



# Transit Watch: Public Transit in Crisis



July 16, 2020

Friends,

The alarm bells are ringing! Caltrain, a critical public transportation option for millions of workers traveling in and through Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties, is in danger of shutting down due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Without funding assistance from the state or federal government, the agency may be forced to close its doors and cease operations indefinitely. Caltrain is one of dozens of public transportation agencies statewide facing this existential crisis.

Are we headed toward a California without transit?

Read some of the coverage of the challenges ahead for Caltrain. Is your agency next?

- [San Jose Mercury News, July 15, 2020, "Could Caltrain shut down? Why the once-unthinkable is now a real possibility?"](#)
  - *"Without riders, Caltrain officials say the agency will need an infusion of cash from somewhere. Otherwise, spokesman Dan Lieberman said, "There wouldn't be enough funding for the system to run."*
- [San Francisco Chronicle, July 15, 2020, "Caltrain derailed: Advocates predict shutdown would mean disaster for Bay Area"](#)
  - *"When we return to normal we're going to see highways flooded with cars, an increase in greenhouse gases and a decrease in mental health," said Caltrain board Director Charles Stone, describing the social consequences of so many people stuck in automobiles."*
  - *"If service were shut down, riders who could have zipped up the Peninsula in 30 minutes will instead spend an hour and a half on the bus..."*
- [NBC Bay Area, July 15, 2020, "Caltrain Facing Full Shutdown as Tax Measure Fails to Advance"](#)
  - *"Caltrain... may be facing a full shutdown."*
  - *State Assemblyman Kevin Mullin in a tweet said San Francisco supervisors' failure to act while the agency is in such dire straits is "**endangering commuter service for parochial reasons**. Irresponsible for a regional 'partner.'"*
- [KTVU, July 15, 2020, "Caltrain warns commuter trains could stop running as funding issues arise"](#)
  - *"...Caltrain is relying on federal CARES Act funding to stay afloat. Caltrain's head of the Board of Directors says his concern focuses on when those federal funds run out."*

For more information, please contact the California Transit Association at [COVID-19@caltransit.org](mailto:COVID-19@caltransit.org).