

***Ridership Growth
Task Force:
Marketing
as a Growth
Engine***

**JPB TOPS Committee
March 25, 2026**



Ridership Growth Strategy

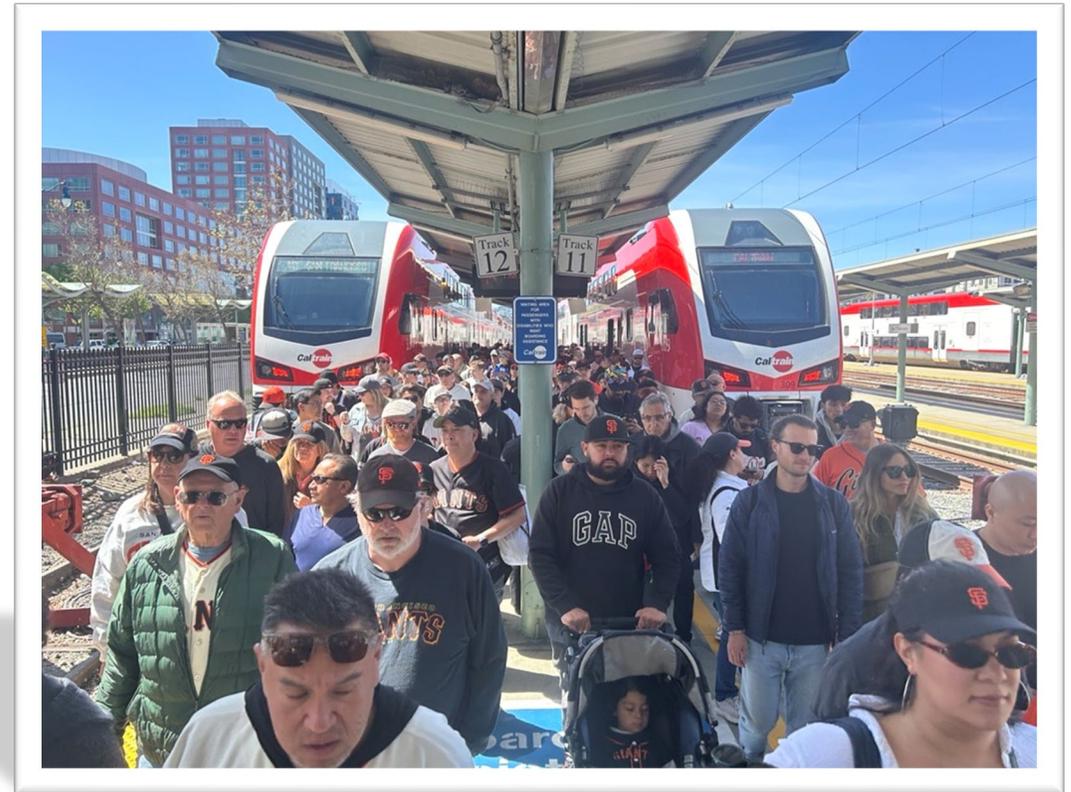
- Cross-departmental initiative to drive ridership growth
- Focus areas include:
 - ➔ Marketing, Activations, Special Events and Partnerships
 - City Partnership Toolkit
 - GoPass Expansion
- Ridership Trend Analysis





Marketing. Ridership. Revenue.

- Quality marketing **affects rider behavior** - shifting how often people ride, which fare products they choose, and when they travel.
- Partnerships **extend Caltrain's reach** at low cost by influencing decisions at moments that matter.



Market Conditions

- San Francisco is among (and by some metrics the highest) **the most expensive** markets for advertisers in the United States.
- Our shared service marketing team is small but mighty, leveraging cost-effective partnerships and using **highly targeted tactics**.
- These conditions resulted in the team leveraging Caltrain brand equity to receive **\$200K+ in equivalent advertising value** from our partners.



ENLARGE STREET VIEW

\$90,286.58 ⓘ
2/8/2026 - 3/7/2026 [Add to Cart](#)

12 WEEK COST
\$243,074.08 [Save 10%](#)
2/9/2026 - 5/3/2026



Strategic Objectives: 2025

North Star: Ridership and Revenue

- 1. Promote Leisure Trips (Weekend and Off-Peak)**
- 2. Be Top Transit Choice for Return-to-Office (RTO)**
- 3. Deepen and Expand Partnerships**
- 4. Experiment with New Marketing Methods**



Signature Campaigns and Programs

- Go **Faster**. Go **Caltrain**.
- Concert and Event Venue Partnerships
- Themed Trains (Billie Eilish, Kendrick Lamar, Valkyries)
- Summer of Caltrain + Camp Caltrain
- \$1 Youth Fare
- SF Giants Partnership
- SJ Sharks
- Bay FC



Partnerships as Force Multipliers

New & Improved Key Partnerships: SF Giants, SJ Sharks, and Bay FC

Piloted Bundled Ticket Products

- Bay FC ticket offer resulted in hundreds of sales with a seamless experience.



