

Link21 Equity Advisory Council (Meeting 7)

November 28, 2023

DRAFT Link21 Equity Advisory Council (EAC) Meeting #7

November 28, 2023

1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

A Zoom transcript of this meeting is included at the end of this document.

Presentation slides from this meeting can be found via BART Legistar.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order (For Information)

A regular meeting of the Link21 Equity Advisory Council (EAC) was held Tuesday, November 28, 2023, convening at 1:02 pm via teleconference pursuant to the Link21 EAC Bylaws and consistent with Assembly Bill No. 361. This meeting was called to order by Tim Lohrentz (Equity Programs Administrator, BART Office of Civil Rights).

Tim Lohrentz gave instructions on the virtual meeting, accessing the presentation materials online, public comment, and members' remarks.

II. Roll Call (For Information)

Tim Lohrentz announced the resignation of EAC Member Stevon Cook before roll call, citing work and family obligations.

Javieree Pruitt-Hill re-introduced himself to the EAC and spoke to his experience working in communities in the Bay Area and at the BART Office of Civil Rights. He spoke of his role in relation to the EAC as an internal champion for equity and a source of support for Tim Lohrentz and the rest of the team.

EAC Present Members
Angela E. Herring
Beth Kenny
Clarence R. Fischer
David Ying
Elizabeth Madrigal
Fiona Yim
Gracyna Mohabir
Harun David
Landon Hill
Linda Braak
Mica Amichai
Samia Zuber
Taylor Booker
Vanessa Ross Aquino

EAC Absent Members
Ameerah Thomas (joined later)
Cory Mickels
David Sorrell (joined later)

Participating Link21 Staff & Consultants
Alisa Zhu, Link21 Team
Ben Duncan, EAC Facilitator
Darin Ranelletti, Link21 Manager of Land Use Planning, BART
Frank Ponciano, EAC Facilitator
Iris Osorio-Villatoro, Link21 Tech Support
Javieere Pruitt-Hill, Program Manager of Title Six and Environmental Justice, BART Office of Civil Rights
Lisa Marie Alley, Link21 Strategic Communications Manager
Mark Anthony Sebarrotin, Link21 Tech Support
Nicole Franklin, Link21 Engagement and Outreach Manager, BART
Sadie Graham, Link21 Program Director
Santiago Vasquez-Garcia, Link21 Documentation Support
Tim Lohrentz, Equity Programs Administrator, BART Office of Civil Rights

III. Public Comment (For Information)

Tim Lohrentz (Equity Programs Administrator, BART) asked for public comment for topics that are not on the meeting’s agenda. Tim reminded meeting attendees that public comment is limited to two minutes per person and outlined instructions for providing verbal comment via phone and Zoom. No public comment was made.

IV. Meeting Topics

A. Approval of October 17, 2023, Meeting Minutes (For Action)

Tim Lohrentz facilitated the discussion around the approval of the EAC meeting minutes from October 17th, 2023. EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer initiated a motion to approve the meeting minutes, and EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino seconded the motion. Tim subsequently declared that the motion was passed and that we accepted the minutes for October.

B. Follow-up to Previous EAC Feedback (For Information)

Tim Lohrentz addressed specific feedback from the last EAC meeting. In response to inquiries about regional rail service frequencies, especially in the East Bay with Union Pacific Railroad's track ownership, Tim outlined plans for a new regional rail concept capable of achieving 2.5-minute frequencies, contingent upon new agreements with Union Pacific. He highlighted potential improvements, indicating six-minute frequencies to Richmond and ten-minute frequencies to Coliseum with enhanced track and signaling.

Additionally, Tim acknowledged concerns raised about regional rail fares being higher than BART fares, emphasizing equity. Tim explained that Link21's modeling adheres to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Plan Bay Area 2050 assumptions, which would ensure the implementation of the same distance-based fare structure for all operators and make the cost of a ride from Richmond to downtown San Francisco equivalent on both regional rail and BART within Link21's future Metro service.

