Station Access Policy Update

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

JULY 17, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 8

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Meeting Agenda & Purpose

1. Context: Caltrain's 2010 Access Policy
2. Project Overview
3. Draft Station Access Policy
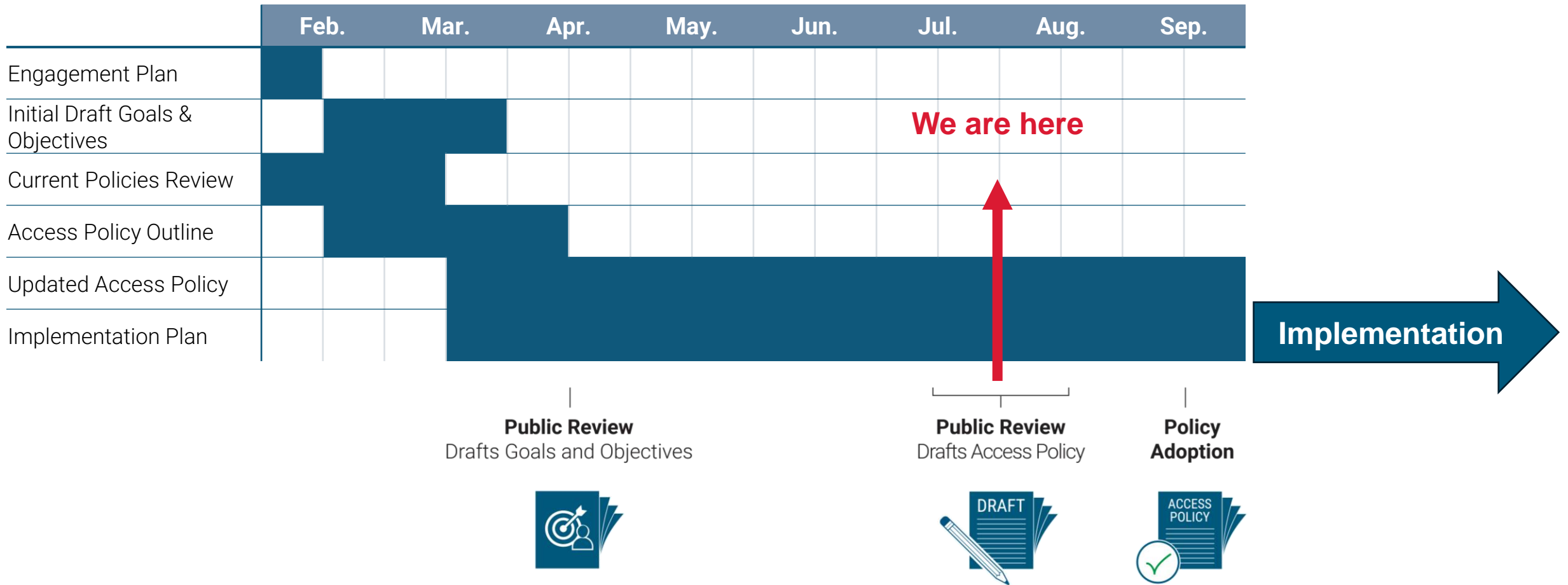4. Next Steps

Meeting Purpose:

1) Share the Draft Caltrain Station Access Policy for your feedback.
2) Provide an overview of next steps for implementation.

Context

- Caltrain currently has an Access Policy Statement that was developed in 2010 as a tool to improve station access and support ridership growth while prioritizing sustainable and cost-effective access modes.

- Customers are core to what we do at Caltrain and attracting more riders is essential for the agency to recover from ridership declines since the pandemic.

- An update to the existing policy is necessary to:

    1) **Support decision making** on access-related projects.

    2) **Align the Access Policy** with other Caltrain policies adopted since 2010 and current initiatives.

    3) **Incorporate the latest industry best practices** in station access policies.

Timeline & Efforts to Date

	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
Engagement Plan	■							
Initial Draft Goals & Objectives		■ ■						
Current Policies Review	■	■						
Access Policy Outline	■	■ ■						
Updated Access Policy			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■					
Implementation Plan			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■					

We are here

Implementation

Public Review
Drafts Goals and Objectives

Public Review
Drafts Access Policy

Policy Adoption

DRAFT

ACCESS POLICY

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Engagement Activities Completed

- The draft policy was informed by a series of internal and external conversations including sharing the draft goals and objectives throughout April with:
  - *Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)*
  - *Bicycle & Active Transportation Advisory Committee (BATAC)*
  - *Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee (CAAC)*
  - *City/County Staff Coordinating Group (CSCG)*
  - *Local Policy Maker Group (LPMG)*
  - *Technology, Operations, Planning & Safety Committee (TOPS)*

Draft Policy Overview

Policy Purpose Statement

Caltrain is a customer-focused rail system. Our mission is to offer safe, reliable, accessible, and sustainable transportation service that enhances quality of life for all.

