

# Caltrain Business Plan

COVID RECOVERY  
PLANNING

UPDATE ON SERVICE  
RESTORATION

June 23, 2021



# Ongoing Recovery Planning Efforts

Caltrain has pivoted its Business Plan effort to focus on COVID-19 Recovery planning. This work is spread across multiple streams as shown on the right

Caltrain staff will engage regularly with the Board, stakeholders and the public as recovery planning proceeds over the next several months



**Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, & Growth Framework**

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**Near Term Service Planning**

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**Financial Analysis**

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**Scenario Planning**

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Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, & Growth Framework



**Near Term Service Planning**



Financial Analysis



Scenario Planning

# Context & Background

# Pre-Pandemic Caltrain Service



Caltrain's pre-pandemic service amplified its most successful markets, but restricted greater diversity of riders and travel behavior.



Highly tailored to pre-COVID office schedules



20 different stopping patterns



Inconsistent BART connections



Infrequent midday and evening service

**Northbound - WEEKDAY SERVICE to SAN FRANCISCO**

100 Local    200 Limited    300 Baby Bullet

Train No.	101	103	305	207	309	211	313	215	217	319	221	323	225	227	329	231	233	135	237	139	143	NORTHBOUND	147	151	155		
Gilroy									6:06		6:28			7:06								AM					
San Martin	AM								6:15		6:37			7:15								AM					
Morgan Hill									6:21		6:43			7:21										PM			
Blossom Hill									6:36		6:58			7:36													
Capitol									6:42		7:04			7:42													
Tamien		4:55		5:51	5:56				6:50	6:56	7:15			7:53	7:59		8:28			9:37							
San Jose Diridon	4:28	5:03	5:45	5:59	6:04	6:23	6:49	6:54	6:59	7:04	7:23	7:49	7:54	7:59	8:04	8:23	8:39	9:13	9:50	10:13	10:13				12:13	1:13	2:13
College Park														8:03													
Santa Clara	4:33	5:08		6:06		6:28			7:06		7:28			8:08		8:28	8:44	9:18	9:55	10:18	10:18				12:18	1:18	2:18
Lawrence	4:39	5:13		6:12					7:12		7:34			8:15			8:50	9:24	10:00	10:24	10:24				12:24	1:24	2:24
Sunnyvale	4:43	5:18		6:20	6:15	6:36		7:07	7:20	7:15	7:40		8:07	8:22	8:15	8:36	8:55	9:29	10:05	10:28	10:28				12:28	1:28	2:28
Mountain View	4:48	5:23	6:01	6:25		6:42	7:05	7:12	7:25		7:46	8:05	8:12	8:28		8:42	9:00	9:34	10:10	10:33	10:33				12:33	1:33	2:33
San Antonio	4:52	5:27		6:29					7:29					8:32			9:04	9:38	10:14	10:37	10:37				12:37	1:37	2:37
California Avenue	4:57	5:31		6:34		6:48		7:18	7:34		7:51		8:18	8:36			9:09	9:42	10:18	10:42	10:42				12:41	1:41	2:41
Palo Alto	5:01	5:36	6:09	6:38	6:27		7:13	7:22	7:38	7:28		8:13	8:22	8:41	8:28		9:14	9:47	10:23	10:47	10:47				12:46	1:46	2:46
Menlo Park	5:04	5:39		6:41		6:54			7:41		7:56		8:44		8:51	9:17	9:50	10:26	10:50	11:49	11:49				12:49	1:49	2:49
Redwood City	5:10	5:44		6:47	6:33	6:59			7:47	7:35	8:02			8:51	8:35	8:57	9:24	9:57	10:32	10:55	11:55				12:55	1:55	2:55
San Carlos	5:15	5:49				7:04		7:30			8:07		8:30			9:02	9:28	10:01	10:37	10:59	11:59				12:59	1:59	2:59
Belmont	5:18	5:52				7:07					8:10					9:05	9:32	10:05	10:40	11:03	12:03				1:03	2:03	3:03
Hillsdale	5:22	5:56	6:19	6:54		7:11	7:24	7:35	7:54		8:14	8:25	8:35	8:59		9:09	9:35	10:08	10:44	11:06	12:06				1:06	2:06	3:06
Hayward Park	5:25	5:59				7:14					8:17					9:12		10:11		11:09	12:09				1:09	2:09	3:09
San Mateo	5:28	6:03			6:44	7:18		7:39		7:45	8:21		8:39		8:45	9:15	9:40	10:15	10:49	11:12	12:12				1:12	2:12	3:12
Burlingame	5:32	6:06				7:21		7:44			8:24		8:44			9:19	9:43	10:18	10:52	11:15	12:15				1:15	2:15	3:17
Millbrae	5:36	6:11	6:28	7:03	6:52	7:26	7:32		8:03	7:53	8:29	8:34		9:08	8:53	9:24	9:48	10:23	10:57	11:20	12:20				1:20	2:20	3:22
San Bruno	5:41	6:16				7:30		7:51			8:33		8:51			9:28	9:53	10:28	11:02	11:25	12:25				1:25	2:25	3:27
So. San Francisco	5:45	6:20		7:09		7:34			8:09		8:37			9:14		9:32		10:32		11:29	12:29				1:29	2:29	3:31
Bayshore	5:51	6:26				7:41+					8:45+					9:39		10:38		11:35	12:35				1:35	2:35	3:37
22nd Street	5:57	6:32				7:50+					8:53+					9:45		10:44		11:41	12:41				1:41	2:41	3:43
San Francisco	6:03	6:38	6:47	7:24	7:09	7:57	7:52	8:08	8:24	8:13	9:00	8:54	9:08	9:29	9:13	9:52	10:09	10:52	11:19	11:48	12:48				1:48	2:48	3:52



