



Link21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Link21 Program Monthly Stakeholder Update

Developing Potential Concepts for Link21

Link21 is entering an important and exciting stage in the planning process! Key information that has been gathered through technical work, such as the market analysis, combined with public input provided during previous rounds of outreach, is helping to create potential Program Concepts (Concepts).

Potential Concepts will be shared in the upcoming public meetings as an introduction to how the team is developing them. It also represents a preview of the wider range of Concepts that will be shared in the future as the work progresses. Concepts will identify the places that could be served by passenger rail, the type of rail service that would improve rider experience, train technology, and what kind of infrastructure is needed to meet travel needs. The Concepts to be shared will include transbay rail crossing options (linking the San Francisco and East Bay BART and Regional Rail networks), including alignments and potential station locations, and the associated megaregional benefits.

These high-level Concepts are important because they allow us to compare and evaluate different options for Link21, refine them, and move Concepts forward for more detailed work in the future; ultimately working towards the identification of rail improvements that best address Link21's goals and objectives as well as the needs of the Northern California Megaregion.

How are Concepts Developed?

Concepts include and reflect various types of information and are built from four key building blocks: markets, service, train technology, and infrastructure.

- **Markets:** The people, places, and travel corridors that could be served by a passenger rail network. This is informed by the Link21 market analysis, which examined current and future travel patterns,

population demographics, activity and employment centers.

- **Service:** The passenger's experience while using rail. For example, how frequently the train comes, trip travel time, and whether a transfer is needed.
- **Technology:** Train technology for Link21 refers to two different types of passenger rail systems; *BART* (frequent trains with many stops, operating within dense urban areas, separate from the national rail network) and *Regional Rail* (less frequent trains serving longer distance trips, at higher speed, with fewer stops or express service).
- **Infrastructure:** The physical components, such as railroad tracks and stations, that are required to connect riders to desired markets with the right type of service.

Based upon technical analyses (ridership modeling, operational options, and engineering) and ongoing input from stakeholders and the public, Concepts will continue to be refined and shared. Continual community outreach will allow us to engage and hear feedback directly from the public to determine if the initial Concepts meet their travel needs or if there are other improvements to consider and include while evaluating them.

Link21 to Kick off the Next Round of Public Outreach

Link21 will begin a combination of in-person and virtual outreach activities, including virtual meetings and virtual office hours in October. This next round of outreach will focus on educating the public about Program Concept development, including results of the service improvements survey, and how all of this information will be used to support technical work and further developing and evaluating Concepts.

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The virtual public meetings (webinars with a live Question & Answer session) are scheduled as follows:

- **Megaregional Overview:**
Tuesday, October 18: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- **San Francisco Focus:**
Thursday, October 20: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- **Oakland/East Bay Focus:**
Wednesday, October 26: 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Please note, each presentation will include information regarding megaregional benefits.

Virtual office hours (Question & Answer session with technical staff) will be held:

- Wednesday, October 19: Noon-1:00 p.m.
- Monday, October 24: 5:30- 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, October 27: 4:30-5:30 p.m.

The office hours events give the public an opportunity to ask questions of the technical teams. All virtual events will be held using the Zoom platform. Multilingual, American Sign Language, and closed captioning will be provided for all events. Starting October 3, registration links for these meetings will be available at www.Link21program.org/events

Prior to the start of the fall outreach activities, the Link21 Team will brief the CCJPA Board of Directors (September 21) and the BART Board of Directors (October 13). Briefings will also be given to Link21 agency working groups: Jurisdictional Working Group (September 21) and the executive level Project Development Team (PDT) [September 27]). The staff-level PDT briefing was held September 13.

Additionally, and to build on current work in the Megaregion communities, the Team will conduct in-person outreach at BART and Capitol Corridor stations and on-board Capitol Corridor trains. Continued grassroots events in various targeted communities will be performed mid-October through November.

Finally, the next round of co-creation workshops and the first Equity Advisory Council (EAC) meeting will be held this fall.

For more information about fall outreach activities, please visit www.Link21program.org/events. If you plan to attend one of the virtual meetings or office hours events and need special accommodations, please email info@Link21program.org or call 1-855-905-LINK (5465).