The Caltrain Station Access Policy supports Caltrain's vision of being a vital link in the regional and statewide rail network by:

- Improving **connectivity** to communities and other transit systems.
- Contributing to the region's **economic vitality**.
- **Partnering** with local communities to ensure that diverse constituencies receive a **world-class travel experience**.

Definition of "Access"

Individuals use a number of modes of transport to complete their journey to and from Caltrain stations: they are **pedestrians**, ride a **bicycle**, use **shared micromobility**, **drive**, are **dropped off**, take a **bus** or **train** operated by another agency, or in many cases **combine various modes** of transport.

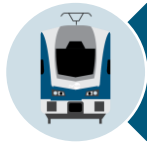**Caltrain's Station Access Policy emphasizes:**
- Safe, universally accessible, well-maintained, and seamless connections to Caltrain stations.
- Integration with the local station area and community context.
- Excellent customer experience for all individuals.

Intended Users of the Station Access Policy

Caltrain Riders and Community Members

Caltrain Board and Staff

Policy Makers and Regulatory Agencies

Local and Regional Transportation Agencies

Local Jurisdictions

Developers, Contractors, and Third-Party Vendors

Goals and Objectives

Goals

Caltrain Access Policy Update

1. **Safe** Routes To, From, and Through Stations

2. World-Class Customer Access **Experience** for All Users

3. **Ridership** Growth through Strategic Access Investments

4. **Equitable** Access Aligned with Diverse Community Needs

5. **Healthy** and **Sustainable** Modes of Access

6. Strategic **Partnerships** to Advance Station Access

Access Hierarchy

The Access Hierarchy is the systemwide aspirational framework to:

1) Guide station area planning and investment decisions.

2) Be used as a tool for decision making and weighing the tradeoffs of access investments to ensure sustainable modes are the highest priority.

3) Ensure proposed access improvements prioritize pedestrians, biking/ shared micromobility, and transit facilities as the highest priority.
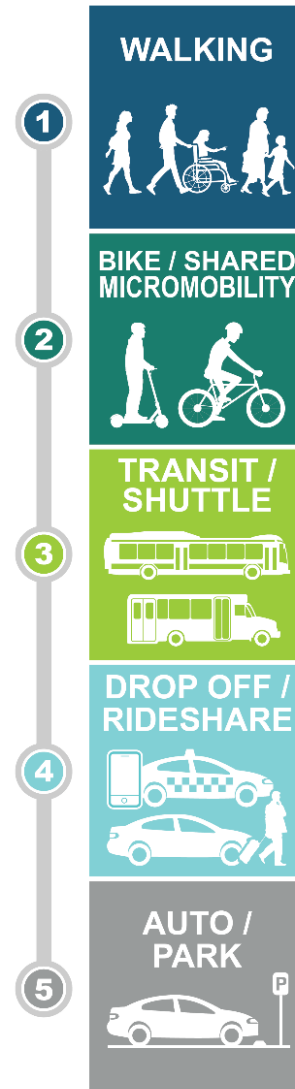
1 WALKING

All Caltrain riders are pedestrians at some point in their journey. This includes people walking on foot, using wheelchairs and other mobility devices, and children in strollers.

2 BIKE / SHARED MICROMOBILITY

All forms of shared micromobility such as bike share and scooter share, and private bicycles and scooters.

3 TRANSIT / SHUTTLE

All connecting transit and shuttle services to Caltrain stations including bus, paratransit, private shuttles, light-rail, and other heavy-rail operators.

4 DROP OFF / RIDESHARE

Taxis, all forms of ride-hailing services, and private drop-off.

5 AUTO / PARK

Private and shared vehicle parking facilities.

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Implementation Plan

The following **eight next steps** support the application of the Station Access Policy and are organized in short, medium, and long-term time periods.

Short term (0-2 years)
- Dissemination of the Station Access Policy
- Update the Caltrain Design Guidelines and Criteria
- Develop a Parking and Curbside Management Strategy
- Develop a Station Access Database

Mid-term (2-5 years)
- Document the Process for Access Improvements
- Conduct Station Needs Assessments
- Complete Project Identification, Evaluation, and Prioritization

Long-term (5+ years)
- Project Delivery and Policy Review

Station Access Toolkit

The Station Access Toolkit provides examples of actions to inform decision making that users of the Station Access Policy may select from when identifying possible access improvements.

