

Caltrain Business Plan

COVID RECOVERY
PLANNING

UPDATE ON SERVICE
RESTORATION

May 26, 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



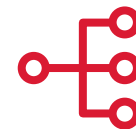
Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, & Growth Framework



Near Term Service Planning



Financial Analysis



Scenario Planning

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Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, & Growth Framework



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Context & Background

Multiple Phases of Crisis & Response

Initial Triage

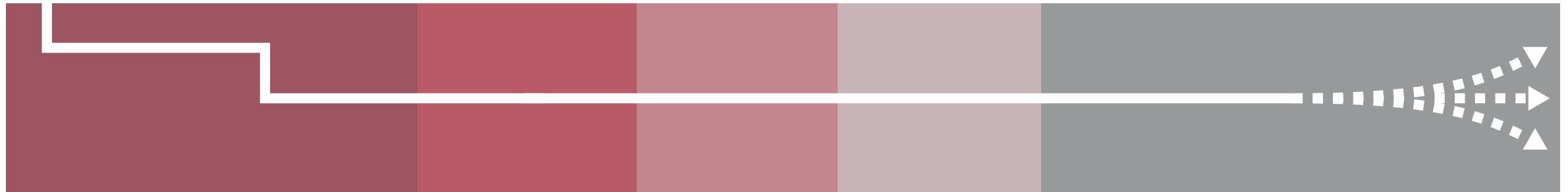
March 2020 – May 2020

Surviving the Pandemic

May 2020 – 2021 (?)

Preparing for the Next Reality

2021 and Beyond



Initial crisis and immediate triage response by Caltrain

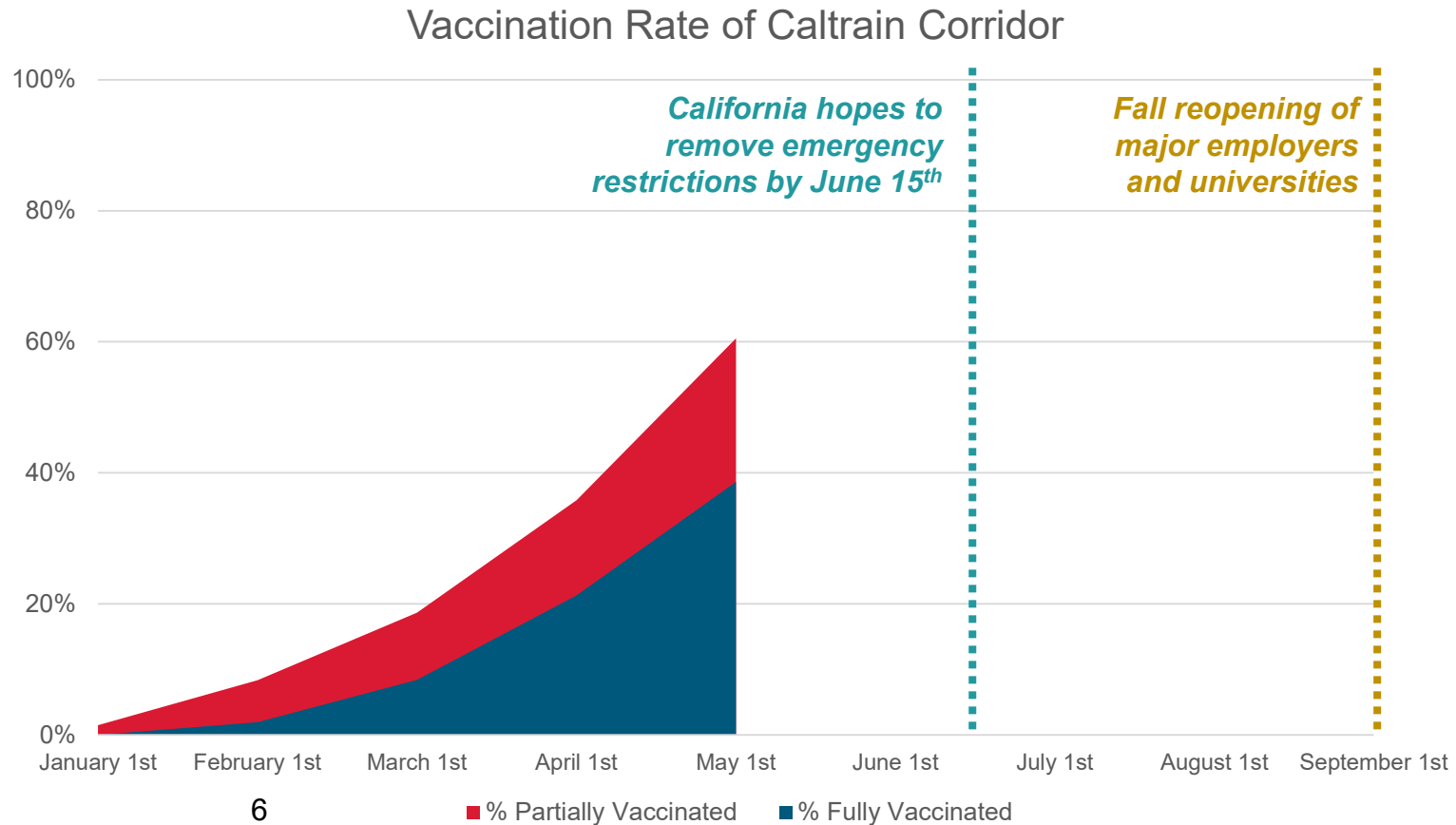
Extended period where Pandemic is ongoing and Caltrain ridership and operations remain deeply impacted and in a state of dynamic flux. Railroad's financial position is precarious

