

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Tim Lohrentz, Equity Programs Administrator (Acting), Link21
TO: Equity Advisory Council (EAC)
CC: Link21 Equity Team (Staff and Consultants)
DATE: June 16, 2023

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM D: FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS EAC FEEDBACK

A key role of the EAC, as defined in the [EAC Charter](#), is to “advise on, cross check, and lift up equity considerations.” EAC can offer this lived experience through bimonthly meetings, office hours, and other communications.

Beginning with the June 20, 2023 EAC meeting, there will be a standing agenda item and accompanying memo entitled “Follow-Up to Previous EAC Feedback.” This memo will document questions and input from EAC members regarding Link21 and demonstrate how that input is being considered in Link21 work. The goals of this memo are to:

- Confirm that EAC questions are responded to.
- Show transparency and accountability for incorporating EAC feedback into Link21 work.
- Demonstrate the value that EAC contributions have on Link21 work.
- Provide ongoing documentation of EAC input that can later be summarized into a report for Stage Gate reviews.

This memo is not intended to be an exhaustive log of all feedback from and communications with EAC members. Rather, it focuses on input that is related to discussion prompts as well as select general input about Link21 or EAC logistics.

During the EAC meeting, the Link21 Team will speak to a few prominent pieces of input from the memo.

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General Program Feedback

Feedback	What has been the outreach to riders or individuals whose first language is not English?
Where Raised	February 28, 2023, EAC meeting
Follow-up	The Link21 team has held numerous events have partnered with CBOs that primarily serve immigrant communities and when asked, we have included interpretation, such as in Spanish, Cantonese, and Hmong. Critical printed materials and the website are translated into Spanish and traditional Chinese. Participants may also request real-time American Sign Language or other languages prior to an outreach meeting.

Feedback	Can the EAC meetings be recorded?
Where Raised	April 25, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	Legally there are no issues with recording a public meeting. At the June meeting, the EAC will take an action on whether to record meetings.

Feedback	How will EAC members' terms be renewed after two years? Will a decision on a proposed project be made prior to terms ending?
Where Raised	May 2, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	<p>The term renewal process has not yet been decided, but the present term is due to expire in January 2025. This will be a future topic of discussion with the EAC.</p> <p>A Project is not formally selected until Environmental Review is completed, which will occur after this EAC cohort's term has concluded. However, this EAC cohort's term will advise on our development process and some early decisions on the way to this selection.</p> <p>The planned date of the Stage Gate 2 in April 2024 falls within this EAC cohort's term. State Gate 2 will advance a Concept, effectively deciding the train technology in the crossing with implications for how Link21 provides megaregional service.</p> <p>Stage Gate 3, estimated for Spring 2025, is expected to identify a Project for Environmental Review. Specific project decisions that are part of Stage Gate 3 might be finalized after current EAC members' terms end or are renewed.</p>

Environmental Constraints and Opportunities Feedback

Feedback	There is a planned Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital on the West End of the City of Alameda. Having a rail connection to there would help people accessing VA hospital services.
Where Raised	March 28, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	Planned medical facilities were not a part of the Environmental Constraints and Opportunities (ECO) Report. The VA facility is planned to include an outpatient clinic, a Veteran's Service Center, and a National Cemetery Columbarium (not a full hospital). In response to this input, during concept development, the Link21 Team will consider the possibility of either directly serving the VA facility via rail or providing access to the facility via a shuttle from a rail station as an environmental opportunity.

Feedback	EAC members commented the need to use clean technology for future rail operations and noted that that using clean technology is an opportunity to reduce asthma rates and other air-borne illnesses in priority populations.
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting and post April-meeting survey
Follow-up	State of California guidelines call for all new railcars to be electric by 2035, which is before Link21's expected completion. As a result, the Link21 Team already planned for electric operations in the new transbay rail crossing, and this is assumed in the ECO work. This comment does reaffirm Link21's objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emission and improve safety, health, and air quality, which could improve asthma rates.

Feedback	There is an opportunity to provide better access to education, such as universities and community college, through transit. For example, Berkeley students commute from all over the Bay Area. Expanded campus-to-campus transit is also an opportunity.
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting and post April 2023 meeting survey
Follow-up	Colleges and universities were already included in the ECO Report. This comment did highlight the potential to better serve educational institutions as an important type of opportunity to the EAC. The Link21 Team will continue to consider opportunities related to serving education.