Link21 Forms Equity Advisory Council

In support of its equity goals, Link21 is establishing an Equity Advisory Council (EAC). As an advisory council the EAC will provide guidance to the Link21 Team along with providing their

expertise on issues related to equity and passenger rail improvement projects.

The EAC will have up to 20 members and reflect the diversity of the Megaregion, including low-income communities and communities of color that have been most impacted by transportation inequities, and other communities that have historically been underserved. It will be made up of people who bring lived experience or professional familiarity in technical and/or policy areas such as passenger rail transportation and land use, housing, environmental, environmental justice, transit justice, and economic development.

In an effort to remove barriers and encourage active participation, EAC members will receive an honorarium for their role on the council as recognition and appreciation of their time, energy, and expertise. Link21 also recognizes that for some community members, there may be additional barriers to full participation, and has therefore created a mitigation fund to serve as an additional mechanism for inclusion by reducing barriers for individuals with additional needs that may otherwise prohibit their participation. Members who opt-in can receive funds to support needs such as high-speed internet or data plan support; child, dependent, or family care support; or transportation.

The EAC will meet virtually every other month beginning in fall 2022. Between meetings, EAC members may be asked to review and give input on program related documents, participate in subcommittee meetings, and attend other related meetings or events.

During August, interested community members were able to submit an application to serve on the EAC. We had a tremendous response, with more than 90 applications received. This fall, EAC members will be selected by a committee consisting of engagement and equity experts from within the Link21 Team, chaired by Nicole Franklin (BART) and Dr. Beverly Scott (Beverly Scott and Associates) as well as public agency and academic partners around the Megaregion, including Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Mineta Transportation Institute, and Caltrans.

Link21 Environmental Constraints and Opportunities Report Available

The Link21 Environmental Constraints and Opportunities (ECO) Report was finalized in July 2022 and can be found on the Link21 website (under the environmental tab in the document library section). The ECO report identifies constraints and opportunities in multiple subareas within the 21-county Northern California Megaregion. The ECO study area includes existing and planned passenger rail networks and transportation hubs as well as other ECO subareas where future rail infrastructure and service improvements may be considered as part of Link21. *(Continued on page 3)*

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The ECO Report provides descriptions of the existing opportunities and constraints across the Megaregion in text, tables, and in mapping. This information will be to help evaluate project concepts and eventual project alternatives. It will also be used to inform decisions about which concepts and alternatives to advance into the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) after decisions made by BART and CCJPA in Stage Gate 2.



ECO Report Study Area

Value Capture and Equity Paper to be Released this Month

The Link21 Value Capture and Equity Paper are now available on the [website](#) (under the Organization, Communication, and governance tab in the document library section). Value capture and equity have not historically or explicitly been tied together, as value capture aims to generate and direct revenue from land value increases to support public investments, but has not always enhanced community economic development. The sheer scale of Link21 paired with issues related to displacement, affordability, and homelessness across the Megaregion provides an opportunity for creative approaches to value capture that support and enable more equitable outcomes while generating much needed funding for transit.

The Value Capture and Equity Paper considers the key equity opportunities and challenges related to value capture, outlines the existing policies that can enable equitable value capture practices, and lays out potential policies that can be introduced early in the program's life cycle to support both community economic development and revenue generation through value capture.

Past and Upcoming Meetings

SEPT. 13	STAFF PDT MEETING
SEPT. 21	JWG MEETING
SEPT. 21	CCJPA BOARD MEETING
OCT. 13	BART BOARD MEETING

Upcoming Grassroots Events and Virtual Meetings*

SEPT. 17	ALOHA FESTIVAL, AUBURN, 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM
SEPT. 17	NAPA FARMERS MARKET, NAPA, 8:00 AM – NOON
SEPT. 17	GRAND LAKE FARMERS MARKET OAKLAND, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
SEPT. 18	ALUM ROCK VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET, SAN JOSE, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
OCT. 18	VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING, 5:30 PM
OCT. 19	VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS, NOON
OCT. 20	VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING, 5:30 PM
OCT. 24	VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS, 5:30 PM
OCT. 26	VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING, 5:30 PM
OCT. 27	VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS, 6:00 PM

* For more information about dates, times, and locations of outreach activities, visit www.Link21program.org/events