

## **CALTRAIN FRAMEWORK FOR EQUITY, CONNECTIVITY, RECOVERY & GROWTH**

*The "Caltrain Framework for Equity, Connectivity, Recovery & Growth" has been developed to provide guidance to staff and transparency to the public as the railroad navigates a prolonged period of intensive challenges and transformation. In fall 2019, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) adopted the Caltrain 2040 Long Range Service Vision, setting a blueprint for the future development of the Ca/train corridor and service over the next two decades and guiding the transformation of the railroad from a traditional commuter rail system toward an electrified, high frequency regional rail service. The Framework for Equity, Connectivity, Recovery and Growth is a companion document based on detailed analysis undertaken by Caltrain and its partner agencies as part of the "Caltrain Business Plan" process during 2018, 2019 and 2020. It outlines principles and policy for how Caltrain will navigate near- and mid-term challenges while incrementally advancing toward its Long Range Service Vision.*

*Caltrain defines equity in terms of equal access to the opportunity provided by the system as well as the fair distribution of the railroad's impacts. The Peninsula Corridor has hosted rail service for over 150 years, and both historically and currently, railroads often lead to or exacerbate harmful disparities in access and impacts for poor and/or minority communities. Age, gender, disability, and English proficiency can also expand or constrain access opportunities. The Caltrain Framework for Equity, Connectivity, Recovery & Growth outlines key steps toward reversing such disparities by focusing railroad resources and attention toward those most harmed by a lingering legacy of racism and discrimination in our community and along the rail corridor. The incorporation of equity policies into a larger framework that also focuses on connectivity, recovery and growth signals that these that these measures are neither superficial nor isolated. Rather, the steps Caltrain undertakes to make the system more equitable are an essential component of the overall evolution of the railroad toward the Long Range Service Vision.*

*It is important to note that the Caltrain Framework for Equity, Connectivity, Recovery & Growth builds on a number of existing Caltrain efforts. Foundationally, these include the railroad's full and broad compliance with federal requirements under both Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition to these core requirements, Caltrain has already undertaken a number of specific equity- and connectivity-focused actions and steps that are referenced in the Framework. Examples include the recent adoption of a Transit Oriented Development Policy with a heavy emphasis on affordable housing, participation in the regional means-based fare pilot program (Clipper START), and enhanced coordination and schedule alignment with other transit operators as part of ongoing COVID-19 recovery efforts. The Framework sets the intention of the railroad to prioritize issues of equity and connectivity, and proposes to significantly expand upon these ongoing efforts.*

*The Framework is also a starting point, not an end. Over the coming months and years, there is more work that the JPB will need to do as we navigate a new and rapidly changing business environment and as we strive to better understand our role and responsibility in making the Bay Area a more inclusive and equitable region for all.*

## Guiding Principles

- 1) Caltrain's Framework for Equity, Connectivity, Recovery & Growth directs the railroad to undertake both near-term recovery planning as well as the longer-term planning and implementation of its services and projects in accordance with the following guiding principles:
  - A.) Caltrain shall make a priority of enhancing **equity** in its system, focusing on the diverse constituency of riders who depend on transit for essential travel and addressing the historical inequities that have caused the rail service to be disproportionately underutilized by lower income riders and people of color.
  - B.) Caltrain recognizes its unique position as a critical link within the Bay Area's passenger rail network. The railroad will undertake policies and actions that improve its **connectivity** to other transit systems to strengthen its role as part on a regionally integrated network.
  - C.) Caltrain must address the needs of the present (during the COVID-19 pandemic), while simultaneously planning for and working toward a long-term future. The railroad will endeavor to proceed on a path of **recovery and growth** that anticipates, advances and, where possible, accelerates the incremental delivery of the 2040 Long Range Service Vision.

## Equity

- 2) In accordance with principle IA, the Framework guides Caltrain toward advancing the following policies and actions as soon as practicable and financially feasible with the goal of increasing equity on the system today and in the future.
  - A.) Undertake service changes and system improvements in a manner that enhances equity and access for historically disadvantaged and underserved groups and communities. This includes:
    - 1) Improving midday and off-peak service levels to serve and attract customers who need the system for non-work trips or whose work schedules do not conform to traditional peak commute hours.
    - 2) Considering social, racial and geographic equity as a significant factor in determining the restoration and expansion of service frequencies at individual stations.
    - 3) Engaging in research, community dialog and planning to understand how best to provide meaningful access and connections between the Caltrain system and historically underserved low-income and minority communities along the corridor.

- 4) Prioritizing the planning and implementation of station projects and system enhancements that will expand and facilitate access for riders with disabilities.
- 5) Undertaking planning to improve Caltrain station access facilities most heavily used by low-income riders, including bus stops, bicycle parking, pick-up/drop-off areas, and walkways.

B.) Take steps to ensure that the Caltrain system is affordable to all, and that fare policies are equitable. This includes:

- 1) Seeking Board action to temporarily suspend the implementation of fare increases previously authorized by the JPB as ridership recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2) Affirming Caltrain's ongoing support for the regional means-based fare program (Clipper START) and working collaboratively with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and other transit operators to increase the effectiveness and reach of this program or any successor effort.
- 3) Accelerating and expanding further fare policy analysis called for in the 2018 Fare Study. This includes both study and evaluation of the Go Pass and other discount programs and well as potential changes to the overall structure of the fare system to improve equity and ridership outcomes.
- 4) Constructive participation in the Regional Fare Coordination and Integration Study, towards the goals of increasing ridership and enhancing the ease and affordability of trips made using multiple transit providers.

