and thus reduce the number of required bays?* The answer is no. AVL is unlikely to help with hot-berthing for two reasons: (1) METRO already does hot-berthing within lanes 1 and 4 today; and, (2) extending this concept to include all lanes would force passengers to cross lanes and create unnecessary safety hazards.

### Conceptual Layout Drawings

This exercise developed three alternative concepts to determine the feasibility of various numbers of bays considering various retail/commercial/residential development footprints. (See Attachment A.) One of the three concepts, Alternative 2, could only accommodate 19 bus bays and is considered not viable. The other two (Alternatives 2 and 3) identified 24-26 bays that could possibly be accommodated on the expanded site (including the NIAC building and the City-owned parking lot on Pacific Avenue). The 26-bay concept assumes three bays on Front Street.

- These concepts show that, in general, the expanded footprint could possibly accommodate METRO's needs. Having said that, there are significant operational features of the initial concepts that present concerns and that would need to be examined further.
- In addition, as both parties acknowledged at the start of the project, the layout study addresses only the bus operations of the station, and METRO's ancillary operations-related functions must also be accommodated. These include, but are not limited to, Customer Services and call center operations; ParaCruz and ADA functions, Greyhound ticketing and baggage storage; operators' break room and restroom facility, the security office, employee parking, and non-revenue vehicle and private delivery parking.
- Additionally, METRO currently leases a number of food-related retail sites to private vendors. The revenue these sites generate is important for the agency.

Given the encouraging results of these two studies, it seems that a 24-bay plan, building on the concepts developed in the *Conceptual Layout Drawings*, could potentially meet the goals of both the City and METRO; acknowledging the future uncertainties related to:

- Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) deployment,
- Electric bus charging,
- The ongoing ability to have the current on-street two-bus bay on Pacific Avenue; and,
- The potential for METRO to host current and future private inter-city transit services at Pacific Station.

### Next Steps

Since METRO has limited staff and funding resources available for this project, it is important that the City to identify whether or not a turnkey redevelopment concept is financially viable (Phase II) before expending additional METRO staff and funding resources on Phase III activities identified below.

As we know, the City and METRO invested almost \$1 million in public funds, not including tens of thousands of dollars in staff time, on the 2000 - 2014 exercise

without a preliminary funding plan for the future transit oriented development (TOD). Given the past history of this project, staff does not recommend proceeding with further expenditures of public funds based on the hope that the City/METRO will receive state and/or federal grant funds or that a speculative public/private partnership will achieve the shared goals of the City and METRO.

To initiate Phase II activities, METRO and the City met recently to discuss the financial viability of a redevelopment of this site including commercial, retail, and residential along with the MERO transit center. The City has indicated that, based on square footage available for development and accommodating METRO's spatial needs for ancillary uses, there is upwards of a \$10 million shortfall to making the project market viable, which the City is unable to fund.

As discussed in the past, METRO's contribution to the global project needs to be limited to METRO-owned land and the \$1.5 million in PTMISEA funds that METRO currently has on hand. METRO's current position is that every bus-eligible capital dollar should continue to be programmed towards replacing the approximately 60 buses that have reached the end of their useful life.

However, METRO is aware that it may have additional financial responsibilities related to Pacific Station that might impact funding priorities, including:

- METRO has building rehabilitation responsibilities given that there is staff and public using a building with water leaks, dry rot, and termites.
- METRO is currently awaiting a response from the County of Santa Cruz on recent environmental analyses related to potential ground contamination conditions at the station. It is not known at this time whether METRO will have any short term responsibilities for mitigation activities.
- Due to pavement conditions in the layover lot (Greyhound), METRO needs to pursue rehabilitation of this area.

METRO and the City recommend, rather than abandon the concept at this time, that decisions on the path forward be held in abeyance until the summer of 2019 when the above three issues are resolved and the cost and timing of any required improvements and/or mitigations are more certain.

If, at that time, the City and METRO concur, and are ready to proceed further, there are a number of additional analyses needed (Phase III) to determine whether there is viable path to a station redevelopment project, including:

- Accommodation of METRO ancillary facility needs, and
- Lease revenue replacement, and
- Operations analysis to determine:
  - How the existing METRO routes could be distributed among the bays in a way that is customer friendly and safe, and

- Station ingress and egress to various destinations, and
- Potential safety concerns related to egress onto Pacific Avenue, and
- Potential operational limitations related to right turn movements from Front Street to Laurel Street, and
- Potential costs related to added runtime for various ingress/egress options, and
- Development of an operationally feasible plan for bus downtown bus operations during project construction, and
- Opportunities available for METRO scheduling with the integration of AVL technology, and
- Integration of electric vehicles and their charging requirements, and
- Confirming the reasonable depth of a commercial/retail/housing parcel along Pacific Avenue towards Front Street for a financially feasible City-sponsored development opportunity, without diminishing METRO's operational needs for a 24 bay bus terminal.

