

Advancing Equity In Public Transportation

Delivering Benefits to Priority Populations

Past transportation and infrastructure projects have failed to adequately consider the needs of communities that have been marginalized. As a result, these communities often experience negative project outcomes like displacement of residents and businesses, and environmental harm while wealthier and whiter communities tend to see more of the project benefits.

In contrast, Link21 strives to partner with communities that have been marginalized to develop much needed transit benefits. A key Program equity consideration is how well Link21 performs in creating benefits for and reducing harms to “priority populations.”

For Link21, “priority populations” refers to census tracts in the Northern California Megaregion where people are most impacted by negative economic, mobility, community, health, and safety outcomes. This term was defined in partnership with communities through a community co-creation process.

What is Link21?

Link21 aims to create a faster, more connected, equitable, and accessible network of train service that cares for people, the environment, and quality of life for generations to come. At the core of Link21 is a new train crossing between Oakland and San Francisco, unlocking travel possibilities across the 21-county Megaregion. Link21 will also include train network improvements for both the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and regional rail.



For more information, visit Link21Program.org

Equitable Processes Create Equitable Outcomes

By prioritizing open and transparent engagement with communities that have been marginalized, Link21 will be better able to design and deliver equitable train service that meets the priorities, needs, and values of megaregional communities. In addition, each team working on Link21, from environmental to planning and engineering, has an equity lead to ensure equity is central to their team's process.

Since the Link21 Program began, the team has actively partnered with local community-based organizations (CBOs) to support engagement with communities that have been marginalized. This included three rounds of co-creation, which gave community members the opportunity to directly shape important work such as Program Goals and Objectives, definition of priority populations, and identification of key mobility needs. Community members and CBOs were compensated for their partnership in this process.

As of July 2022, the Link21 Team hosted three rounds of community co-creation, which reached more than 870 community members through workshops and more than 1,600+ through surveys and polls.

In 2023 and 2024, the Link21 Team will partner with CBOs on community walking tours, workshops, presentations, surveys, open houses, and more. These events will provide community members opportunities to offer input on important Program work. Link21's engagement activities are designed to meet the accessibility needs of community members with flexible timing, locations, technology, interactive and accessible content, and smaller meetings to increase trust and accountability. In addition, the

Program is strategizing now on ways to minimize displacement within priority populations as a result of Link21.

Along with community partnerships, Link21 offers a variety of ways to engage from surveys to virtual webinars and in-person presentations, where audiences learn and provide valuable input, including through the Link21 website, email address and telephone line.

Equity Advisory Council

Link21's Equity Advisory Council (EAC) was established in February 2023. The 18-member body was selected after a public call for applications in 2022. EAC membership reflects the demographic, social, economic, and geographic diversity of the Megaregion. Committee members serve two-year terms and are compensated for their service.

The EAC provides important Link21 advisory functions, such as integrating deep community experience and knowledge from those who have lived experience with transportation and infrastructure inequities. Since the EAC meets every other month, members can provide continuous and long-term input on numerous topics.

EAC meetings are hosted online and open to the public. For more detail, visit Link21's EAC webpage or BART Legistar.

Partner with Link21

Link21 is actively seeking CBOs who would like to play a role in helping shape and define the Program. Learn more by visiting the Program website and contacting inquiries@Link21Program.org to express your interest.

Link21 is sponsored by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (Capitol Corridor). The Link21 Team is also working closely with our Northern California rail partners and the state of California to ensure an integrated rail program.