# Caltrain Service - Multiple Phases of Crisis & Response

## Initial Triage

March 2020 – May 2020

## Surviving the Pandemic

May 2020 – Summer 2021

## Preparing for the Next Reality

Fall 2021 and Beyond



- Service cut to 42 trains per day during initial shelter-in-place order.

- Service restored to 68 trains per day.
- After board adoption of Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, and Growth Policy, service increased to 70 trains per day with a focus on off-peak service and BART connections.

- Opportunity to rebuild service to capture post-pandemic markets and build upon ECRG policy.

# Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, and Growth Policy



## Equity

Undertake service changes in a manner that enhances equity and access for historically disadvantaged and underserved groups and communities.



## Connectivity

Plan for a standardized schedule with consistent station arrivals so that transit providers can coordinate with Caltrain's service.

Prioritize coordination of major intermodal transfers within service planning, focusing on the connection to BART at Millbrae



## Recovery & Growth

Strive to deliver specific elements and benefits of the Long Range Service Vision as soon as practical and supported by market demand and financial circumstances of the railroad.

# Service Planning



# Post-Pandemic Uncertainty

There is substantial uncertainty around post-pandemic travel behavior, especially when and how regular commuting patterns will return. Caltrain travel patterns could look substantially different than before the pandemic, given that many tech companies may shift to regular remote or flexible work schedules. A post-pandemic Caltrain service will need to be diverse and adapt to changing corridor needs while also capturing new markets.

## Tracking Data & Trends to Inform Service Planning

- Pre-Pandemic Ridership Patterns & Surveys
- Pandemic Ridership & Feedback
- Vaccinations & Variants
- GoPass Participation
- University Reopening Plans (Stanford, Santa Clara, San Jose State, UCSF, etc.)
- Gas Prices
- Travel Behavior Trends (Office Reopenings & Remote/Flexible Work Schedules)
- Economic Trends (Office Vacancies, Unemployment Rates, & Development Activity)
- Freeway Congestion
- Restoring Special Events (Giants, Warriors, Sharks, etc.)

# Service Planning Strategy



**Match Flexibility of Future  
Workplace & Recapture  
Commuter Market**



**Address Systemic  
Inequities of Caltrain  
Service**



**Build New  
Ridership Markets**

# 1. Match Flexibility of Future Workplace & Recapture Commuter Market

## Key Findings

### Uncertainty

Most office-based employers do not have a clear picture of the post-pandemic “new normal” – employer policies and employee preferences continue to evolve

### Evolution Over Time

It may take months or years for clear trends to emerge and a new normal to be established. Caltrain will need to monitor and adapt to new travel behavior.

### Greater Flexibility

Increased work from home and flexible work hours are expected, but will vary widely by employer:

- Universities, life sciences, logistics, and hospitality/services more likely to be in person all or most of the time
- Offices (especially tech) more likely to have a remote work option, but adoption will be different between employers



# 2. Address Systemic Inequities of Caltrain Service

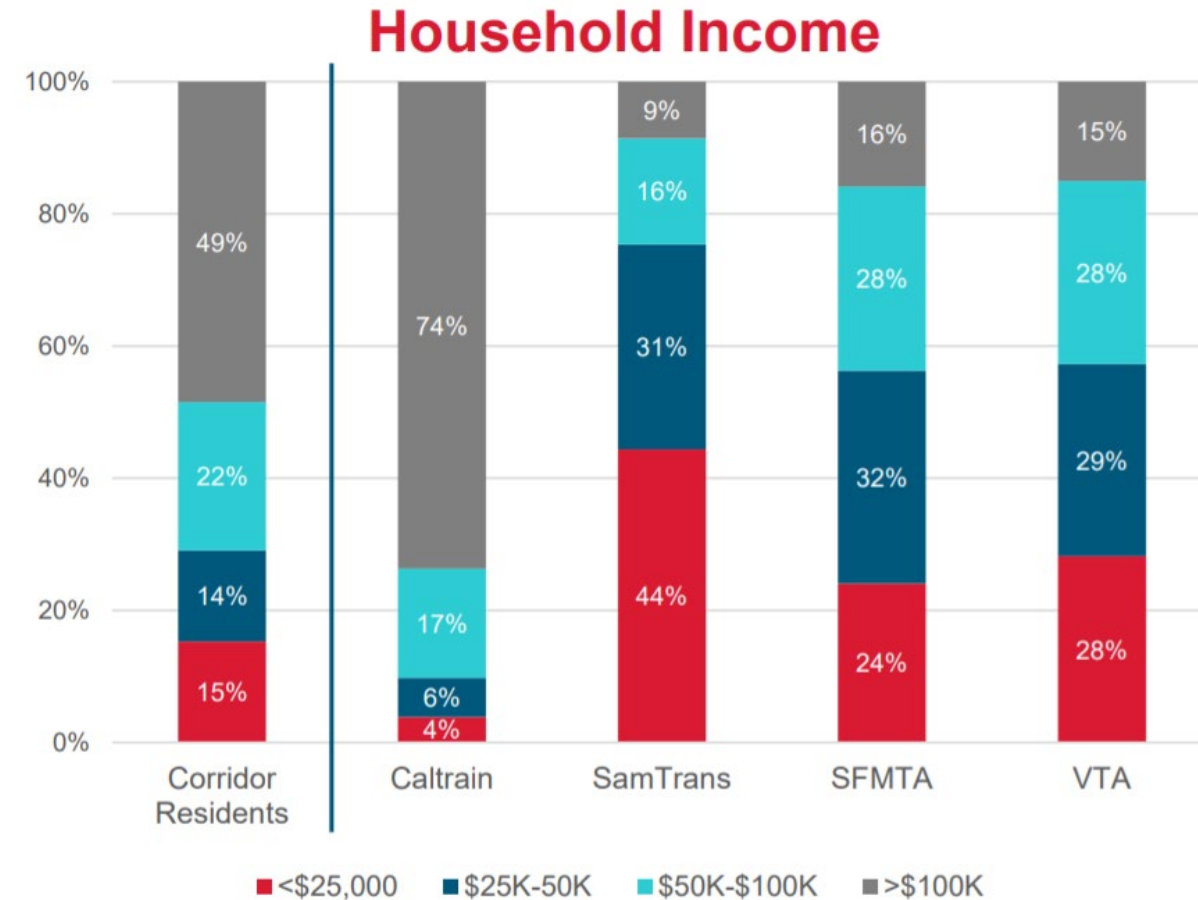
## Key Findings

### Schedule-Imposed Barriers

Prior to the pandemic, Caltrain's highly-customized schedule posed barriers for off-peak/ weekend trips, intermodal transfers, and "novice" riders.

### Disproportionate Outcomes

Schedule-imposed barriers particularly affected people who are transit-reliant or work nontraditional schedules – populations that are disproportionately lower income and people of color



# 3. Build New Ridership Markets

## Key Findings

### Latent Demand & Development Activity

Prior to the pandemic, Caltrain experienced significant latent demand due to low frequencies and limited connectivity for many stations. Construction activity along the corridor remains strong, and recently-completed developments provide potential for new ridership growth.

### Special Events & Non-Commute Trips

Recent ridership data show that the traditional Giants game market is rebounding quickly, and Caltrain has an opportunity to better serve Warriors and Sharks games, concerts and special events, airport travel, medical appointments, and other non-commute trips – especially during evenings and weekends.