#### Pacific Avenue Access/Egress for METRO Buses

Among the major issues at hand in the various concept alternatives is whether METRO buses can access/egress the site via Pacific Avenue. Currently all UCSC services utilize Pacific Avenue because buses cannot geometrically/physically make the right turn from Front Street to Laurel Street when headed towards the UCSC campus. METRO understands that the City would like to maximize Pacific-Avenue-facing development, which would potentially be impacted or reduced by buses accessing/egressing the station. The potential solution would be to provide a right-turn pocket with supportive signal phasing and lane striping at Laurel Street for buses leaving the station on Front Street and headed for UCSC via Laurel Street.

METRO is aware that the City is currently reviewing development plans for this intersection. In order to preserve the future potential for METRO buses that might no longer access or egress on Pacific Avenue, to utilize Front Street to Laurel street to access UCSC, METRO staff requests that the Capital Projects Committee recommend to the Board that it encourage the City to review the potential for a right turn pocket as a condition of plan approval for the current proposed project at this intersection.

#### **IV. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS/IMPACT**

These two consultant engagements have cost approximately \$80,000 shared equally between METRO and the City. Further planning and analysis would cost an as yet undetermined amount of funding along with significant METRO staff time. To support METRO's portion of these contracts, a budget of \$50,000 was



included in the Planning Department's FY19 Professional/Technical Service (503031) Operating Budget.

**V. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

If it is decided not to move forward with further analysis, METRO would commit its remaining PTMISEA funding to rehabilitation of the existing station. This would not meet the METRO and City interests in possible redevelopment of the existing station and preclude participation in the urban revitalization of downtown Santa Cruz.

**VI. ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Conceptual Layout Drawing Alternatives 1-3


Prepared by: Barrow Emerson, Planning & Development Director

**VII. APPROVALS:**

Barrow Emerson  
Planning & Development Director

  
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Approved as to fiscal impact:  
Angela Aitken, CFO

  
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Alex Clifford, CEO/General Manager

  
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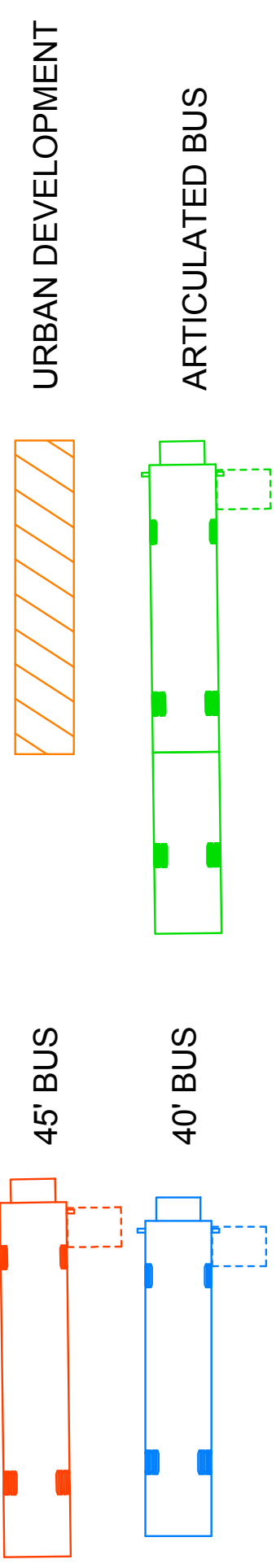
FRONT St.

PACIFIC Ave.



VEHICLE COUNT	
40' BUS	18
45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>

SCALE: 1" = 20'  
 DATE: OCTOBER 2018  
 FILE:



**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
 SANTA CRUZ METRO  
 ALTERNATIVE 1





VEHICLE COUNT	
40' BUS	18
45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
TOTAL	26

— BUS MOVEMENT  
— IMPAIRED BUS MOVEMENT  
 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SCALE: 1" = 20'  
 DATE: OCTOBER 2018  
 FILE:

**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
 SANTA CRUZ METRO  
 ALTERNATIVE 1



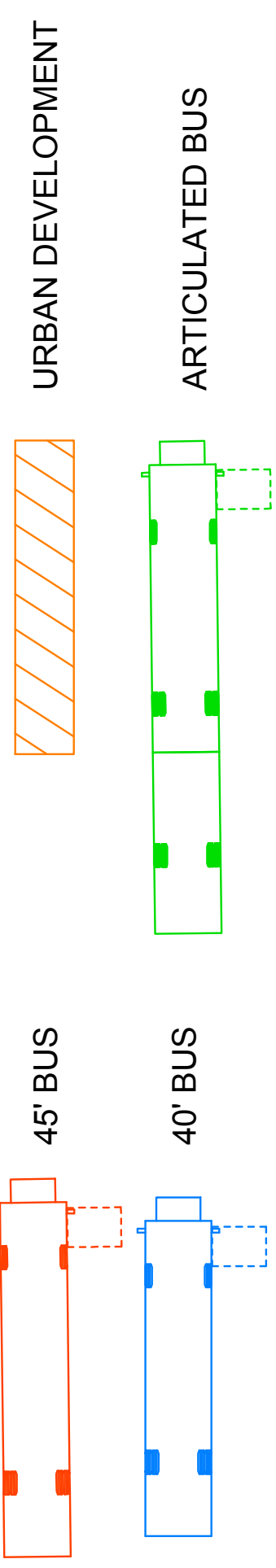
FRONT St.

PACIFIC Ave.



VEHICLE COUNT	
40' BUS	11
45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

SCALE: 1" = 20'  
 DATE: OCTOBER 2018  
 FILE:



**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
 SANTA CRUZ METRO  
 ALTERNATIVE 2





FRONT St.

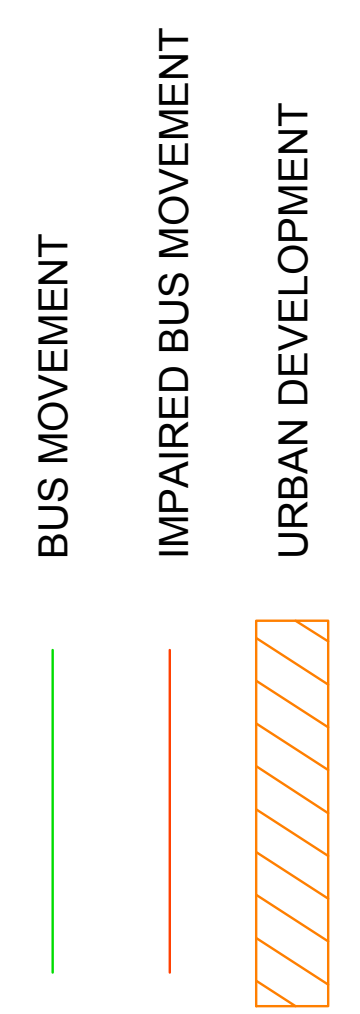
PACIFIC Ave.