C. EAC Bylaws Update & Proposed Amendments (For Action)

Facilitator Ben Duncan provided a comprehensive overview of the EAC Bylaws Update, commending members for valuable feedback. Ben highlighted the multi-step process to update the bylaws that involved a first reading and subsequent survey, with six members expressing support for the proposed changes through the survey. Feedback included considerations for reappointments, emphasizing EAC participation criteria and the discretionary role of the Link21 program. Ben acknowledged grammatical edits and addressed Vanessa Ross Aquino's positive feedback on the clarity of the bylaws.

During the voting process, EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino motioned for approval, EAC Member Gracyna Mohabir seconded, and a unanimous roll call vote with 13 members confirmed the bylaw changes, surpassing the required 75% threshold. Tim expressed gratitude to the participants, officially confirming the motion's passage.

D. Proposed Anti-Displacement Sub-group (Working Group or Sub-committee) (For Information)

Frank Ponciano provided an overview of the anti-displacement discussion from the October EAC meeting, the November office hours session on anti-displacement, and the work that the Link21 team has done in between. Frank reminded the EAC that the focus statement proposed at the October EAC meeting aimed not to be a mission statement but to guide intentions and directions in the near term. The statement reads as follows: "For anti-displacement, the EAC will explore topics including, but not limited to, transit-oriented development and race and ethnicity." Frank shared that this focus statement passed with a close vote of eight to seven.

Frank highlighted that feedback indicated concerns about the statement's narrow focus, prompting a desire for more nuanced discussions on anti-displacement. He stated that suggestions included explicitly incorporating equity values and allowing more time for comprehensive consideration. Frank presented a dual-track approach that involves utilizing the existing focus statement in upcoming EAC meetings and creating an Anti-Displacement subgroup, suggested as either a working group or subcommittee. Frank reviewed and compared the characteristics of the working group and subcommittee per the slides in the meeting packet.

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer suggested considering the preference for subcommittees over working groups due to their public accessibility, allowing for potential valuable input from the public. Clarence emphasized the importance of waiting until January for meetings to start, anticipating more public participation and avoiding scheduling conflicts associated with December holidays.

EAC Member Samia Zuber raised two clarifying questions during the discussion centered around whether other topics would be considered for subcommittees and on the process for determining the date and time of meetings, specifically whether the group would collectively decide on these logistics for either a working group or subcommittee.

Frank Ponciano addressed Samia's second question, explaining that staff would collaborate with subcommittee members to ensure meetings are scheduled to accommodate everyone's availability. Tim Lohrentz responded to the first question about subgroups for other topics by expressing the likelihood of additional subgroups forming in 2024. Tim mentioned the potential introduction of a community benefits program and suggested the possibility of the formation of a subcommittee around that topic based on the interest of EAC members.

EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino agreed with Clarence R. Fischer's preference for subcommittees for transparency with the public. Vanessa stressed the need for public engagement and questioned the timeline for concluding the effort. Vanessa also suggested holding the first meeting in February for a break in December. In response, Tim Lohrentz deemphasized timing as a major difference between the two options, emphasizing formality. Frank Ponciano clarified potential challenges due to limited staff capacity and cautioned against the proliferation of subcommittees and working groups. Frank specified the current focus on anti-displacement and suggested addressing other needs as they arise in the future.

EAC Member Fiona Yim expressed a preference for a group that continues indefinitely, citing the complexity of the topic and the ongoing emergence of new questions and ideas. Frank Ponciano responded that even if a working group is chosen, its focus could be on setting up a subcommittee for a more extended conversation. Darin Ranelletti agreed, emphasizing the iterative nature of the process and openness to various group durations and focuses. Frank clarified that the key distinction lies in formality versus rigidity, with ample time available for in-depth discussions on the anti-displacement issue.

EAC Member Gracyna Mohabir echoed others in favoring the subcommittee option for its potential extended duration, and highlighted its appeal for public involvement. Gracyna emphasized the value of ongoing, regular meetings allowing the public to listen in or provide input, aligning with Link21's co-creation efforts.

EAC Member Samia Zuber commented that they favor working groups, echoing Frank Ponciano's statements. Samia found the idea of starting with a working group and later transitioning to a subcommittee appealing. Samia additionally highlighted the potential for transparent communication, effective execution, and system building within working groups. Samia suggested mechanisms to increase public transparency like reporting back to the EAC or sharing public notes until a solid foundation is established for the shift to a subcommittee.

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer clarified two points for the group: the possibility of a working group evolving into a subcommittee and concerns about the Brown Act. Clarence questioned whether informal gatherings of two or three members outside of formal meetings would be allowed. Tim Lohrentz explained that the EAC is not subject to the Brown Act, allowing members to freely gather for discussions.

EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino acknowledged the appeal of both working groups and subcommittees but, after hearing from everyone, leaned towards the working group as a starting point before progressing further.

EAC Member David Sorrell proposed starting with a working group and progressing to a formal subcommittee. David emphasized the importance of internal discussions among EAC members and engagement with the public, recognizing the potential impact of their efforts in assisting BART staff. David suggested that a step-by-step approach might be more beneficial than an immediate choice between the two options.

Frank Ponciano concluded the discussion, mentioning that based on the conversation, staff would have discussions in the following weeks. Frank assured the group that they would be informed of the direction in December or January of the next year, with the conversation continuing regardless of the chosen path. Frank expressed gratitude for everyone's engagement, questions, and opinions.

Break (10 min)

Facilitator Frank Ponciano announced a 10-minute break at 1:55 pm.

E. Fare Presentation & Discussion (For Information) (50 minutes)

Frank Ponciano moved to the next agenda item and introduced Sadie Graham (Link21 Program Director), who initiated the presentation on fares.

Sadie began this section by introducing three speakers who would address the critical aspects of fares and affordability: Mike Eiseman (Director of Financial Planning, BART), Jim Allison (Planning Manager for Capitol Corridor, CCJPA) fiscal sponsor for the Cal ITP program, and Alisa Zhu (Link21 Team).

Mike Eiseman began his presentation by highlighting the BART fare structure, which is distance-based and aims to reflect the value of distance traveled. Mike covered current fares, discount programs, and the impact of the pandemic on fare recovery. Mike zoomed out to the broader Bay Area and discussed the complexity of fare structures across nearly two dozen transit agencies. He introduced the Fare Integration Task Force, outlining its initiatives, including the Clipper Bay Pass pilot and no-cost interagency transfers. Long-term plans involve an all-agency pass and a vision for a unified fare structure. The presentation concluded with an overview of the Clipper card and the upcoming next-generation Clipper system, aiming to enhance customer experience and introduce new payment options.

Jim Allison discussed the current Amtrak-based fare system and upcoming initiatives. Capitol Corridor offers various passes with Amtrak-administered discounts. Jim stated that efforts are underway to transition to an open-loop payment system aligned with the California Integrated Travel Project (CallTP). Additionally, Jim presented the "Tap to Ride" pilot, which involves 350 participants tapping on and off with pre-registered cards, facilitating fare spreading and automated discounts. Capitol Corridor is coordinating with CallTP to standardize and automate discounts across California's transit operators. The ongoing pilot informs future developments for statewide transit.

At this time, Frank Ponciano paused to allow for any clarifying questions or comments from meeting attendees.

EAC Member David Sorrell highlighted the successful collaboration with Mike and Ryan on the BART team. David noted the positive impact of the Bay Pass program on ridership and transit gaps for students, emphasizing the need for a strategy addressing affordability and transportation issues. David stated that he was advocating for programs with reduced fares and discounts for students and regular riders and, drawing from personal experience, underscored the frustration of lacking a coordinated transit system as a college student.

EAC Member Beth Kenny expressed gratitude for the presentation and highlighted a trend where cities allocate paratransit funding for transit passes for seniors and people with disabilities. Beth suggested that, in developing new fare systems, consideration should be given to creating a mechanism for cities to directly contribute to these initiatives, utilizing some of their paratransit funds for seniors and people with disabilities.

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer suggested the necessity of a unified Clipper card for all transit agencies in the region. Clarence proposed using EAC board members as volunteers for feedback on no-cost and reduced-cost options through the Bay Pass. Raising concerns about the frequency of pilots, he expressed a desire for a more consolidated approach. Finally, Clarence advocated for exploring the possibility of having an entity, like Caltrain,

operate the Capitol Corridor at the state level for greater control over discounts, potentially up to 50%, for seniors, disabled individuals, and others, emphasizing the need for swift implementation.

EAC Member Harun David raised concerns about excluding low-income individuals, especially EBT card users, from the proposed payment methods discussed by Frank Ponciano. Harun emphasized the need to integrate EBT cards, particularly for those receiving cash aid, to support this vulnerable population effectively. Harun criticized the plan to stop using Clipper cards and eliminate cash payments, arguing it would disproportionately impact needy individuals who heavily rely on public transportation. He urged policymakers to consider and extend transit benefits to marginalized populations.

Mike Eiseman provided clarification in response to the concerns raised by EAC Member Harun David. Mike stated that in November, BART will cease using paper tickets, but cash can still be used to load money onto a Clipper card at BART stations, including a \$3 fee for a new Clipper card. Mike assured that the system would largely remain the same regarding cash transactions.

Furthermore, Jim Allison noted the challenges in integrating Amtrak's ticketing with standalone systems. Jim emphasized the promise of the CalITP program, designed to simplify payments using embedded chips and create an open-loop system across various mediums like cards or smart devices. Jim highlighted the program's capacity to access standard databases for eligibility verification and enable discounts set by transit agencies.

EAC Member Fiona Yim praised the Bay Pass for influencing her transit choices and suggested extending it to young adults under 26. Fiona highlighted the impact of losing the Bay Pass as a recent graduate and how it affected her spending behavior. Fiona inquired about the integration of commuter cards, loaded with pre-tax money, into the credit/debit system, questioning whether they would replace or need to be loaded onto Clipper cards.

Alisa Zhu (Link 21 Team) discussed fare assumptions in Link21's travel demand model and how it impacts Link21's business case evaluation. Alisa highlighted that future Link21 fares hinge on policy decisions by rail operators in collaboration with stakeholders and MTC. Aligning with MTC's fare Policy Plan Bay Area 2050, the assumed fare structure includes distance-based fares with a 50% discount for low-income users. For trips crossing into the Bay Area, Link21 proposes a hybrid fare system combining elements from within and outside the Bay Area. Alisa presented examples, showing varying fare reductions, and emphasized that the model predicts increased ridership and benefits, especially for low-income users.

In response to Alisa Zhu, Jim Allison confirmed that if a commuter card has the necessary technology, such as the symbol for open-loop transactions, it can be used until it runs out of money. He further explained that the ability to transfer funds to such a card depends on the banking system and commuter benefit arrangements. Jim stated that the idea is that as long as the card supports open-loop transactions, it can be used until it needs to be reloaded.

EAC Member David Sorrell emphasized the importance of ensuring that fare policies are accessible and understandable for all users, including those who may not be tech or financially savvy. David mentioned potential challenges with contactless payment systems and urged for safeguards and clear communication regarding fare policy changes. David expressed additional concerns about coordinating fare policies across multiple transit agencies and sought assurance from MTC to enforce a streamlined and seamless fare coordination program to prevent confusion among users.

Jim Allison responded by emphasizing the importance of testing and shared an example of a payment issue involving a wage works card during a pilot. Jim acknowledged the complexity of achieving fare integration with multiple transit agencies and stressed the need for a back-end system to coordinate and allocate fares based on travel. Jim mentioned the awareness of these challenges within the Bay Area and the ongoing work on agreements and technology to address these complexities.

Mike Eiseman added the ongoing efforts in the Bay Area to achieve fare integration, acknowledging the complexities involved. Mike highlighted the progress made in recent years, noting that BART, historically protective of the status quo, has become more open to new ideas and flexible in the face of changes brought about by the pandemic. Mike mentioned BART's collaboration with MTC and its commitment to being a regional leader in progressing toward fare integration, especially considering BART's significant role in regional transfers.

EAC Member Beth Kenny expressed gratitude for the means-tested program proposed but raised concerns about tying it to federal poverty levels, which may not accurately reflect the cost of living in the Bay Area. Beth provided examples of individuals and families making \$30,000 and \$50,000, respectively, who wouldn't qualify under the federal poverty level but still face financial challenges in the Bay Area. Beth suggested considering a means test based on the local Bay Area or Megaregion cost-of-living level.

