

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Tim Lohrentz, Equity Programs Administrator, Link21
TO: Equity Advisory Council (EAC)
CC: Link21 EAC Team (Staff and Consultants)
DATE: 08/18/2023

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

This is a standing agenda item and accompanying memo entitled “Follow-Up to Previous EAC Feedback.” This memo documents questions and input from EAC members and demonstrates 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 2 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 questions and input about Link21 or EAC logistics that were not previously or sufficiently responded to or were raised on multiple occasions.

General Program Feedback

Feedback	Can Link21 support a regional pass program to reduce barriers? Many displaced individuals now live further away from urban centers and need to travel longer to reach destinations, resulting in higher transportation costs.
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting
Follow-up	The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the lead agency to establish a means-based fare program in the region. In addition, Link21 may form a partnership with other agencies to address the issue of fare affordability in the region and megaregion.

Feedback	How is Link21 conducting outreach especially in low-income neighborhoods?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti)
Follow-up	Through a grassroots community co-creation process, the Link21 Team is intentionally working with low-income and marginalized communities, including Link21's priority populations, to ensure their voices are heard

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	<p>and past harms are not repeated. Link21 is partnering with local community-based organizations (CBOs), to provide a deeper level of engagement, promote open conversation, and help us understand and integrate the needs of marginalized communities into the Program. The Link21 Team co-creates with CBOs and community members from priority populations census tracts and with residents experiencing inequitable outcomes, regardless of what census tract they live in. Read more here regarding how Link21 defines priority populations: Priority Populations An Updated Definition for Link21 (link21program.org)</p>
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Anti-Displacement Feedback

Feedback	What is the make-up of those working on anti-displacement policy?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting
Follow-up	This will be answered in part at an upcoming EAC meeting when the staff/consultant survey results are shared.

Feedback	How are Link21 and BART approaching the problem of vacant housing where owners are speculating about jumps in the rental housing market?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting
Follow-up	Government agencies have limited tools to compel owners of vacant housing units to put their units on the market to lease to new tenants. Some cities, including San Francisco and Oakland (both of which may receive Link21 investments), have recently adopted a vacant property tax which taxes property owners of vacant properties to, in part, encourage them to lease their units to tenants. These taxes are relatively new and their effectiveness is still being evaluated. Link21 will consider a broad range of housing policies, including vacant property taxes and other appropriate strategies to make additional housing units available – both new and existing units, and prioritize those believed to be the most effective based on the local conditions and in consultation with local jurisdictions and communities.

Feedback	How are people with disabilities, specifically people with mobility, vision, and hearing impairments accounted for in the anti-displacement work? The effects of displacement are severe on this group.
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting
Follow-up	Link21 is looking into how to assess and address potential displacement risks for people with disabilities. More information will be provided in a future memo.

Feedback	Can Link21 quantify the potential social and emotional impacts of displacement?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti)
Follow-up	There currently aren't established methods in the anti-displacement field to predict and quantify the potential social and emotional impacts of potential future displacement. However, it is known that displacement can cause high social and emotional impacts in communities. As such, Link21 is quantifying the potential displacement risk of program concepts and is developing an Anti-displacement Toolkit with the goal of mitigating those risks.

Feedback	What will Link21 do to ensure people get assistance, including people who do not qualify for programs for low-income households?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti)
Follow-up	Link21 will work with government partners, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to implement anti-displacement strategies. While many of these strategies will likely target lower-income households because research shows they are more at-risk of displacement than middle- and higher-income households, addressing potential displacement of middle- and higher-income households is important because it preserves mixed-income communities. Also, displaced middle- and upper-income households can contribute to displacement of lower-income households when the middle- and upper-income households move into housing previously occupied by lower-income residents. Link21 will consider anti-displacement strategies that could benefit households of all income levels. For example, homebuyer assistance programs could support retention of existing middle-income households while also providing a pathway for lower-income households into middle-income homeownership opportunities.