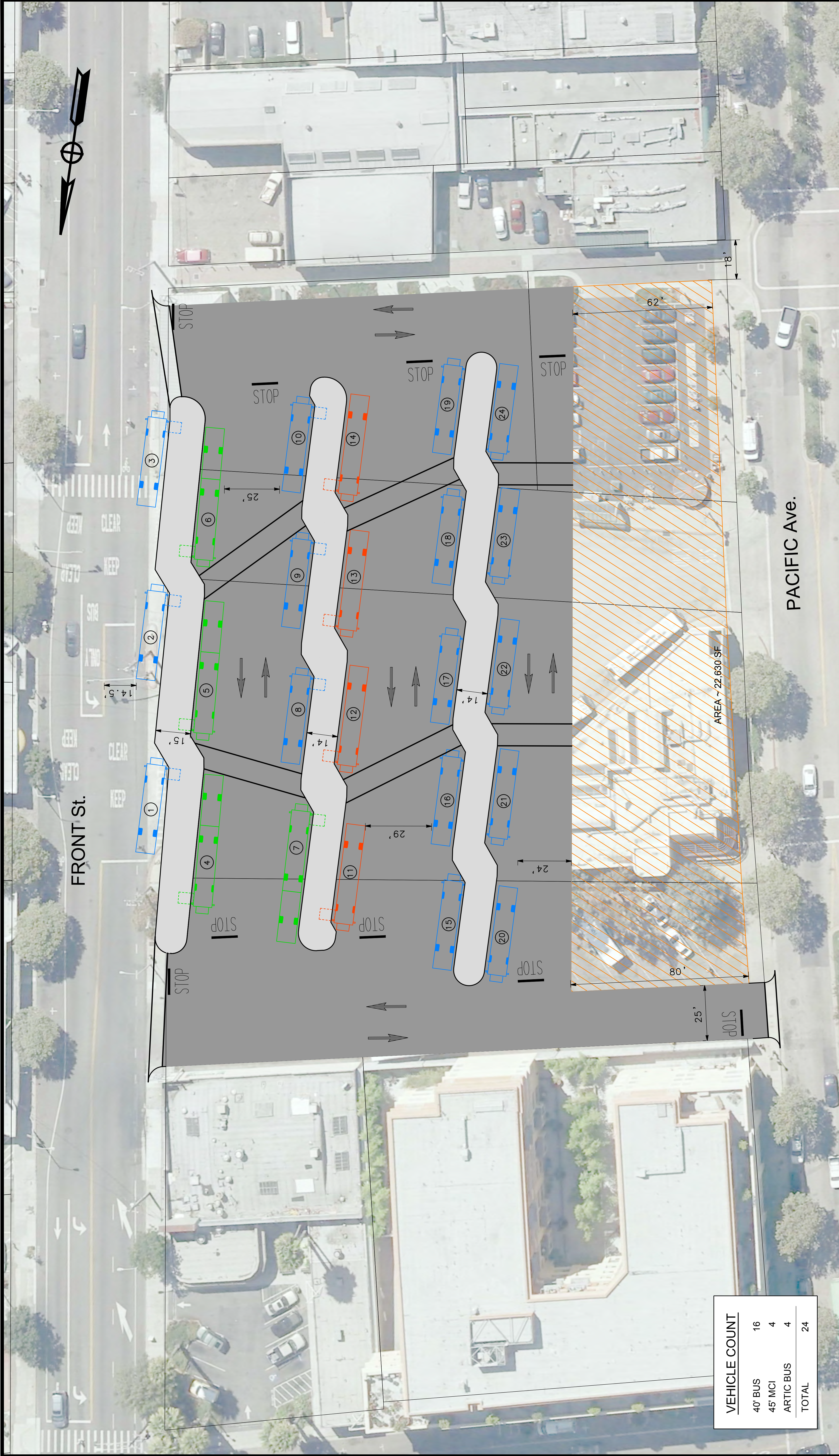
VEHICLE COUNT	
40' BUS	11
45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
TOTAL	19



**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
 SANTA CRUZ METRO  
 ALTERNATIVE 2

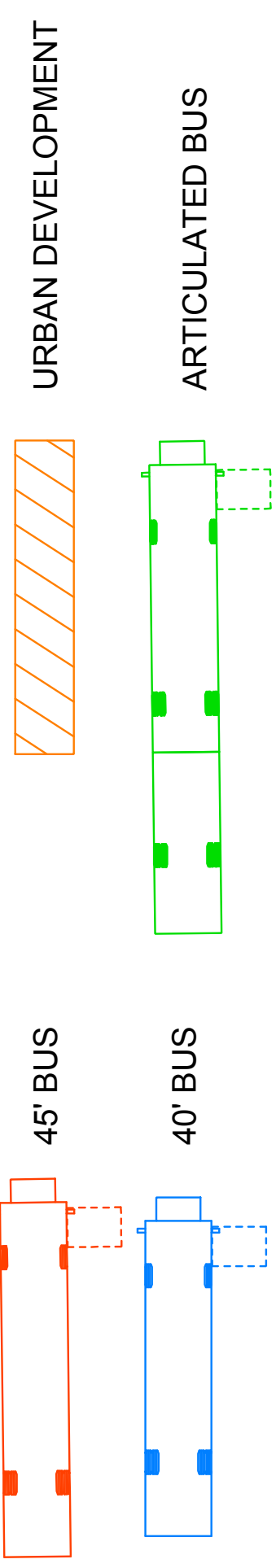


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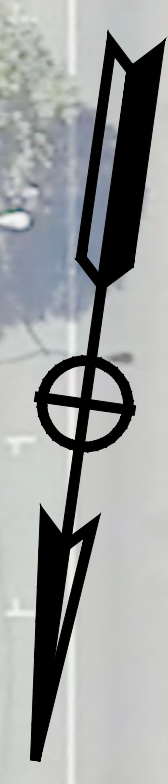
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45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
TOTAL	24

SCALE: 1" = 20'  
 DATE: OCTOBER 2018  
 FILE:



**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
 SANTA CRUZ METRO  
 ALTERNATIVE 3





FRONT St.

PACIFIC Ave.

AREA ~ 22,630 SF

VEHICLE COUNT	
40' BUS	16
45' MCI	4
ARTIC BUS	4
TOTAL	24



**DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER**  
SANTA CRUZ METRO  
ALTERNATIVE 3

- BUS MOVEMENT
- IMPAIRED BUS MOVEMENT
- URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SCALE: 1" = 20'  
DATE: OCTOBER 2018  
FILE: