



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of October 9, 2025

Correspondence as of September 26, 2025

<u>#</u>	<u>Subject</u>
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| 1. | RE: Casey Fromson – <i>Staff response</i> |
| 2. | VTA's BART Phase II: October 2025 Construction Update |
| 3. | BSVII Project: October 2025 Construction Notice (Upcoming Road Closure for PG&E Utility Work)) |
| 4. | Early train departures |
| 5. | FW: Safety Concerns at Diridon Caltrain Station |
| 6. | Zone System |

From: [Caltrain BOD Public Support](#)
To: michael.c.herrick@gmail.com
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: RE: Casey Fromson
Date: Monday, September 22, 2025 6:05:54 PM

To Michael Herrick,

Thank you for reaching out to Caltrain to share your feedback. We are glad to hear of your positive reception to our new electric trains, though we regret the impression of our modernized service was soured by your family's recent experience trying to travel with us. We apologize for the trouble, and we assure you that Caltrain remains committed to providing our community with a high-quality transit system. And we recognize this extends to doing more than just running our trains on-time, but ensuring we keep communication clear, consistent, and timely during the course of any given service day.

As part of our improvement process to ensure we are providing our riders with safe and reliable transit service, know that your comments and concerns with your family's travel with us earlier this month were forwarded to our Rail staff for review. Additionally, a copy of this correspondence will also be provided to our Board of Directors.

Please rest assured, our staff takes such reports quite seriously, and our Rail team investigated on several fronts in order to uncover and address any issues that may have led to this incident.

Our Operations and Stations & Facilities staff reviewed both the software and hardware at Hayward Park station involved in the track switch messaging. From what they found, it does appear that the actual messaging of the track switch had been programmed and running as intended that day. However, they uncovered several problems with both the PA and the VMS systems at the station. As your family's experience attests, these mechanical issues would have made it difficult for passengers to either hear or see any announcement information about the track change depending on where they were waiting at the station. Caltrain staff have since corrected these faults.

As for our boarding process, as you thought, it is not an automated procedure, but one managed by our crew. Before our trains depart, the assistant conductor is supposed to step down from the train to verify that all passengers have boarded and that the doorways are clear. Once this is verified, the assistant conductor signals to the lead conductor it is clear. The conductor then checks his end of the train before closing all the doors using the step switch. Of course, this does mean our train crews must remain diligent in ensuring all waiting passengers have boarded before they begin this process. Our Rail Operations team did speak with the crew of Train 638 about their service to Hayward Park station that day to ensure our staff continue to meet the standards of excellence expected of them.

Of course, regardless of our efforts now, we recognize it does not change the fact that your wife and son had been left behind. Again, we apologize for the trouble our service had caused your family. But please rest assured that Caltrain will work to improve, and it is our hope to provide you and yours a better travelling experience moving forward.

Your Caltrain BOD Support Team

From: Michael Herrick <michael.c.herrick@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 8, 2025 12:41:52 AM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Jan Alexis Salandanan <SalandananJ@samtrans.com>
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>
Subject: Re: Casey Fromson

Some people who received this message don't often get email from michael.c.herrick@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders.

Dear Alexis and Board:

This problem persists. My wife and son just waited 25 minutes for a Southbound train at Hayward Park. When the 5:26 arrived it was on the Northbound track with no warning/no indication/no announcements. When my wife and 6-year-old son attempted to sprint around to the Northbound track to board the 5:26 train, the doors were closed in their faces and the train pulled off. They are now waiting another 30 minutes, on the Hayward Park platform, not knowing which track the train will arrive on. Not only is this Caltrain, lack of adequate communication, situation inconvenient and unfortunate, it is downright dangerous. The employee of the FTA who reached out to me several years ago after my pungent email to the Board ought to follow up again ... if he is even employed still by the FTA given the assault on responsible Federal employees we have all witnessed this year.

The new, electric, Caltrains are wonderful. Good job implementing. That Caltrain **refuses** to use their message boards to alert people to a track switch in situations like these is simply unconscionable. Moreover, that conductors, arriving on the wrong track, do not use extra care to see whether people on the "right" platform need extra time to reach the "wrong" platform, is also a grave customer service error. Train engineers can clearly see if people are waiting on the "correct" platform as they pull into a station. That they do not radio the conductors to wait for those passengers is simply a basic error of service and incredibly sloppy.

Sincerely,

Michael

On Tue, Sep 5, 2023 at 3:31 PM Michael Herrick <michael.c.herrick@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Alexis,

Thank you for your response. Within but a week or two I did receive two very positive responses from the vantage point of both communication and safety/operations review so I was really impressed by the alacrity with which substantive communication happens when sending a pungent email to the Board.

Empowering more of the staff within customer service itself, at Caltrain, may well have achieved some of the same results, without the pungency, more than a year ago? I recall that the first time I called customer service about this issue the rep was kind, knew about the general issue itself and had, herself, been affected by it while traveling on Caltrain.

I wish you well with all of the changes and improvements coming to Caltrain in the coming years.

Michael

On Tue, Sep 5, 2023 at 11:42 AM Jan Alexis Salandanan
<SalandananJ@samtrans.com> wrote:

To Michael Herrick,

Thank you for contacting Caltrain. We are sorry to see, however, that it was due to concerns you had with our Communications team. We sincerely apologize for the poor impression you were left with of our service. We at Caltrain are well aware of the importance of clear communication in public transit—at every level of our service. And we also know this can best be accomplished with a deep understanding of the Communications field, with theory guided by practical experience.

Rest assured, our goal at the San Mateo County Transit District has not changed; Caltrain is still committed in providing our community with safe and reliable transit service. Even with the challenges posed by the final stages of our Caltrain Modernization project, we are well aware it remains our responsibility to ensure our customers receive the service we have advertised and they, in turn, expect. If we fall short of this goal, know that we will work to address the issue in order to meet the professional standard we have as a public transit agency—and improve beyond it.

To that end, know that your comments on your recent experiences travelling with us, along with your concerns about our service and staff, were forwarded to the proper parties

for review. Additionally, a copy of this correspondence will be sent to our Board of Directors. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with us and for riding Caltrain.

Kind regards,

Alexis Salandanan

San Mateo County Transit District
Customer Service Dept.

[1250 San Carlos Avenue](#)

[San Carlos, CA 94070-1306](#)

1-800-660-4287

www.smctd.com

From: Michael Herrick <michael.c.herrick@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2023 4:17 PM

To: Board (@[caltrain.com](mailto:board@caltrain.com)) <board@caltrain.com>

Subject: Casey Fromson

You don't often get email from michael.c.herrick@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Caltrain Board,

I understand that in good policy governance a Board does not get immediately involved in operational decisions. Caltrain's current communication situation, with its ridership, has reached such a nadir that I see no other options. If you do not implement change for the better, immediately, riders will begin to lobby the federal government to claw back funds the electrification project has received to date due to misuse.

Riders will also leave. In my case, that means simply leaving the Bay Area. Without viable public transit, a city ceases to be a city. I suspect many other riders work from home due to this issue, thus contributing to the current economic death spiral of some SF districts. Or, they are on the roads, unlikely ever to return to a transit system that has treated them so badly.

I suspect that the root of the communication failures about track changing lies in poor and irresponsible communication by the contractors doing the electrification track work. If they are empowered to make track changes without first creating a communication handshake, including precise details as to time and stations

involved, with Caltrain's central systems desk, then that is a problem which Caltrain should have been solving long ago. This problem may be entirely outside the control of the Caltrain communications office itself.

I in mid-July, however, I confirmed that Casey Fromson has not attempted to spearhead a visible effort, internal to Caltrain, to create a backup communication loop to attempt to limit damage to customers. An attendant, or conductor(?), on the 5:39 Northbound from Menlo Park confirmed that he does have the ability to communicate to the central system desk as soon as he sees that his train is switching tracks. He does not because he thinks he needs a button, personally, to effect the necessary electronic billboard changes at the station he is approaching. Current technology should be able to effect a change to affected station billboards within 2-3 minutes, total, from the time a conductor sees that his train has switched tracks. It's not the conductor's job to create this backup communication system and empower himself. Casey Fromson is positioned within Caltrain to enable this empowerment of its employees to serve the communication needs of customers.

This backup communication method would require communication teamwork within Caltrain itself. This method, a backup to the primary communication responsibility of the contractors, would be in service to the ridership—the point of Caltrain's existence and, in theory, it's primary source of funding.

Or is this, in fact, the point of Caltrain? One wonders after reviewing Casey Fromson's credentials to be Chief Communications Officer for Caltrain. She seems to have no training or credentials in communication. I respect on the job training and experience but her career experience is telling. All of her communication bona fides have to do with the political processes by which Caltrain procures public funding. Which seems to help answer the question in the negative. Caltrain's purpose may in fact have little or nothing to do with serving riders and providing a valid, self-sustainable public transit option. Perhaps this board is primarily invested in acquiring money for the local economy to support construction jobs and to secure channels of regular public funding to operate a mirage public transit service which does not actually pay much attention to the people transiting? Certainly the fact that the construction contractor has the power and authority to suddenly divert trains without obligation to communicate this change to the fee-paying ridership is an indication of whose bread Caltrain seems to be buttering.

That would align with the bizarre historical maps I come across when transferring each morning to BART at Millbrae. That so much money has been devoted to

electrifying an antiquated freight track system when there has always been the possibility to extend BART under or above El Camino Real from Millbrae to Santa Clara seems odd to put it mildly. Pouring “electrification” money into completing BART would have achieved grade separation everywhere while also bringing so many more benefits to society through the type of organic and natural economic growth which underlies the strength and vitality of megacity economies and truly civil societies.

I’m not enamored of the phrase systemic racism, but it’s difficult to see Caltrain’s existence in any other light. Knowing Stanford’s practice to keep black workers out of offices and in dining halls and residence hall service only, during the exact historical period when the communities in its orbit were busy tanking the obvious and simple method for delivering sound public transit in the Bay Area, causes one to more than wonder.

As the board overseeing Caltrain it is not your job to replace Casey Fromson. Perhaps she is amazing and should be running the whole operation, and not just communications. The disconnect between her past communication chops and Caltrain’s day-to-day communication needs is revealing of something.

I drafted this email on a day in July when I sprinted around from the Northbound Menlo Park platform to the Southbound one at 5:39 AM. That day I told the attendant enough was enough after completing my tenth Millbrae or Menlo sprint in the past year only to watch some trains blithely pull away. Perhaps my words to him had an effect. This morning in Menlo Park there were some last minute announcements communicated at 5:37 allowing two of us to traverse the tracks safely before the barriers went down. But 5 minutes later, in RWC, a whole gaggle of passengers boarded shocked, confused and exhausted. I guess they don’t ride Caltrain much. And, I suppose they may not make many forays on it in the future. Why Menlo could get the news but RWC, with 5 extra communication minutes, did not indicates something amiss.

I hope you are able to bring some good to Caltrain and the Bay Area ridership as a result of this email. I’ll drop a printout of it in snail mail for Secretary Buttigieg’s office in case they can provide you some assistance to help out riders—beyond the trickle down effect of money poured into the Bay Area economy through construction dollars provided through Eshoo’s efforts on Capitol Hill.

Sincerely

Michael Herrick
Menlo Park, CA

From: VTA BART Phase II <vtabart@vtabsv.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 4:49 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: VTA's BART Phase II: October 2025 Construction Update

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BART SILICON VALLEY
PHASE II EXTENSION PROJECT

October 2025 Construction Update



VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension Project's October 2025 Construction Update has just been published!

Learn about upcoming construction activities around the Project site, including construction progress made in September and anticipated work in October.

Have a question for us about Phase II?