Jim Allison acknowledged the importance of Beth Kenny's point and mentioned that the topic of tying the means-tested program to federal poverty levels has been discussed by the Clipper Executive Board and various participating agencies. Jim explained that the current threshold was chosen for administrative feasibility, but the challenges in the uptake of the program have been recognized. Jim noted that changing the threshold is a topic under consideration, and discussions about this aspect will continue to explore potential adjustments to the verification system.

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer raised two points for clarification. Firstly, Clarence emphasized the need to consider discounts not only based on poverty levels but also for disabled and senior riders. Secondly, he highlighted the importance of specifying the Megaregion when discussing in-region and out-of-region distinctions.

EAC Member David Ying expressed support for EAC Member David Sorrell's emphasis on creating an intuitive system for riders. He highlighted the importance of making the system appear seamless to riders, despite the diverse fare systems across the various transit agencies in the Bay Area. David also suggested that the fare integration process could be an opportunity to explore broader organizational changes, such as the consolidation of transit agencies like BART and Caltrain for improved efficiency and integration.

EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino briefly responded to Clarence R. Fischer's concerns. Vanessa shared her belief that the discussions around poverty considerations would naturally encompass seniors and individuals with disabilities, as they all have varying income levels.

In response, Jim Allison reassured meeting participants that considerations for various groups, such as seniors, students, veterans, and individuals with disabilities, are part of the ongoing conversation. Jim emphasized that the challenge lies in creating user-friendly mechanisms for eligibility, avoiding lengthy proof requirements, and highlighted the potential role of the CalITP program in addressing these concerns.

F. Link21 Engagement & Outreach Approach (For Information) (30 minutes)

Nicole Franklin (Link21 Engagement and Outreach Manager, BART) presented an overview of the engagement approach, highlighting the team's efforts in connecting with diverse stakeholders, including community-based organizations, businesses, and government agencies. Nicole emphasized the community's priorities, such as access, connectivity, and community-centric planning, which was gained through ongoing collaboration and feedback mechanisms. She detailed specific engagement activities, such as co-creation sessions with organizations like the Unity Council. Nicole provided insights into the 2023 engagement activities and encouraged participation in the Link21 online open house. Project milestones, including anti-displacement initiatives, business case metrics, and alignment considerations, were outlined, with Nicole welcoming questions and recommendations from the EAC.

EAC Member Elizabeth Madrigal pointed out a gap in outreach coverage in the Monterey Bay region. Living in Santa Cruz, Elizabeth emphasized the need to address this gap, considering the existing bus connections between Santa Cruz and Santa Clara County as well as the recently initiated bus service from Monterey County to Gilroy.

Nicole Franklin acknowledged previous concerns from agencies in the area about Link21 outreach being potentially confusing to the public among other planning efforts and highlighted the importance of revisiting collaboration efforts to ensure comprehensive coverage of the Megaregion.

EAC Member David Sorrell expressed interest in future collaboration, proposing a call with Nicole and Sadie to discuss the impact of Link21 on university transportation. He sought insights on affordability and accessibility for students and employees. David also raised a political challenge, noting resistance from transit board members who perceive regional connectivity as favoring affluent individuals. He inquired about efforts to convince board members of the equity benefits and broader positive impacts on communities.

Sadie Graham expressed appreciation for the invitation from David and expressed willingness to collaborate. Regarding the equity aspect of Link21, Sadie acknowledged challenges in stakeholder management due to the existing governance structure and competition for funds among different agencies. Sadie emphasized her role in promoting Link21 as an equity solution and expressed readiness to provide further elaboration as needed.

EAC Member Vanessa Ross Aquino shared her positive experience participating in Link21 events. Vanessa emphasized the importance of ongoing engagement and supported the suggestion to involve kids, schools, and seniors in community events. Vanessa highlighted the enjoyable atmosphere, mentioning pizza and beverages, and expressed gratitude for the experience.

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer suggested a proactive approach for EAC members to support Link21 outreach events. He proposed that, upon confirmation of these events, an email notification could be sent to EAC members, allowing them to express interest in participating and assisting with the promotion of Link21. Clarence emphasized the committee's willingness to contribute to community engagement efforts.

