Editorial: Vote yes on Measure RR to keep Caltrain on the rails

The measure's 0.125% sales tax increase is a small price to pay for its benefits to commuters and the climate...

But the pandemic has devastated ridership, reducing it by as much as 95% and throwing the railroad into fiscal crisis... While the pandemic and its consequences have come to seem permanent in this country, workers will return to offices one day. Losing Caltrain, the heir to a history of Peninsula passenger rail dating to the 19th century, would force as many as 65,000 riders a day to take to the Bay Area's oversubscribed highways in perpetuity...

Meanwhile, modernizing the system through electrification could take more people off the roads by expanding service and facilitating connections with other systems...

The system's board has taken steps to further diversify ridership by offering fare discounts for low-income passengers and promising more off-peak service and coordination with other transit agencies...

In any case, voters get the chance to make Caltrain less vulnerable to the next crisis, global or parochial, by voting yes on Measure RR.

Editorial: Keep Caltrain rail service on track. Vote yes on Measure RR

Expanding and upgrading Caltrain's service is a key element of the Bay Area's long-term transportation strategy. Yet for decades the well-run system that stretches from Gilroy to San Francisco has had no dedicated revenue source, slowing progress to electrify engines and substantially increase the number of trains that run each hour.

Voters in Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco counties should remedy that by approving Measure RR on the Nov. 3 ballot...

The pandemic will eventually diminish. When it does, ensuring an expanded Caltrain will stand as a smart investment...

Caltrain's very existence has been threatened by concerns about COVID-19, which reduced ridership by 95%... Failure to pass Measure RR would either force Caltrain to shut operations altogether in January or further reduce service to a bare-bones operation that would primarily focus on maintaining the railway corridor...

It's essential that the most important Peninsula transit service remain on track. Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco county voters should approve Measure RR.