# Service Planning Strategy

Strategies

**Match Flexibility of Future Workplace & Recapture Commuter Market**

**Address Systemic Inequities of Caltrain Service**

**Build New Ridership Markets**

Approach

## **Competitive Service**

Restore Baby Bullet and zone express service to recapture riders adjusting to new travel behavior

## **Simple Service**

Simplify structure while expanding train options and frequency at as many stations as possible

## **All-Day Service**

Maintain expanded midday, evening, and weekend service to broaden Caltrain's reach

## **Coordinated Service**

Coordinate connections with BART and other operators

## **Optimized Service**

Adjust stopping patterns to serve latent demand and growing station areas

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# Ongoing Constraints

Caltrain's primary goal of the fall schedule change is to increase service. Still, the railroad must continue to operate within significant schedule constraints, including:



## Financial Constraints

- Farebox revenue remains low and will take time to recover
- Service levels must be aligned with financial capacity



## Major Construction Projects

- South San Francisco and Electrification projects require track access to complete
- Train schedules must be tailored to accommodate ongoing single-tracking operations

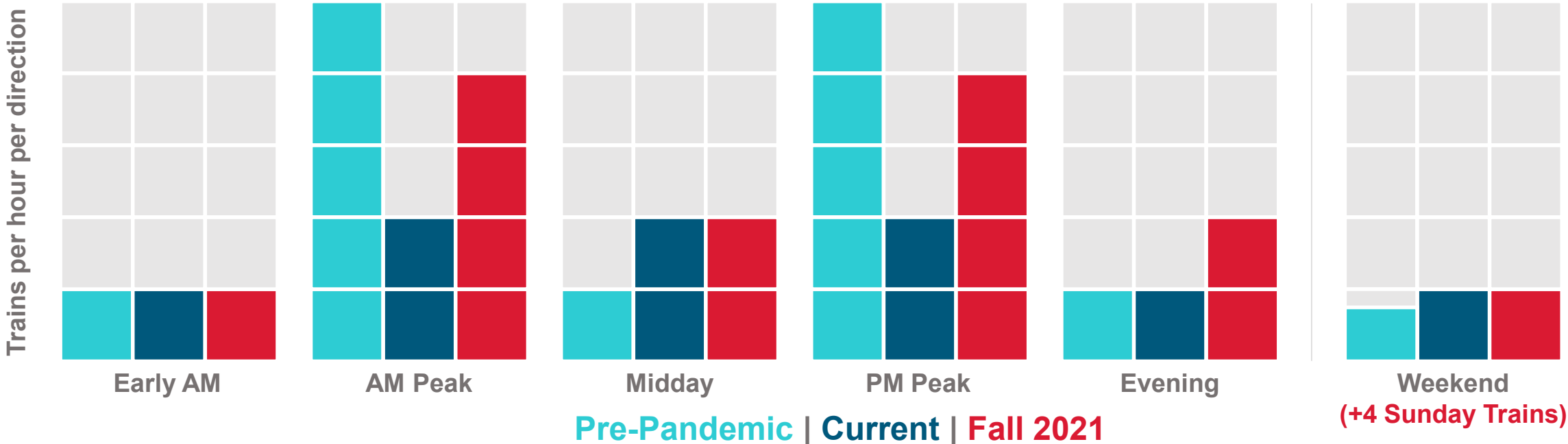


## Staffing

- Service reductions during the pandemic were achieved through attrition (retirements)
- Replenishing through hiring and training will take months.

# Fall 2021 Service Expansion

The Fall 2021 service plan focuses on expanding peak period and evening frequency as well as adjusting stopping patterns. Overall weekday span of service will not change. Sunday service will be expanded to match Saturday Service.



# Service Structure & Ongoing Analysis

## Service Structure

- Increase peak period service to 4 trains per hour
- Maintain off-peak service at 2 trains per hour and expand evening service
- Maintain hourly weekend service and add four trains on Sunday
- Restore Baby Bullet service
- Restore Gilroy service to 3 round trips per day

## Ongoing Analysis

- Optimize transfers with BART at Millbrae
- Evaluation of service types and tradeoffs
  - Travel times
  - Frequency
  - Connectivity
  - Complexity

# Next Steps

- **Continue development of final timetable based on schedules recently received from BART**
- **Return to the Board in August with final service plan**
- **Share schedule and meet with stakeholders and partner agencies to facilitate regional coordination**
- **Showcase service plan as part of the "Welcome Back to Transit" marketing campaign this Fall**