

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Don Dean, Environmental Lead, Link21
TO: Equity Advisory Council (EAC)
CC: Link21 EAC Team (Staff and Consultants)
DATE: 08/18/2023

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM E: LINK21 PRELIMINARY PURPOSE AND NEED

At the August 22, 2023 Equity Advisory Council (EAC) meeting, there will be a discussion of the Link21 Program's Preliminary Purpose and Need for the crossing project.

Under the federal National Environmental Policy Act, any federally authorized or funded project that requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must prepare a justification for the project in terms of a *Purpose and Need Statement*:

- The **Need** identifies the problem(s) the project would address (i.e., why is the proposed project needed?).
- The **Purpose** is the positive outcome that is expected from the project and describes how the project addresses the Need.

The Purpose and Need (P&N) is the basis of defining the project to be considered in the EIS. Alternatives evaluated in an EIS also must meet the P&N; if they do not, they are not required to be analyzed in the environmental review.

A Preliminary P&N (attached to this memo) has been developed for the Link21 crossing project by the Link 21 strategy and environmental teams, based on the following:

- Link21 Program Goals and Objectives
- Link21 Equity Priority
- Planning and technical work including evaluation of transportation conditions
- Input from the public, stakeholders, agencies, and the EAC concerning the program and the crossing project overall

The P&N will continue to evolve throughout the planning and environmental phases. A preliminary P&N will be part of Stage Gate 2 (April/May 2024) that will consider EAC input. The P&N will continue to evolve and will be finalized in the EIS document.

The Preliminary P&N includes key areas that emerged from engagement and preliminary technical work, which the Link21 strategy team grouped together under five Need topics. Issues of concern to the EAC are reflected in the preliminary P&N and further input from the EAC will be part of the P&N as it evolves over time.

DRAFT - DELIBERATIVE

Input from the EAC is sought as to whether EAC members agree with the identified needs, think they can and should be addressed through the project, if there are any areas missing, and input on additional information to be incorporated into the purpose and need statement.

ATTACHMENT

Agenda Item E: Link21 Preliminary Purpose & Need Statement

DRAFT - DELIBERATIVE

Agenda Item E Attachment: Link21 Crossing Project Preliminary Purpose and Need

Preliminary Purpose	Preliminary Need
<p>Integrate the megaregion’s passenger rail network by connecting and leveraging existing and planned systems and optimize the network’s performance, tapping into nearby underserved markets in order to enhance access to economic opportunities and boost the region’s economy and its global competitiveness.</p>	<p>Insufficient Passenger Rail Connectivity: Existing rail services and networks are not sufficiently integrated and do not meet the needs of Bay Area residents and businesses or provide adequate connectivity for the megaregion. Limited service frequency, especially in off-peak periods, long travel times and inadequate transfer points are among the factors constraining the network.</p>
<p>Expand access to improved and affordable passenger rail service for priority populations (PP), while proactively reducing potential displacement from new investments in transit.</p>	<p>Existing passenger rail systems and operations insufficiently address mobility needs of marginalized communities: These communities, including Link21’s priority populations (PP), disproportionately rely on transit to reach employment, healthcare, education centers, government services, and social destinations. Lack of accessibility to rail combined with service inefficiencies within the existing Transbay Corridor limit the mobility of PP. Many PP residents lack safe, affordable, and connected rail transit services, especially outside of traditional commute periods.</p>
<p>Increase passenger rail capacity in the Transbay Corridor to meet long-term forecasted travel demand.</p>	<p>Passenger Rail Capacity Constraints: Existing infrastructure in the Transbay Corridor is insufficient to meet pre-pandemic and projected future travel needs resulting in crowding and lack of availability. Forecasted growth in this corridor will exacerbate its capacity issues.</p>
<p>Expand redundancy and resiliency in the Transbay Corridor to minimize service disruptions and maintain mobility.</p>	<p>Lack of redundancy: Rail service in the Transbay Corridor is vulnerable to disruption due to the existence of only a single rail crossing – the BART Transbay Tube, which is 50 years old. Any disruption to its service negatively impacts travelers regionwide. Intercity/regional rail passengers are dependent on this single crossing and the congested freeway/bridge system.</p>
<p>Enhance sustainability and quality of life through greater mobility, a reduction in transportation-related regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and reduction in automobile-related accidents, injuries and fatalities.</p>	<p>Negative transportation-related impacts. Regional GHG reduction targets cannot be met without major reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Automobile accidents and fatalities are increasing throughout California. The Bay Area has one of the worst average commute times in the nation, and commuters spend over 100 hours a year stuck in traffic, with a cost to the economy of \$2.4 billion (2019)</p>

DRAFT - DELIBERATIVE