Long-term resolution of pandemic through vaccine or other permanent public health approaches. Caltrain adjusts to new Business Environment

Vaccinations & Reopening

Key Milestones

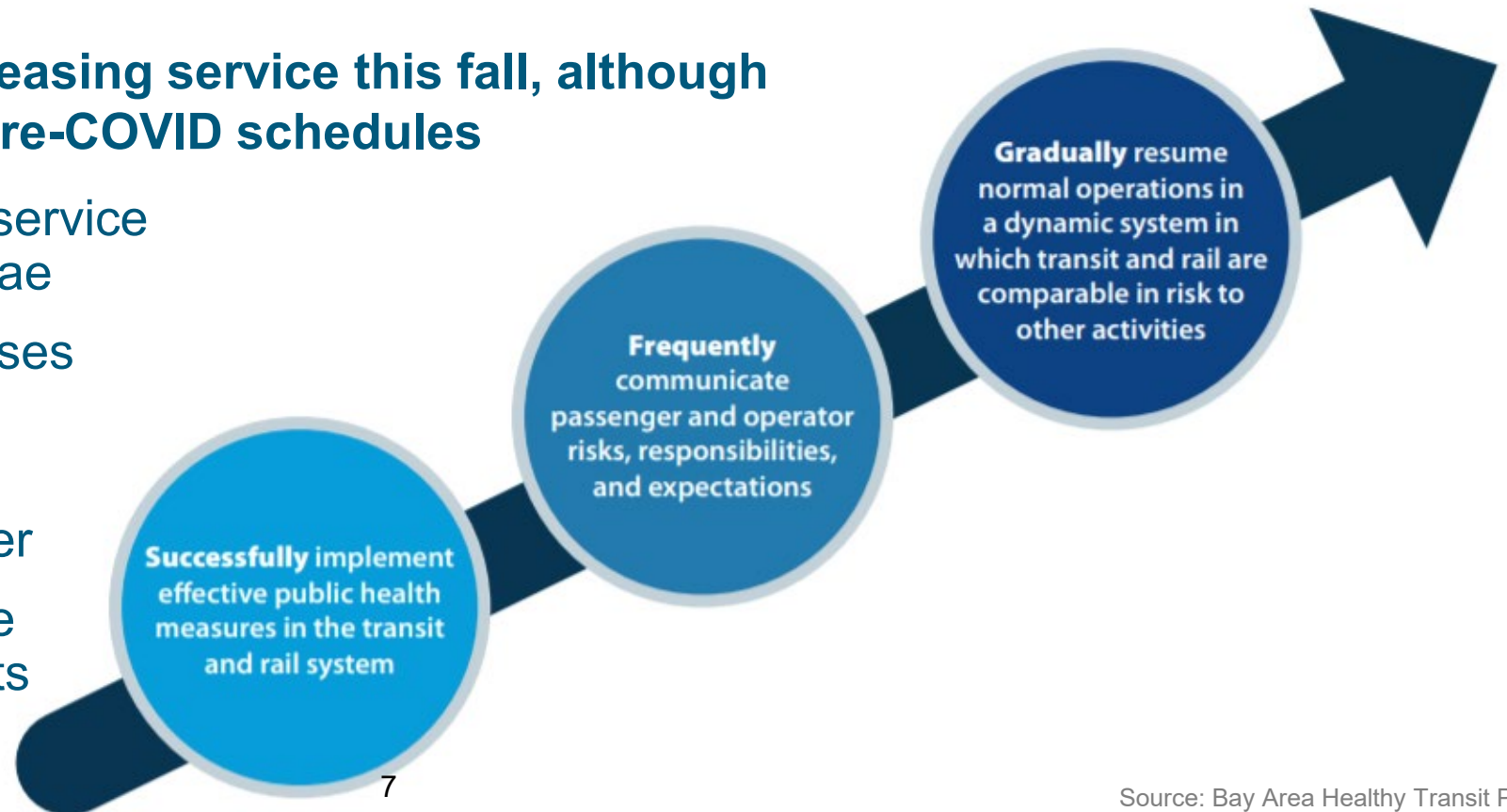
- As of May 1st, 61% of residents of Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties are partially or fully vaccinated
- California hopes to remove all emergency restrictions by June 15
- Several major employers are targeting reopening in September (Google, Apple, etc)
- Major universities expect to be in person in the fall (Stanford, San Jose State, Santa Clara, etc)