Feedback	How is Link21 assessing local land use policies that could hinder anti-displacement efforts? How will Link21 be working with local/county/state to prevent displacement?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti); July 25 EAC office hours
Follow-up	Link21 will work with government agencies at the local, regional, and state level, as well as with local communities and non-governmental organizations, to implement anti-displacement strategies. This could involve, for example, working with government jurisdictions to adopt new policies and programs and developing funding programs to implement new or augment existing initiatives. Link21 will be exploring this issue in-depth in the coming months to identify ways to maximize the successful implementation of the anti-displacement strategies.

Feedback	How will displacement risks ultimately be addressed in the final concept once determined?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti)
Follow-up	Link21 will compile the displacement risks of the various program concepts to consider when selecting the final concept. Displacement risk will be considered along with the other evaluation criteria (metrics related travel time, ridership, equity, environmental benefits, etc.). Once the final concept is selected, Link21 will work with government partners, non-governmental organizations, and local communities to implement the prioritized strategies from the Anti-displacement Toolkit designed to be the most effective for the station locations in the final concept.

Feedback	Is Link21's approach to anti-displacement focused on preventing people from being displaced or supporting people who have already been displaced?
Where Raised	June 20 EAC Meeting (Menti); July 25 EAC Office Hours
Follow-up	Link21 is considering strategies to prevent people from being displaced, to support people who were previously displaced (e.g., with improved transportation options), and to support previously displaced people who desire to return to their former communities. The Anti-displacement Toolkit will likely focus on preventing new displacement, but the program is interested in exploring what it can do to support people who have been previously displaced.

Concept Development and Business Case Feedback

Feedback	People with disabilities are a vulnerable population that should be included in the priority population definition
Where Raised	July 18 EAC Office hours
Follow-up	<p>To keep this phase of analysis consistent, the current priority population definition needs to be used until Stage Gate 2 (approximately April 2024). Link21 is considering updating the definition after Stage Gate 2 for use in future analysis. Adding disabilities will be a top priority when an update is made.</p> <p>Although disabilities are not an input to the current definition, analysis shows that the existing methodology still results in the prioritization of geographies with higher concentrations of individuals with disabilities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regression analysis shows that there is a significant Pearson correlation coefficient between the presence of individuals with

	<p>disabilities and the priority population index score, which determines whether a tract is a priority population. This means that, on average, as the percentage of individuals with a disability in a census tract rises, the tract's priority population index score goes up, making it more likely to be a priority population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Megaregionally, priority population tracts have a 45% greater proportion of individuals with disabilities than non-Priority Population tracts do. <p>Priority populations are just one analytical tool used for equity on Link21. It has limitations, including its geographic nature. Link21 aims to comprehensively consider the needs of individuals with disabilities, regardless of whether they live in a priority population tract. Efforts to do this have included co-creation with disability communities to understand their needs and goals for rail travel.</p>
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Feedback	Several EAC members commented that jobs that require commuting outside of the morning peak hours are important to consider for equity.
Where Raised	April 18 EAC Meeting
Follow-up	<p>The June Follow Up Memo introduced that, responsive to EAC input, the Link21 Team will be analyzing access to opportunity jobs — jobs that are both generally accessible to individuals without a bachelor's degree and pay a living wage or provide the opportunity to advance — and said that more details on how this approach aligns with EAC feedback would be provided in the August memo.</p> <p>To understand how jobs with commutes outside of the AM peak are reflected in opportunity jobs, the Link21 Team analyzed Census data. Individuals without a bachelor's degree earning more than median wage were used as a proxy for individuals working opportunity jobs. The analysis found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% of individuals without a bachelor's degree earning more than median wage leave for work outside of the 7-10 AM peak hours. In comparison, only 30% of above median wage workers with a bachelor's degree leave for work outside of 7-10 AM. • Individuals without a bachelor's degree earning more than median wage are 3.28 times more likely than their counterparts with bachelor's degrees to leave for work between midnight and 6 AM. <p>This data shows that access to jobs that require off-peak commutes is well represented within opportunity jobs. Transit during off-peak commuting times, including nighttime, may support individuals without a bachelor's</p>