Visit www.vtabart.org or email us vtabart@vtabsv.com



BART SILICON VALLEY
PHASE II EXTENSION PROJECT

vtabart@vtabsv.com

(408) 321-2345 BART Silicon Valley Hotline



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From: VTA BART Phase II <vtabart@vtabsv.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 5:14 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: BSVII Project: October 2025 Construction Notice (Upcoming Road Closure for PG&E Utility Work))

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BART SILICON VALLEY
PHASE II EXTENSION PROJECT

Construction Notice



Upcoming Road Closure for PG&E Gas Utility Work *N. First Street between Santa Clara Street and St. John Street*

Wednesday, October 8, 2025 – Thursday, October 9, 2025, from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Construction Activities

- Road closure for the disconnection of PG&E gas on N. First Street between Santa Clara Street and St. John Street.

What to Expect

- Work will take place from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Work activities will have no direct impact to VTA light rail service.
- Work activities will have no direct impact on sidewalk on east side of N. First Street.

- Detour routes: Use alternative routes, Market Street or 3rd Street, or follow all posted detour signs.
- Noise from sawcutting and jack hammering of concrete roadway.

Sign up for construction updates at www.vtabart.org



Project Information

VRTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension (Phase II Project) is a six-mile, four-station extension of BART from Berryessa / North San José Station (opened 2020) through downtown San José to the City of Santa Clara. The Phase II Project is planned to include an approximately five-mile subway, three stations with underground platforms (28th Street/Little Portugal, Downtown San José, and Diridon), one ground-level station (Santa Clara), a train maintenance and storage facility, and additional facilities.



Roadway Safety Tips

- Maintain a safe following distance.
- Plan ahead for your trip.
- Slow down and follow posted speed limits.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Pay attention to safety signs.

Have a question for us about Phase II?

Visit www.vtabart.org or email us vtabart@vtabsv.com



BART SILICON VALLEY PHASE II EXTENSION PROJECT

vtabart@vtabsv.com

(408) 321-2345 BART Silicon Valley Hotline



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From: [Scott Yarbrough](#)
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: Early train departures
Date: Thursday, September 25, 2025 6:44:27 AM

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders.

Your conductors are usually great when it's time to close the train doors, but this morning the 106 left 22nd Street before the scheduled 6:30 departure time while I was running to get on. The 106 train is empty since it follows a baby bullet that departs 6 minutes before and before another limited service train that doesn't arrive at 22nd Street until 23 minutes later. I love a train that get me to work reliably, as long as it doesn't leave before it's scheduled departure time.

From: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com))
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com))
Subject: FW: Safety Concerns at Diridon Caltrain Station
Date: Thursday, September 25, 2025 8:38:42 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Marilyn Ralph <mralph10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 5:31 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com) <Board@caltrain.com>
Subject: Safety Concerns at Diridon Caltrain Station

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Dear Caltrain Board,

I am a San Jose resident who regularly uses the Diridon Caltrain station. On 9/24/2025 at 6:55am, I was chased by an individual clearly under the influence of drugs as I entered the station. This was a frightening and unsafe experience.

Unfortunately, it is common to see drug use and loitering at the station and in the adjacent Cahill park, yet there is little to no visible security presence. Riders and nearby residents should not have to fear for their safety when using public transit.

I urge you to take action by increasing security and/or police presence at Diridon Station to ensure the safety of all passengers.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Ralph MD, dipABLM

From: [Stephen Rock](#)
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: Zone System
Date: Thursday, September 25, 2025 10:57:26 AM

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The zone system for fares is unjust and outdated. It might have simplified ticketing when everything was done by hand with paper. Now with clipper cards and credit card payment and electronic ticket checking there is no justification for it.

The system is unfair since someone going the long distance from Redwood City to Millbrae within one zone pays much less than the going very short distance from Lawrence to Sunnyvale or Menlo Park to Redwood City (2 zones).

Please change your fare system so it is based on distance rather than the arbitrary zones.

I do not have anything to gain by the change, since I mostly go from Cal Ave to SF, or Millbrae

Steve Rock
ser84@caa.columbia.edu