

## THE CALTRAIN LONG-RANGE SERVICE VISION

Adopted October 2025

*The following “Caltrain Long-Range Service Vision” has been adopted by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB) to guide the long-range development of the Caltrain rail service and supporting plans, policies, and projects. This Long-Range Service Vision will be periodically reaffirmed and updated by the Board as described in Section 4 below.*

*This updated policy supersedes Caltrain’s first Long-Range Service Vision, which was adopted by the PCJPB in October 2019 as a key output of the Caltrain Business Plan, an extensive technical planning and engagement process led by Caltrain and its partners. At that time, Caltrain’s ridership had reached historic levels with on-board capacity significantly constrained. Even with the enhancements anticipated from Caltrain Electrification, rapid ridership growth and crowded on-board conditions were expected to continue far into the future. Supported by the findings from the Caltrain Business Plan process, PCJPB adopted a Long-Range Service Vision to respond to projected future demand and to provide clarity regarding future service levels on the corridor for Caltrain and its partners.*

*In the years since the COVID-19 pandemic, however, conditions for Caltrain and its partners have shifted substantially. After dropping to historic lows during the pandemic, Caltrain’s ridership was slow to recover in the early 2020s; large ridership gains have been recently realized since the start of electrified service in fall 2024, but ridership remains lower than pre-pandemic levels amidst long-term travel pattern changes in the region. Accompanying this recent reduction in demand for rail service, future population projections along the corridor have been reduced, potentially impacting future demand for service. Caltrain’s business model for operating and maintaining the railroad has shifted from one that was heavily dependent on self-generated revenue before the pandemic to one that is now increasingly reliant on external, public subsidies amid long-term funding uncertainty. Additionally, in recent years, costs have increased dramatically for planning, designing, and building major capital projects, such as grade separation projects and terminal projects; at the same time, funding availability for such projects has decreased, resulting in delays for many projects’ planning horizons.*

*PCJPB recognizes that in spite of these shifts, it remains crucial for Caltrain and its partners to have Board-adopted policy that clarifies long-term future service levels and that serves to guide long-term decision-making across the corridor. PCJPB also recognizes that in light of these shifts, it is critical that this policy affirm the long-term future service maximum for peak hour service. In reaffirming this policy, PCJPB also recognizes that Caltrain and its partners will endeavor to achieve the policy’s overarching goals for service, while continuing to navigate near- and mid-term challenges, and in the longer-term, to incrementally advance towards the Long-Range Service Vision.*

1. Caltrain’s Long Range Service Vision directs the railroad to manage the corridor and provide customer-focused service towards achieving the following goals:
  - a. Offer safe, reliable, accessible, and sustainable transportation that enhances quality of life for all;
  - b. Foster community connectivity, mobility, and vitality;
  - c. Improve environmental sustainability and public health outcomes; and,
  - d. Strengthen regional economic opportunities, prosperity, and competitiveness.
  
2. Towards these goals, Caltrain’s Long-Range Service Vision directs the railroad to plan in the long-term for substantially expanded rail service that, over the coming decades, will address the local and regional mobility needs of the corridor while supporting local economic development activities. When fully realized, this service will provide:
  - a. A mixture of express and local Caltrain services operated in an evenly spaced, bidirectional pattern;
  - b. Maximum peak hour frequencies of:
    - i. 8 trains per hour per direction on the JPB-owned corridor between Tamien Station in San Jose and San Francisco, extended to Salesforce Transit Center,
    - ii. 4 trains per hour per direction between Blossom Hill and Tamien Stations, subject to the securing of necessary operating rights,
    - iii. 2 trains per hour per direction between and Gilroy and Blossom Hill Stations, subject to the securing of necessary operating rights;
  - c. Off-peak and weekend frequencies of between 2 and 6 trains per hour per direction north of Blossom Hill and hourly between Gilroy and Blossom Hill, with future refinements to be based on realized demand;
  - d. Accommodation of California High Speed Rail, Capitol Corridor, Altamont Corridor Express and freight services in accordance with the terms of existing agreements;
  - e. Delivery of these services will occur through the incremental development of corridor projects and infrastructure to be further defined through individual planning process, feasibility studies and community engagement. At this time, such infrastructure is conceptually understood to include:
    - i. Investments in rail systems including a new, high performance signal system,
    - ii. Station modifications including platform lengthening, level boarding, and investments in station access facilities and amenities to support growing ridership and improve customer experience,
    - iii. New and modified maintenance and storage facilities in the vicinity of both terminals as well as the expansion of the electrified Caltrain fleet,