C.) Manage the corridor, including railroad facilities, lands and projects, in a manner that addresses equity and the historical impacts that the rail line and its operation have had on lower-income and minority communities. This includes:

- 1) Incorporating and adhering to environmental justice and equity principles in the early stages of capital project planning and the overall development of the railroad's capital program
- 2) Prioritizing projects and programs that mitigate, reduce or eliminate localized environmental impacts of rail operations, including pollutant emissions and noise
- 3) Implementing the significant commitment to affordable housing included in Caltrain's 2020 Transit Oriented Development Policy

- 4) Working with corridor communities to support inclusive local and regional land use policies and anti-displacement efforts at and around Caltrain stations
  - 5) Supporting grade separations and other projects that enhance connectivity across the rail corridor and address the historic role the railroad has played in physically bifurcating and segregating communities
- D.) Ensure that Caltrain communicates and interacts with customers in a manner that is equitable and welcoming to all. This includes:
- 1) Evaluating and updating training for frontline workers to address implicit bias
  - 2) Regularly assessing fare enforcement policies and activities to ensure that they are designed and executed in a consistent and equitable manner
  - 3) Continuously improving Caltrain's outreach processes, marketing materials and customer information systems to ensure that they exceed minimum standards and are intelligible, intuitive and welcoming to customers representing a broad spectrum of cultural and linguistic backgrounds; and
- E.) Sustain and deepen Caltrain's commitment to equity through an ongoing program of organizational development, learning and accountability. This includes:
- 1) Identification of training resources and participation in programs such as the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) to expand organizational understanding and effectiveness on equity issues
  - 2) Designation of an internal Core Team responsible for the tracking and advancement of equity initiatives across the organization
  - 3) Designation of the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) as a primary venue where updates regarding Caltrain's equity initiatives will be provided on an at-least biannual basis
  - 4) Development of a regularly-updated equity work program, along with specific performance measures and standards, to be reviewed with the both the CAC and the Board
- 3) In accordance with principle 1B, the Framework further directs Caltrain to advance the following policies and actions to maximize connectivity to other transit providers as part of an integrated regional rail and transit system.
- A.) Plan for a standardized "clock face" schedule with consistent arrivals and departures at stations so that shuttle, bus, and light rail transit providers and

intercity rail operators have the ability to predict and plan to Caltrain's service.

- B.) Prioritize the coordination of major intermodal transfers within service planning, focusing initially on the connection to BART at Millbrae and considering other key transfer points as practicable.
  - C.) Build on and expand existing coordination with other transit and rail operators to ensure that inter-operator connectivity is safeguarded and improved as COVID-19 recovery efforts proceed and as Caltrain prepares for the launch of electrified service.
  - D.) Consider the ease of transfers as a key factor in the further development of the railroad's fare policy and continue to seek integration with, and participate in, State and regional fare programs, including continuing constructive participation in the Regional Fare Coordination and Integration Study.
- 4) Finally, in accordance with principle IC, the Framework guides Caltrain towards planning for COVID-19 recovery and growth in a manner that looks toward the future and incrementally advances and implements the 2040 Long Range Service Vision over the course of the coming decade.
- A.) Strive to deliver specific elements and benefits of the Long Range Service Vision as soon as is practicable and supported by the market demand and financial circumstances of the railroad.
  - B.) Plan and build toward an "enhanced growth" level of service, beyond initial electrification, that includes the provision of an 8 train per hour per direction peak hour service level between San Francisco and San Jose, and enhanced service south of San Jose to the extent achievable based on current corridor ownership constraints.
  - C.) Refine and advance the planning and development of a program of capital improvements to support the "enhanced growth" level of service, including but not limited to:
    - 1) The full electrification of the mainline service between San Francisco and San Jose, and the corresponding expansion of Caltrain's electrified fleet and storage facilities;
    - 2) Any necessary improvements to Caltrain's tracks and systems;
    - 3) The provision of level boarding at all Caltrain stations; and

- 4) The enhancement of Caltrain's stations and access facilities to accommodate expanded ridership and provide an improved customer experience.

D.) Simultaneously continue Caltrain's leadership in the planning and advancement of key, long-range regional and State partner projects identified in the 2040 Long Range Service Vision, including:

- 1) The Downtown Extension to the Salesforce Transit Center
- 2) The reconstruction of Diridon Station and surrounding rail infrastructure
- 3) The reconstruction and electrification of the rail corridor south of Control Point Lick to the Gilroy Station
- 4) Additional improvements to provide for the operation of High Speed Rail service between Gilroy and San Francisco
- 5) The substantial grade separation of the corridor as well as safety upgrades to any remaining at-grade crossings, undertaken in a coordinated, strategic manner driven by the desires of individual local jurisdictions as well as legal requirements associated with any proposed 4-track segments.