High-Visibility Partnerships: Testing Concepts

- Official television and radio broadcasts; in-game/concert advertising; content creation with players and mascots.

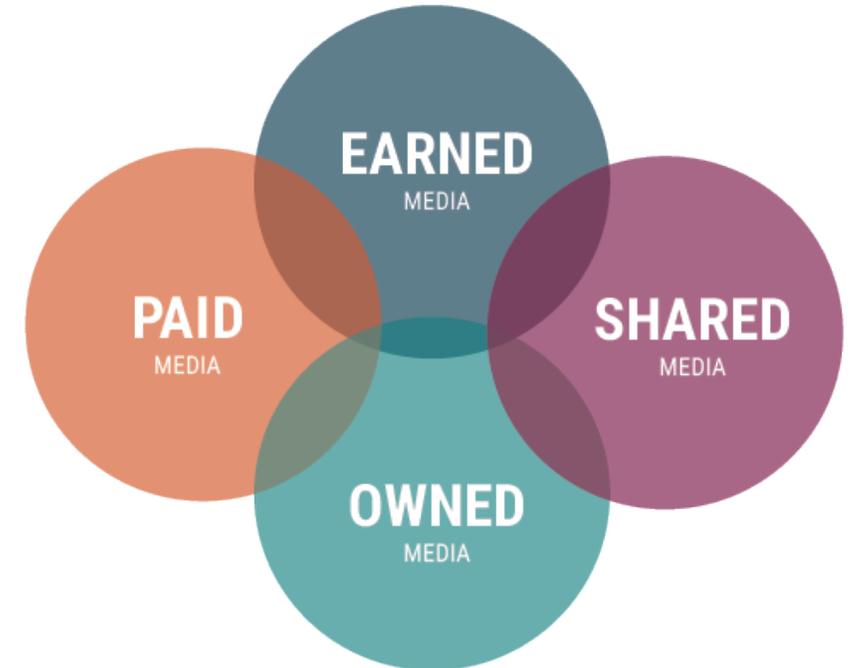
New Revenue Opportunities

- Caltrain's visibility and positive brand has already generated over \$450,000 in direct ad revenue in 2026 and will surpass \$1M by end of FY27.



Your Investment at Work

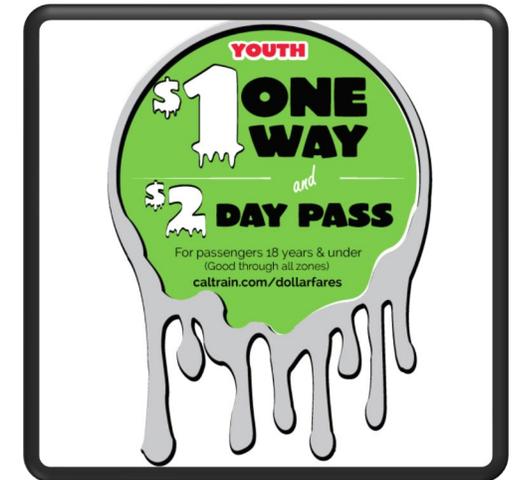
- FY26 Discretionary Budget: \$354,645
 - Paid Media: \$165,000 (digital, social, broadcast)
 - Partnerships: \$129,000 (SF Giants, Bay FC, Stanford Athletics, etc.)
 - Other Opportunities: \$60,645
 - 2025 spend was highly targeted; in-kind marketing critical.



Ridership Outcomes

Marketing paired with service improvements successfully brought non-commute riders into the system.

- South County Ridership increased +21% YOY
- Giants Ridership increased +57.9% YOY
- Sharks Ridership increased +83.3% YOY
- Warriors Ridership increased 50.2% YOY
- Youth Ridership increased +124% YOY
- Weekend ridership up 135%+ YOY
- Highest rider satisfaction in 27 years of measurement.