The Access Toolkit is comprised of actions organized into five categories:

1) Customer Experience
2) Active Transportation
3) Transit and Shuttles
4) Private Vehicles and Parking
5) Partnerships

User Manual

The following six steps outline how Caltrain's Station Access Policy may be used:

01 | Identify Scope

Determine if project scope applies to a specific station, multiple stations, or systemwides

Station-Specific   Multiple Stations   Systemwide

02 | Review the Station Access Policy

Ensure stakeholders are aware of and understand the Station Access Policy

03 | Conduct Station Needs Assessments

I   Identify opportunities for improvement

II   Identify station specific priorities and needs

04 | Select Station Access Toolkit Actions

Based on findings from step 3, select toolkit actions that align with station specific needs and addresses improvement opportunities

05 | Classify Actions

A   New stand-alone projects

B   Modifications/Inclusion into existing projects

06 | Proceed to Implementation

Next Steps

- Present the Draft Access Policy for public feedback in July and August

- Present the Final Updated Station Access Policy for JPB adoption in September 2024 .

- Begin Implementation activities in Fall 2024

Upcoming Meetings	
Citizens Advisory Committee	July 17th
Bicycle & Active Transportation Advisory Committee	July 18th
Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee	July 19th
City/County Staff Coordinating Group	August 21st
Local Policy Maker Group	August 22nd
Technology, Operations, Planning & Safety Committee	August 28th
Joint Powers Board	**September 5th**

Thank you!

Questions?

paped@caltrain.com and greenbergh@caltrain.com

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APPENDIX

Goal #1

Safe Routes To, From, and Through Stations

Operations: Promote rider and maintenance investments to ensure safe and reliable train operations at Caltrain facilities.

Connectivity: Work with local jurisdictions to ensure safe and direct connections to, from, and through Caltrain stations and facilities.

Universal Design: Incorporate Universal Design* principles to ensure safe access for all riders and respond to varying user needs.

Crime Prevention: Embed Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in design criteria to ensure safe and secure access.

Goal #2

World-Class Customer Access Experience for All Users

Objectives

Design Guidelines: Develop multimodal station design guidelines and criteria reflecting industry best practices that align with the Caltrain Access Hierarchy.

Project Delivery: Ensure access needs and improvements are reflected in planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities.

Technology: Leverage technology both at stations and online to help riders easily navigate the Caltrain system.

Wayfinding: Develop a unified wayfinding system that provides clear and intuitive directions to diverse customers, reinforces Caltrain's Access Hierarchy, and aligns with regional initiatives.

Goal #3

Ridership Growth through Strategic Access Investments

Objectives

Transit-Oriented Development: Promote transit-oriented development at Caltrain-owned facilities and in the surrounding station areas, providing direct access to Caltrain for residents and workers.

Multimodal Programs: Promote first/last mile access options through collaborations to expand bike lockers, bikeshare, private shuttles, and other micromobility options.

Transfer Guidelines: Establish and implement facility design guidelines and criteria for direct and convenient travel paths when transferring between modes.

Seamless Transit: Partner with connecting transit operators to minimize transfer times and provide seamless connections.

Maximize Value: Explore creative use of facilities to support both operations and maintenance and customer access needs.

Goal #4

Equitable Access Aligned with Diverse Community Needs

Objectives

Community Engagement: Engage with communities, including equity-priority communities, to understand needs and define access priorities.

Access Prioritization: Prioritize investments that improve access for equity-priority communities.

Expanded Choices: Collaborate with jurisdictions and partner agencies to deliver first/last mile connections to Caltrain that are tailored to meet the needs of local riders.

Adaptable Solutions: Ensure multimodal design guidelines and criteria are flexible and adaptable to different communities and local contexts.

Partnerships: Engage in strategic partnerships to improve regional access to housing and jobs at Caltrain stations and in surrounding station areas.

Goal #5

Healthy and Sustainable Modes of Access

Mode Shift: Prioritize multimodal investments to encourage mode shift from automobiles and parking to more sustainable options.

Land & Capital Management: Leverage land & capital assets to encourage transit-oriented development around stations and minimize vehicle-miles traveled.

Parking Management: Consider parking management strategies such as parking pricing to leverage parking assets and encourage mode shift that reduces single occupancy vehicle trips.

Climate Resilience: Ensure station facilities can withstand and operate in current conditions and are resilient for future weather and climate conditions.

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Goal #6

Strategic Partnerships to Advance Station Access

Collaboration: Partner with local jurisdictions in station area planning efforts to incorporate multimodal, connected street networks aligned with transit-supportive land uses.

Coordination: Define roles and responsibilities for Caltrain and its stakeholders to identify, plan, construct, and maintain access related projects.

Review Processes: Establish protocol for involvement with local jurisdictions and private entities on development plans, leveraging the project planning and entitlement process to deliver access investments.

Partnerships: Cultivate partnerships to explore cost-sharing, data-sharing, and grant funding opportunities with other agencies and jurisdictions.