EAC Member Taylor Booker expressed interest in discussing areas in San Francisco focused on low-income communities, especially the African American/Black community. Taylor proposed connecting further to discuss community-based organizations (CBOs) and collaborating with colleagues in the Mission and cultural districts.

G. Public Comment (For Information)

Tim Lohrentz opened the public comment period for items on this meeting's agenda. Tim explained that public comments will be limited to two minutes per person.

Pamela Morris highlighted an error in the last presentation regarding fares for paired trips in 2050. Pamela pointed out that the trip between Sacramento and Vacaville was incorrectly labeled as wholly outside the Bay Area. She emphasized that Solano County is generally recognized as part of the nine-county region and suggested verifying the example geography.

EAC Member Angela E. Hearing made three points. Firstly, Angela suggested deciding how to move forward with working groups and subcommittees as this is the last meeting of the year. Secondly, she proposed allowing public comments after each agenda item for enhanced participation. Angela emphasized involving the public in working groups, aligning with previous preferences.

V. Next Meeting Date: January 16, 2024, at 1:00 pm (For Information)

Tim Lohrentz announced that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 16 at 1 pm.

VI. Adjournment (For Action)

EAC Member Clarence R. Fischer motioned to adjourn the meeting and EAC Member David Sorrell seconded the motion. The EAC unanimously motioned to adjourn at 3:30 PM.

EAC Meeting Zoom Transcription Meeting #7 – November 28, 2023

This is a Zoom transcript of the meeting.

Frank Ponciano

All right, hello, welcome, everybody. Really appreciate you giving us your time here this afternoon. We're going to be getting started real soon. We might still be waiting for some people coming in. We'll leave it to you, Tim, at what point you'd like to get going, okay.

Tim Lohrentz

Let's give it a couple more minutes.

Tim Lohrentz

Okay, next slide, we can start. Hello all, it is Tuesday, November 28th at 1:02 PM and I am calling the Equity Advisory Council meeting to order. I'm Tim Lohrentz, the Equity Programs administrator of Link21 for the Office of Civil Rights. I extend a warm welcome to members of the public today, as well as to our Equity Advisory Council members on behalf of the Link21 team. Next slide please. Before we do a quick agenda review and hear public comments, I want to make sure we are on the same page about how we will conduct a Zoom meeting today. First, please keep yourself on mute when not speaking. If you would like to make a comment, please raise your hand or come off mute. If on the phone, you can press star six to unmute and star nine to raise your hand, pressing star six again will mute your phone. If you're on Zoom, keep in mind the Mute button is on the bottom left of the screen. Next to that is a Start or Stop video button. If you need to change your name, you can click on Participants button and then click Rename by your name. The Reactions icon on the bottom bar of your window allows you to raise your hand or provide responses such as thumbs up, applause, and others. This meeting is being recorded, closed captioning or live transcript is available to all at the top of your screen. Please be sure to take advantage of this if it helps your participation. Chat is available for panelists in case you are having any technical difficulties and need assistance from our tech support team. For comments related to the meeting, we ask that you unmute yourself to speak whenever possible instead of using Chat. Next slide please. We will begin this Equity Advisory Council meeting with a roll call of Council members in attendance. Before we begin the roll call, I would like to announce that EAC member Stevon Cook has resigned from the EAC due to work and family obligations. So we will start this meeting with 17 members. When your name is called, please unmute yourself and let us know you are in attendance by saying here. The names will be called in alphabetical order. Let's begin with Ameerah Thomas.

Tim Lohrentz

Angela E Herring.

Angela E Herring

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Beth Kenny.

Beth Kenny

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Clarence R. Fischer.

Clarence R. Fischer

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Corey Mickles. David Sorrell. David Ying.

David Ying

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Elizabeth Madrigal.

Elizabeth Madrigal

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Fiona Yim.

Fiona Yim

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Gracyna Mohabir.

Gracyna Mohabir

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Harun David. We heard from Harun before that he may be rejoining us at 02:00. Landon Hill.

Landon Hill

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Linda Brack.

Linda Brack

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Mica Amichai.

Mica Amichai

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Samia Zuber.