Regional Transit Service Scaling Up

Many transit agencies are increasing service this fall, although few are completely restoring pre-COVID schedules

- BART will provide 15-minute service on all lines, including at Millbrae
- WETA phasing service increases between July and October
- ACE and Capitol Corridor are increasing service this summer
- Muni, VTA, and SamTrans are evaluating service adjustments



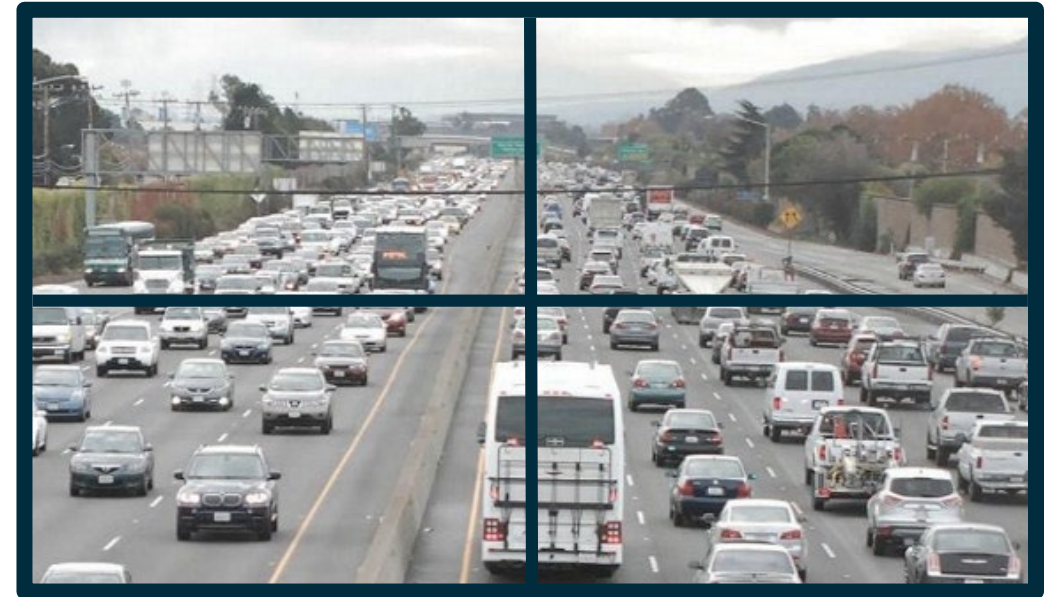
A Window of Opportunity

As workplaces, universities, and events establish a “new normal,” Caltrain has a window of opportunity to shape post-pandemic travel behavior:



Caltrain recaptures ridership and attract new riders by increasing service

OR



Former riders shift to driving because Caltrain service does not meet their needs

Service Planning

Service Restoration Goals

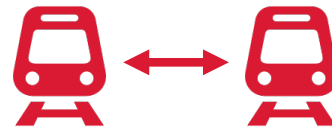
Caltrain seeks to recapture and expand market share while also building upon the principles of the Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, and Growth Policy:



**Competitively
Serve core
ridership markets
and attract new
riders**



**Provide a
standardized
repetitive schedule**



**Coordinate transit
connections**



**Address social and
racial equity needs**

What We've Heard

Service during COVID-19 Pandemic has been reduced and ridership remains very low as many major employers along the corridor continue remote work. Caltrain has listened to feedback on the current reduced service. As we look to change the service in the next few months we want to retain elements of the service that work well while also adjusting and improving.

	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening
Current Service Plan	2	2	2	
70 Trains/Weekday	1	1	1	1

- **Customers have benefitted from improved connections with BART at Millbrae**
- **Midday and weekend service increase is popular**
- **Increased train service desired, including express trains**
- **Add more stops to improve connectivity/frequency at all stations (skip-stop service at current service level is inconvenient for travelers going between intermediate stations)**



Fall Service Strategy

Increasing service for the Fall will help Caltrain rebuild core ridership markets and support the region's economic recovery.