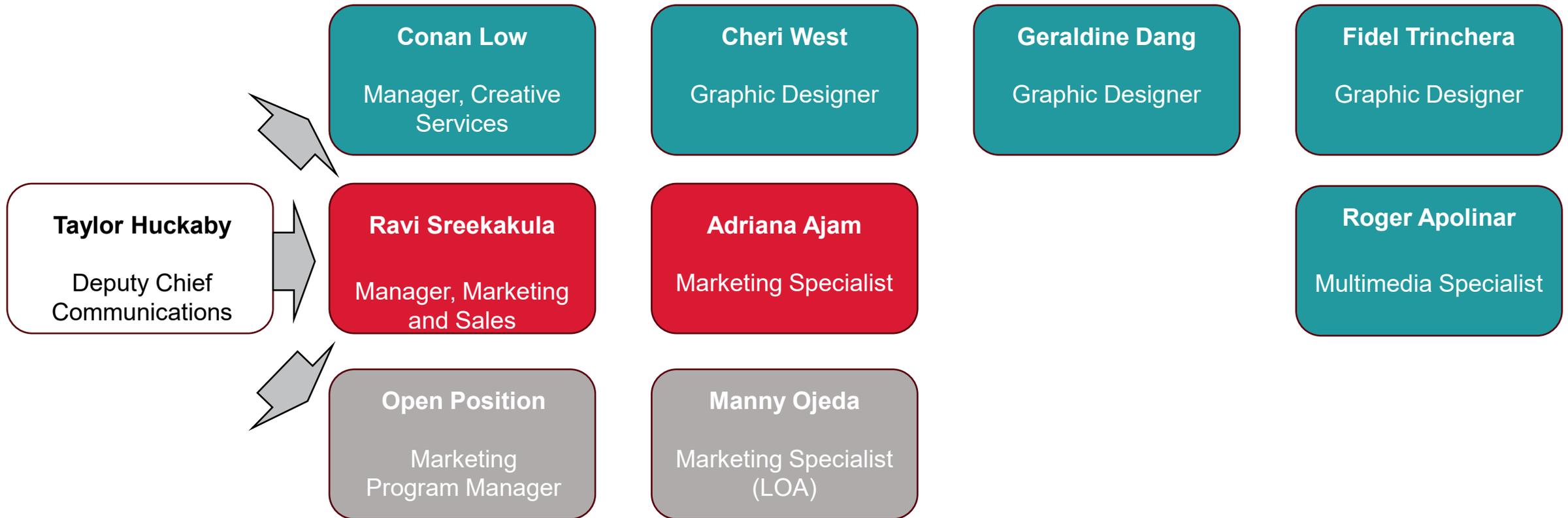


Looking Ahead: 2026

- Continue to **leverage high-impact partnerships** and in-kind marketing value.
- Additional **Chase Center** and **SAP Center** opportunities.
- Deeper partnership with the **SF Giants**.
- Focus **Go Caltrain** “always-on” campaigns towards **youth ridership**.
- Budget cuts **will have an impact** on ability to provide additional return on investment.
- **Ad contract** up for renewal – will require board action later this year.



Shared Services: Marketing and Creative Services Team



GoPass / City Partnership Updates

Full Updates in near future



City Partnerships

City Engagement

- Meeting being set-up with Mayors, LPMG members to start the conversation on how this could be a win win from a City perspective

City Policies

- Identify opportunities for cities to include stronger transit policies in upcoming TDM or General Plan updates that would benefit Caltrain

Communication Toolkits

- Equip cities with clear information and collateral so they can effectively promote Caltrain services and programs

Provide City with Go Pass Information

- Encourage GoPass adoption by cities, highlighting new flexible sign-up options

GoPass Strategy

Assessment

- Developing new GoPass web site
- Partner outreach
- Optimization of program operations
- C2 transition issue mitigation

Development

- Increased outreach to prospective organizations
- City partnerships
- San Mateo County TA grant fund, \$575K

Optimization & Growth

- Explore existing partner opportunities
- Tiered program evaluation
- Tap into participating organizations

GO PASS

» CALTRAIN FOR BUSINESSES



**FIRST-CLASS COMMUTING.
ECONOMY-CLASS PRICING.**

Introducing GoPass, a discounted and unlimited annual Caltrain pass that businesses can offer to employees. Make commuting easier while lowering your carbon footprint on Caltrain's electric fleet.

| PROGRAM | CRITERIA* | ANNUAL PRICE PER PERSON |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| GoPass All-In | All site employees must be enrolled | \$275 |
| GoPass Tiered | SMALL: 14-100 headcount | \$399 - \$449 |
| | MEDIUM: 101-500 headcount | \$449 - \$499 |
| | LARGE: 501+ headcount | \$449 - \$549 |

*Minimum enrollment required.

PASS VALUE

\$1,152[†]

[†]Based on adult monthly pass price annualized within one travel zone.

WHY GOPASS?

- Valuable benefit to retain and attract employees.
- Tiered pricing offers flexibility for any workplace.
- Participating in GoPass and donating unused passes can qualify for tax benefits.
- Frequent service every 15-20 minutes during peak hours and every half hour during off-peak and weekends.
- Special offers with GoPass Perks.

Learn more: caltrain.com/gopass | b2b@caltrain.com

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.CALTRAIN.COM