Facility and Resource Use: Define access needs and align permitted uses at Caltrain stations and resources to balance multimodal access with safety, maintenance, and community needs at Caltrain stations.

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Category 1: Customer Experience

Toolkit Actions

Improve customer comfort through enhancements such as landscaping, lighting, weather protection, seating, local information, and other placemaking strategies at stations.

Improve ease of navigation to, from, and within stations, for example through intuitive design, clear sightlines, signage, translations of signage for Limited-English proficient communities, and other accessible wayfinding strategies.

Implement security improvements such as the application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques, lighting, visibility enhancements, cameras, and other means to increase security presence.

Improve access to real-time arrival information at stations and through digital communications.

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Category 2: Active Transportation

Develop new or enhance existing pedestrian circulation areas (e.g. sidewalks, concourses, and plazas) within stations.

Ensure stations meet accessibility standards and work with stakeholders to apply universal design principles such as elevators, ramps, stairs, level boarding, and auditory and visual cues.

Coordinate with local jurisdictions to deliver local station area access improvements that meet universal design principles such as curb ramps, tactile and audio crossing cues, improved sidewalks, slower traffic speeds, shorter crossing distances, and increased crossing time.

Develop new or enhance existing bike and micromobility parking amenities, such as secure bike parking, bike share stations, scooter drop zones, and electric bike charging infrastructure.

Partner with local jurisdictions to encourage plans for low-stress active transportation facilities to Caltrain stations, such as traffic calming measures, crossing improvements, protected bike lanes, and curb extensions.

Work with local jurisdictions and project sponsors to ensure that grade separation projects adjacent to stations reflect multi-modal access needs.

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Category 3: Transit and Shuttles

Toolkit Actions

Develop new or enhanced pick-up/drop-off facilities for transit and shuttles.

Work with transit agency partners to implement rail-to-rail and bus-to-rail opportunities that optimize transit stop placement, frequency, and routing for connecting transfer services.

Coordinate schedules, station facility needs, and access to information with public and private transit operators to optimize transfers, including paratransit access, bus stops, waiting areas with shading and seating, and signage with real-time information.

Increase coordination with guaranteed ride home programs and other local micro-transit services to increase passenger awareness and usage.

Coordinate with local jurisdictions to deliver transit-priority improvements that improve transfer connectivity and travel times such as queue jumps and transit-only lanes.

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Category 4: Private Vehicles and Parking

Develop new or enhance delineated areas for rideshare passenger drop off and pickup.

Develop parking pricing to right-size parking to local market conditions and demand.

Implement parking management and enforcement practices such as paid parking, automated enforcement via license plate recognition, etc.

Identify stations where parking lots are underutilized and can be reduced and redeveloped into TOD and/or new access facilities (transit centers, bikeways, or bike parking, etc.).

Coordinate with other agencies, local jurisdictions, and/or adjacent property owners to consider sharing station parking.

Provide carshare facilities at stations.

Provide designated carpool/vanpool spaces at stations.

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Category 5: Partnerships

Toolkit Actions

Explore fare incentive programs such as the GoPass and other partnerships that increase access to sustainable and affordable travel choices for equity-priority populations.

Strengthen relationships and membership in local Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to promote Caltrain ridership and first/last mile access choices.

Coordinate with local institutions (e.g., colleges and healthcare campuses) to collect data and develop shuttle programs or other access projects that cater to these destinations.

Identify opportunities to support local parking cash out programs and other sustainable travel incentives.

Identify opportunities for public-private partnerships and other cost sharing agreements to deliver station area access improvements.

Formalize agreements, operating standards, and facility usage with third-party vendors that provide first/last mile access.

Partner with local jurisdictions to identify opportunities for placemaking and other station enhancements that promote community identity.

Collaborate with local communities, cycling advocacy groups and environmental groups to increase awareness of sustainable and affordable travel choices.

Formalize partnerships with advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and other non-governmental agencies to solicit community buy in and identify access priorities.

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List of Access Related Caltrain Policies and Programs

The following adopted and ongoing Caltrain initiatives are also relevant to access:

- Bicycle Parking Management Plan (2017)
- 2040 Service Vision (2019) and Business Plan (2020)
- Equity, Connectivity, and Growth Framework (2020)
- Rail Corridor Use Policy (2020)
- Transit-Oriented Development Policy (2020)
- Design Criteria (2024)
- ADA Transition Plan (Ongoing)
- Capital Improvement Plan Development Project (Ongoing)
- Corridor Crossings Strategy (Ongoing)
- Corridor Crossings Delivery Guide (Ongoing)
- At-Grade Crossings Safety Strategy (Ongoing)
- Level Boarding Roadmap (Ongoing)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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