Investing in the Region's Economic Recovery:



Provide a Competitive Regional Transit Service

- Recapture riders adjusting to new travel behavior
- Emphasize connectivity to rail and bus services



Continue Equity-Oriented Planning

- Maintain off-peak and weekend service enhancements to diversify trip purposes and ridership markets



Expect the Unexpected

- Duration of pandemic and effects on travel behavior remain unknown
- Ridership and farebox revenue may take time to fully recover

Ongoing Constraints

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

Other factors impacting the train schedule:



Work within Existing Financial Constraints

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



Deliver 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.

Fall Service Changes Under Consideration

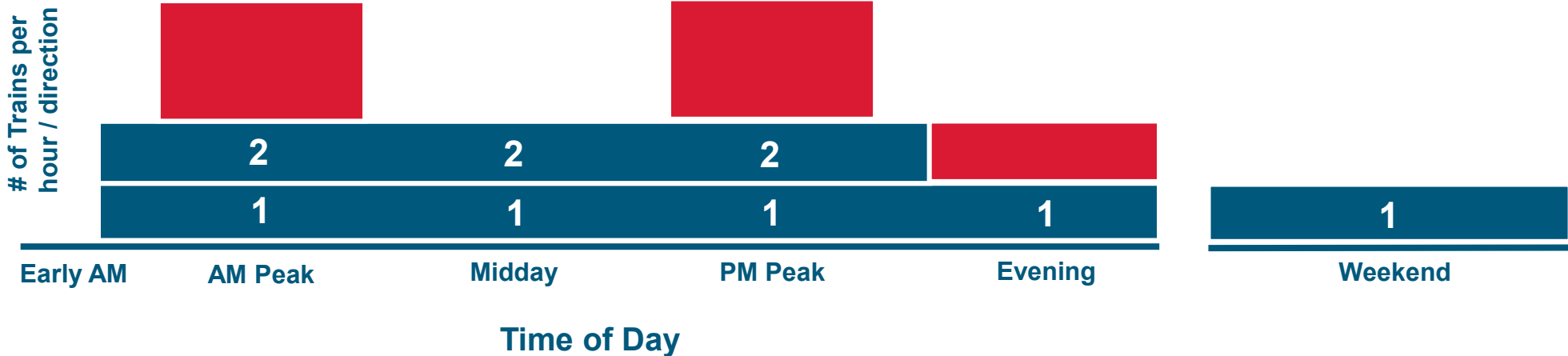
- **Maintain service enhancements identified in the Equity, Connectivity, Recovery, and Growth Policy**
 - Expanded off-peak and weekend service
 - Simplified repetitive service pattern
 - Improved coordination with BART and other transit providers
- **Increase peak period service levels above the current 2 trains per hour**
- **Increase evening service levels above 1 train per hour**
- **Evaluate changes to service patterns including potential restoration of “Baby Bullet” style express service**
- **Restore 3 daily roundtrips to Gilroy**

Fall 2021 Service Expansion

Service planning will consider expanding peak period and evening frequency and adjusting stopping patterns. Overall span of service hours and weekend frequency will not change.

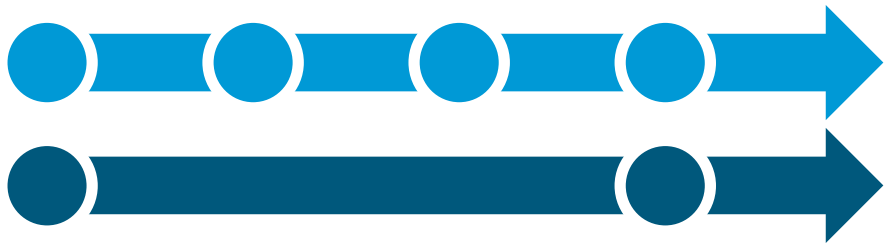
Fall Service Changes

Current Service Levels



Key Tradeoffs

Number of Stops



Types of Service



		Number of Stops	
		More Stops	Less Stops
Types of Service	All Trains the Same	<p>Pros: Frequent service to all stations. Consistent headways with good connectivity.</p> <p>Cons: Trains are slow.</p>	<p>Pros: Reasonable travel times at all stations. Frequent service at major stations only.</p> <p>Cons: Infrequent service with challenging connectivity at most stations. Complicated service.</p>
	Different Types of Trains	<p>Pros: Faster travel times between major stations. Good connectivity between all stations.</p> <p>Cons: Slow travel times for all other stations. Inconsistent headways at major stations. Somewhat complicated service.</p>	

Next Steps

- **Develop service plan to achieve the outlined goals**
- **Coordinate with BART timetable to optimize connections**
- **Prepare to participate in region's "Welcome Back to Transit" marketing campaign**
- **Consider potential to join BART in promotional fare reduction planned for month of September**