- iv. A series of short, 4-track stations and overtakes at various points throughout the corridor,
  - v. Completion of key regional and state partner projects including:
    - 1. The Portal 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 allow 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.
3. Further, Caltrain’s Long-Range Service Vision directs the railroad to consider new regional and megaregional connections that may result in changes to rail service on the corridor. Specifically, the Long-Range Service Vision directs the railroad to:
- a. Work with regional and State partners to collectively consider the feasibility of expanded regional and megaregional rail connections that either extend or interact with Caltrain’s service and corridor. This work is anticipated to include ongoing planning related to the California High Speed Rail system. It could also potentially include engaging in other partner agency planning efforts, such as endeavors related to the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, the Link21 program, the potential for expanded Altamont Corridor Express and Capitol Corridor services, and a potential extension of rail service to Monterey County.
  - b. To return to the Board with a recommendation regarding any formal expansion or modification of the Long-Range Service Vision to explicitly include such connections at such a time as:
    - i. The financial, operational, and physical feasibilities of such connections have been confirmed to the PCJPB;
    - ii. The PCJPB’s role in the advancement, funding, delivery, and operation of any such connections has been defined and agreed to by the Board and other relevant parties;
    - iii. There are formal policy and funding commitments supporting such connections; and
    - iv. The community impacts associated with such connections have been assessed and affected communities have been engaged with.

4. Additionally, Caltrain’s Long Range Service Vision directs the railroad to work toward implementation of the Vision by:
  - a. Developing a Plan for Caltrain’s Next Decade that lays out a plan for future service that is as financially sustainable as possible and that includes:
    - i. Assessment of demand for rail service relative to the financial and operational capacities of the JPB;
    - ii. Confirmation of Caltrain’s near-, medium-, and longer-term plans for future service levels across the corridor, as well as corresponding capital investments that may be required or desired, including grade separations and passing tracks,
    - iii. Analysis of gate-downtimes for at-grade crossings,
    - iv. Thresholds for changing service in the future and,
    - v. Consistency with Caltrain’s Capital Improvement Plan, Corridor Crossing Strategy, and Grade Crossing Program;
  - b. Ensuring that management of JPB assets and the planning and design of JPB and partner capital projects accommodate the Long-Range Service Vision;
  - c. Developing interpretative guidance that specifies how to apply the Long-Range Service Vision in planning and capital project contexts as is needed;
  - d. Continuing to improve the customer experience across the Caltrain system, including by advancing station accessibility improvements, station activation strategies, and first- and last-mile access solutions (such as partnerships with sister agencies), consistent with Caltrain’s Station Access Policy;
  - e. Seeking sources of funding and revenues needed to sustain the railroad’s operation, including the pursuit of fare revenue capture strategies and other potential revenue and funding sources that may be new, dedicated, public, and/or private; and,
  - f. Incrementally implementing the Long-Range Service Vision in a financially prudent manner.
  
5. Finally, Caltrain’s Long Range Service Vision directs the railroad to periodically reaffirm the Vision to ensure that it continues to provide relevant and useful guidance to the railroad. Such reaffirmations should occur:
  - a. At regular intervals of no less than 5 years, and
  - b. In response to significant changes to JPB or partner projects that materially influence the substance of the Long-Range Service Vision.