Samia Zuber

Here.

Tim Lohrentz

Taylor Booker.

Taylor Booker

Present.

Tim Lohrentz

Vanessa Ross Aquino.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Present.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks all for your attendance and welcome to the Equity Advisory Council of the Equity of the Link21 program. At this time, I'd like to introduce Javieree Pruitt-Hill, Title Six manager of BART. And Javieree was instrumental in setting up the EAC back last year. Javieree.

Javieree Pruitt-Hill

Thanks, Tim. Appreciate it. Everyone, good afternoon. I like to start with a quote. That quote is, not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. The Link21 team and the Equity Advisory Council is at the doorstep of some pivotal change to prevent inequities for our communities. So that quote was by

James Baldwin. So, as Tim mentioned Javieree Pruitt-Hill. So, good morning to the EAC and the Link21 team. I am currently the Program Manager of Title Six and Environmental Justice with the BART's Office of Civil Rights. Title Six of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial receipts. So BART is a recipient of federal funding. In addition, Presidential Executive Orders for Environmental Justice and limited English proficiency provide additional protection for protected populations. So I currently have a staff of three, oversee an advisory committee of 17 members, and the Equity Administrator role that Tim Lohrentz currently occupies. As Tim stated in 2022, I occupied the role of Equity Program Administrator. So I feel like I know each and every one of the EAC members. You guys are a special group of folks, and I'm honored to be able to share this space with you. I know Tim when we have our check ins, he is always excited about the time he gets to spend with this group. So in addition to being a member of the EAC selection community, I actually helped develop some of the EAC infrastructure with the team and worked on some white papers. So I'm a native of San Francisco with experience in community and development for youth contract equity, some federal state compliance, and environmental justice. My passion for EJ was cultivated in 2014 when then District Supervisor Scott Wiener appointed me to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Citizen Advisory Committee. So there we oversaw the \$3 billion Sewer System Improvement Project, the Water Systems Improvement Program, and the Biosolids Digesters Facility Project. The Biosolids Digester Facility Project addressed an aging biosolids infrastructure that emitted harmful emissions in black and minority communities for generations. 80% of the city's wastewater is processed in communities with minorities and low income folks. So in accordance with the Clean Air Act, we led a clean air evaluation that netted negative results. So fast forward to 2019. The SFPUC broke ground on constructing a new biosolids digesters facility. So I share this example of my experience because it's truly unacceptable for agencies to say we have to digest wastewater somewhere, so let's arbitrarily do so in communities with vulnerable populations. It's not enough to say that we're going to develop a mega regional rail system, but if it's not inclusive of all, then we're doing a detriment to those protected populations, ergo, low income folks, Blacks, Asians, so the EAC is in a great position to effectuate change in partnership with the Link21 program. So I just wanted to come and let you know that you have an additional champion on the inside at BART to help guide you through this process, because it is going to be very difficult to make sure that we spread equity throughout this program. So I look forward to continuing to support Tim and his role and look forward to working with you all. Thank you.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks, Javieree. Next slide, we'll move now to hearing public comments, and this is for topics that are not on today's agenda. Please keep in mind public comment is limited to two minutes per person. If you're on the phone and would like to provide a verbal public comment now, please dial star six to unmute yourself. If there are no comments for those who dialed in, we will now see if anyone participating via Zoom would like to provide a public comment. You can do so by raising your hand. Okay, no public comment at this time. Later on, we will hear public comments for items that are on today's agenda. Next slide please. Our first item on the agenda today is the approval of the EAC meeting minutes from October 17th, 2023. Next slide please. Does anyone make a motion to approve the meeting minutes for October 17th?

Clarence R. Fischer

Clarence so moves.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

I second.

Tim Lohrentz

Second from Vanessa. All those in favor, raise your hand so that we can get an accurate count.

Tim Lohrentz

Okay, that motion is passed. We accept the minutes for October. Next slide please. And today's agenda. What we're looking at is we're going to have the follow up to previous EAC feedback. Then we'll move into item C, which is our Bylaws updates and proposed amendments to the Bylaws. Item D is our follow up to the anti-displacement, and we'll be proposing a subgroup on anti-displacement. Item E is our, we have a presentation related to fares today, and then we'll have a discussion that follows. This is with both Capitol Corridor and BART, staff will be presenting. And then our final item is the Link21 engagement and outreach approach. How we are doing our engagement and outreach on Link21. Next slide please.