	degree to work in jobs that pay a living wage and offer opportunities for advancement.
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Feedback	An EAC member advocated for transportation to and transit-oriented development at Golden Gate Fields
Where Raised	April 18 EAC Meeting and July 18 Office Hours
Follow-up	<p>Based on findings from Link21’s Market Analysis, as well as initial engineering work, the Link21 Team found that Golden Gate Fields would be best served by enhanced local transit connections from the Berkeley Amtrak/Capitol Corridor station.</p> <p>As work advances, Link21 will coordinate with other transit agencies to create efficient transfers between trains and local transit to places like Golden Gate Fields. Link21 will additionally coordinate governments on potential transit-oriented development, with an emphasis on equity.</p>

Feedback	An EAC member advocated for better transportation options in Vallejo to improve access to jobs for residents facing traffic challenges.
Where Raised	July 18 Office Hours
Follow-up	<p>The Solano County Transportation Authority is the lead agency for transportation planning in Solano County and has been working with the City of Vallejo on studying how to improve transit service for Vallejo residents.</p> <p>In 2022, Capitol Corridor conducted a New Carquinez Crossing Study, which examined options for a new rail crossing of the Carquinez Strait that would facilitate future service expansion between Sacramento and the Bay Area. The existing Benicia-Martinez Lift Bridge is a significant source of delays, as it frequently opens for marine traffic.</p> <p>In November 2022, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority Board authorized staff to continue engineering feasibility analysis for two options: a new rail bridge crossing adjacent to Interstate 80’s bridge crossing or a new rail bridge crossing to replace the existing Benicia-Martinez Lift Bridge. A new rail bridge adjacent to I-80 would bring train service to Vallejo. Work on these Carquinez Strait rail bridge options is ongoing, with an update to the Board expected in February or April 2024.</p>

Feedback	What steps are being taken to address commute needs outside of the Oakland-San Francisco area? How does Link21 relate to the State Rail Plan?
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Where Raised	Post EAC Meeting #4 Survey
Follow-up	<p>Although the infrastructure work for Link21 concepts is concentrated in portions of the Bay Area close to the Oakland-San Francisco Transbay Corridor, service benefits from Link21 will be realized beyond the Bay Area. For example, Link21 could enable improved train service to places like Sacramento and Stockton. Link21 will also address key connections between BART and regional rail, allowing easier transfers between the two systems, which will also benefit travelers commuting between the Bay Area and Megaregional locations. See the “Service Improvements” page of the Link21 website for more details.</p> <p>A second transbay rail crossing is a key component of California’s State Rail Plan, which states “<i>future rail service in the Bay Area is highly dependent on a second Transbay crossing managed and led through the Link21 Program. The zero emission and integrated rail corridor between the San Francisco Peninsula and Sacramento identified in the Vision would not be possible without a second bay crossing</i>”.</p> <p>Link21’s <i>Megaregion Program Report</i>, to be released later this year, will include more information about how Link21 fits in with the State Rail Plan and other projects.</p>

EAC Logistics Feedback

Feedback	Several EAC members expressed interest in opportunities for the EAC to have conversations and provide input in ways other than the general information heavy EAC meetings.
Where Raised	July 18 EAC Office Hour
Follow-up	The August 22 meeting will provide the opportunity for EAC member reflections and conversation. Future EAC meetings should also be less content heavy and provide more opportunity for EAC member participation, along with the Office Hours between meetings.

Feedback	There should be a run-through for how the concepts would change service for various communities
Where Raised	Post EAC Meeting #4 Survey
Follow-up	This will be considered for a future EAC Meeting topic. Additional information and discussion about the service impacts to different communities will likely be a part of additional meetings before the end of 2023.

Feedback	Seven of eight survey respondents said that three-hour EAC meetings would work for them.
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Where Raised	Post EAC Meeting #4 Survey
Follow-up	This will be discussed at the August 22 EAC Meeting for a possible change in meeting length.

Feedback	One respondent said that Office Hours at noon would be convenient
Where Raised	Post EAC Meeting #4 Survey
Follow-up	This will be added to the post- EAC #5 Meeting survey to gauge support for this change in office hours meeting time.