

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Joseph Chroston-Bell, Network Rail Consulting, Link21 Stage Gate Lead

TO: Equity Advisory Council (EAC)

CC: Link21 EAC Team (Staff and Consultants); link21dc@link21program.org

DATE: 06/09/2023

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM F: ADVANCING TO STAGE GATE 2

At the April EAC meeting, an introduction to the Stage Gate process presentation was given to the Equity Advisory Council (EAC). The presentation included outlining the purpose of the review process, how each review is structured, the evidence we take to each review, and the EAC's role in future reviews. The presentation can be found [online here](#). This memo fulfils an action to return to the EAC with additional detail on the forthcoming Stage Gate 2.

Stage Gate 2

Expected Board Action

At Stage Gate 2, estimated for Spring 2024, we aim to approach the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) Boards with a recommended action for each Board to approve. The current draft Board action is to:

“Advance a recommended Concept into Phase 2 (Project Selection) and develop a Project proposal for Environmental Review”.

In practice, ‘advancing a recommended Concept’ means the Board will be making some important decisions in the lifecycle of Link21:

- *Technology choice* – Whether to develop BART-guage or Standard-Guage (Regional Rail) technology in the new transbay crossing. This has implications for the type of new and upgraded service and journeys we could provide for the Megaregion.
- *Concept options* – Also advancing the options associated with the technology choice (such as different stations served or routes) for further development, engagement, evaluation, and refinement.

Upon passing Stage Gate 2, the Link21 Team will develop a Project sufficiently defined for Environmental Review. This will entail additional technical development, evaluation, engagement and outreach, and other supporting activities to refine the Concept. For example, following Stage Gate 2 we expect additional work to occur in the definition of station locations and rail alignments.

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Evidence For Stage Gate 2

Stage Gate 2 Report

At each Stage Gate a report is provided to the Boards. The primary purpose of this document is to clearly articulate why the proposed board action should be taken. The report fulfils this purpose by contextualizing work done throughout the phase so readers can understand the evidence and rationale underpinning the proposed action.

Four statements

We will frame evidence in the Stage Gate 2 report by four thematic statements. The current draft statements are:

1. **Development & Evaluation** – “Completed robust development and evaluation to confirm the Megaregional need, and to recommend a Concept for advancement in line with the vision, goals, and objectives approved at Stage Gate 1”.
2. **Engagement & Outreach** - “Engaged stakeholders and the public across the Megaregion to shape the development and recommendation of a Concept for advancement”.
3. **Equity** - “Fully implemented the Equity Commitment through the whole development process and are recommending a Concept that advances equity”.
4. **Readiness** – “Secured people, processes, funding and tools to readily deliver Stage Gate 3”.

We defined, and continue to review, these statements to challenge ourselves to deliver work of high quality. If we demonstrate we have fulfilled the four statements, we consider we have sufficient evidence to secure the proposed board action.

Key Stage Gate 2 Evidence List

Throughout the Stage Gate 2 report, links will be provided to key evidence that will be available for public access on the Link21 website. Key evidence includes select reports and memos produced throughout the phase that we consider vital to support our Stage Gate 2 proposed Board action. Our current draft list of key evidence includes:

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| • Preliminary Business Case | • Concepts Considered But Not Advanced Report |
| • Concept Development Report | • Funding Plan |
| • Engagement Summary Report | • Governance Strategy |
| • Environmental Constraints & Opportunities (ECO) Report | • Preliminary Purpose & Need |
| • Megaregional Program Report | • Stage Gate 3 Outline Delivery Plan |
| • Equity Advisory Council Report | |

In your forthcoming EAC meetings the Link21 team will clearly articulate how topics presented, and your advisory provided, will impact Stage Gate 2 and especially the key evidence listed above.

Role of EAC in Stage Gate Process

Providing ongoing advisory through to Stage Gate 2

The EAC provides ongoing advisory to the Link21 Team through its regular bimonthly meetings, office hours, and other communications. This role is intended to give the EAC the opportunity to proactively shape the development of key work related to Stage Gate 2, as opposed to just providing the EAC with the ability to react to more complete work.

In alignment with this, upcoming EAC meetings will, as much as is feasible, focus content and discussions around the decisions that will be made at Stage Gate 2. Table 1 shows the currently proposed upcoming topics. Discussion on each of these topics will allow EAC input to guide the development of key evidence for Stage Gate 2. Topics are proposed at times that best allow for input to be incorporated into work.

This list is kept in draft to allow flexibility to both adjust based on EAC input about meeting structure and respond to previously raised feedback or questions. In acknowledgement of EAC feedback regarding needing more time for discussion, the Link21 Team will endeavor to have no more than two substantive agenda topics per meeting. The Link21 Team will also structure agenda items so that EAC members have more time to provide input.

Table 1 – Proposed upcoming EAC topics and relation to Stage Gate 2

PROPOSED TOPIC	INTENDED EAC ROLE INFLUENCING STAGE GATE 2
August 2023: Preliminary Purpose & Need	Advisory on how the preliminary Purpose and Need should be refined, informing its definition for Stage Gate 2.
August 2023: Anti-Displacement Toolkit	Advisory on the toolkit methodology, results, and recommendations, informing how displacement is considered in the Business Case.
October 2023: Service Visioning	To understand the differences in service provision between the two technologies (BART and Regional Rail) and to provide advisory on how this could influence the Stage Gate 2 recommended Concept.
October 2023: Business Case Evaluation	Advisory on what the more detailed evaluation shows about a technology choice and how this could influence the Stage Gate 2 recommended Concept.
November 2023*: Business Case Uncertainty Evaluation	Advisory on how uncertainty results (i.e., what benefits Link21 could offer in different future scenarios) are interpreted and how this could influence the Stage Gate 2 recommended Concept.
January 2024: Stage Gate 2 Briefing	To inform the EAC on how evidence and evaluation will be presented to the Board at Stage Gate 2.

**Pending potential move of the EAC meeting from December to November to avoid the busy end-of-year period.*

The Equity Advisory Council Report

One piece of key evidence that the Link21 Team will produce for Stage Gate 2 is an *Equity Advisory Council Report*. This document will summarize the advisory related to Stage Gate 2 work that the EAC provided throughout 2023 and how that ongoing advisory was incorporated into and shaped the preparation of key evidence for Stage Gate 2.

Starting in June, there will be a new standing agenda item about how EAC feedback is being considered and addressed in the work. This will allow the EAC to review the Link21 Team's in-progress summation of Stage Gate 2-related input received and how that input has been integrated into work. This continuous review will give the EAC the opportunity to ensure that the Equity Advisory Council Report accurately reflects its input in advance of the document being made available as a part of the Stage Gate 2 review in 2024.