Feedback	Link21 should leverage capacity on existing tracks
Where Raised	Post April 2023 meeting survey
Follow-up	Existing rail right of way was already included as an opportunity in the ECO Report and maximizing the utility of existing infrastructure is a focus of Link21's concept development work. However, it should be noted that for Regional Rail, most of the existing rail lines (except for Caltrain) are owned by private freight rail operators and thus all use of the rail lines and right-of-way requires agreements with those companies. Reaching agreement often requires building additional rail capacity and not only using existing rails. Furthermore, dedicated passenger tracks (not on existing privately-owned tracks) will enable higher service frequency and better reliability for passenger trains, since freight trains now have priority over passenger trains on shared track. The Link21 Team will continue to consider opportunities related to using existing infrastructure in concept development.

Business Case Equity Metrics and Indicators Feedback

Feedback	What is the diversity of staff involved with developing the Business Case equity metrics?
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting
Follow-up	<p>The Link21 Team has created a survey that all Link21 staff are expected to complete to gain a better understanding of the Link21 Team's composition. Results from the survey will be reported to the EAC at a later date.</p> <p>In addition, Link21's approach to equity in the Business Case, including the identification of equity metrics, was done in partnership with community. There was a strong emphasis on working with communities that have historically been excluded from influencing early planning work for infrastructure projects. Notable engagement that shaped the equity metrics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ 2 rounds of co-creation, in partnership with over 30 community-based organizations and almost 700 community members ▫ A poll of low-income individuals and people of color

Feedback	Several EAC councilmembers commented on access to jobs, including the need for better access to jobs at airports, restaurants, and services. Many of these workers need safe late-night transit. For young people, many are working in retail or food. Good service throughout the day is important.
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting
Follow-up	<p>In alignment with the EAC's input on types of jobs that are important from an equity perspective, the Link21 Team will be analyzing access to opportunity jobs — jobs that are both generally accessible and pay a living wage or provide the opportunity to advance. This analysis will be included in the next Business Case evaluation. The Link21 Team will provide further details about this approach, and how it is reflective of EAC feedback, through an upcoming follow-up memo.</p> <p>The Business Case also includes a metric on expanded service hours, which considers the level of service outside peak hours.</p>

Feedback	Several EAC councilmembers discussed that community destinations could also include correctional facilities, tourist attractions, community-based organizations, and primary care clinics.
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting, April 25, 2023, EAC Office Hours, and post April 2023 meeting survey
Follow-up	The Link21 Team is examining these various ideas for community destinations. We will report back on this at an upcoming EAC meeting.

Feedback	How will the benefits of Link21 be distributed geographically amongst priority populations?
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting
Follow-up	The Link21 Team will create maps or other materials that show the distribution of benefits to priority populations in the next evaluation and share these with the EAC.

Concept Development Feedback

Feedback	Work together with city governments and other transit agencies on first- and last-mile issues
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting and May 2, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	Link21 has begun to look at station access for potential new/improved stations, with the aim to improve station access for modes such as walking, biking, other micromobility (e.g., electric scooters, skateboards, e-bikes), and buses. After a technology decision is made at Stage Gate 2, Link21 will take a deeper look and work with cities to explore how best to plan for stations that provide convenient rail access.

Feedback	Are any express service concepts being developed?
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting and May 2, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	The service plans that Link21 has developed in this phase of concept development are intended to explore the potential for new rail ridership, and not intended to represent exactly what service will be operated. In doing so, we have gained some insights about where express service might make sense, and where it might not. We will continue to refine service plan concepts after a technology decision is made at Stage Gate 2. We will be incorporating both urban metro and intercity express service types in our plans. The express service is mostly provided on the regional rail network since BART is primarily a two-track system and passing tracks (3 rd and 4 th) tracks are needed to bypass and “express” past local trains.

Feedback	Provide a program to assist low-income individuals
Where Raised	April 18, 2023, EAC meeting and May 2, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	BART participates in Clipper START, a means-based fare program established by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) which recently increased its low-income rider discount from 20% to 50% for BART riders. Access for low-income individuals is a key Link21 equity concern . However, discount programs are managed on a regional level by MTC.

Feedback	EAC member David Sorrell provided links to two studies related to women on public transit and safety considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ 7 ways cities can make transportation safer for women: study – AMPO ▫ Metro releases Understanding How Women Travel report The Source
Where Raised	May 2, 2023, EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	Link21 team will share this information with the EAC.