Tim Lohrentz

Please refer to your virtual meeting packet and look for agenda item B. This is also available on Legistar. There are

several items of importance related to fares and there's two items which I would like to highlight and report it at this meeting. The first was I believe this was at our last EAC meeting, someone asked what would be the service frequencies on regional rail, especially considering that Union Pacific Railroad owns much of the track in the East Bay. This is a complicated question, but our response would be that a new regional rail concept in the crossing would be capable of 2.5 minutes frequencies or headways. This is a train every 150 seconds beyond the crossing. In the East Bay, a new agreement would need to be made with the Union Pacific to increase frequencies. Additional track and improved signaling would allow for six minute frequencies to Richmond and ten minute frequencies to Coliseum. In the West Bay, Caltrain is planning for ten minute frequencies in the short term and five minute frequencies in longer term. Another piece of feedback that we wanted to highlight today is someone at our last meeting also said that regional rail fares are higher than BART fares currently. This is an equity concern, so I would want to say that in our modeling, as Alisa Zhu will discuss later, we utilize the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Plan Bay Area 2050 assumptions that the same distance based fare structure would be utilized by all operators. This means that a ride from Richmond to downtown San Francisco would cost the same on regional rail as it would on BART. We will strive to make this true on future Metro service of Link21. Next slide please. I will now turn to Ben Duncan to lead the discussion of item C. Ben?

Ben Duncan

Thank you, Tim. Afternoon everyone. Like to think any meeting that starts with a James Baldwin quote has got to go well, so thank you, Javieree. Good to see folks. We go to the next slide. I'm going to walk a little bit of historical record as we have this conversation and just remind folks of the process that we've used to get to the place that we are today. And maybe before going through that, I just want to express my real appreciation for folks' feedback that was offered and input on what hopefully will be some additional structures that can be formalized and really help us move our work. So there is an action today and we'll get to that decision point and I'll pass it back to Tim at that time. But just as a reminder, at our last meeting, and per the rules that we have in front of us, we go through a process where for bylaws amendments, we have a first reading which was provided at the last meeting, provided opportunity in that space for input. We did receive some feedback verbally at our last meeting from Mr. Clarence that laid out an additional amendment that we included then in a survey. And so, again, I appreciate the folks that took the time to review those amendments to give input and feedback through the survey mechanism. So we've kind of gone through the first two parts of our process and then today represents our second reading and the opportunity to adopt the proposed changes. Just reflecting a little bit on survey responses. We did have six members that responded. There was all signaling support for the proposals and then there was a couple of comments that I just wanted to lift up to confirm process commitments because I think they were reflected in some of the feedback in the survey. One that there was language and as we think about reappointments, in particular around participation in the EAC being one of the mechanisms for consideration, both for a reappointment and then per the additional amendment for any possible third term, which would include attendance, contribution, both in the meetings, out of the meetings, your participation in office hours, all of the things that are kind of outlined in your contributions, will be included in that type of analysis. And so that will be really at the discretion of the Link21 program, but really considered and clarified as part of reappointment. The other piece that we are collectively committed to and consistent with where we started this process, how you all were initially identified and appointed, is that we will maintain the commitment to that foundational vision to have socioeconomic, demographic, geographic representation across the Megaregion region, but also to maintain technical and lived experience and the diversity of that experience and expertise to inform the program aligned with all the goals that we've been working on and working together towards throughout our process. So there were a couple of comments there and then of course, there was some great eyes on some grammar. We had a couple of extra commas and semicolons. So I appreciate the level of detail that was given. So it wasn't just substance, it was also just maybe some better eyes than these old eyes to be able to see those things. So I'm going to pause there and just ask if there's any questions about either the process or kind of our ask for today or any other reflection.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

I like to say something real quick.

Ben Duncan

Please, Vanessa, jump in.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Thank you so much. And I did get a chance to review it. I guess I just want to say just to add to the improvement, I just think that it's definitely a lot clearer. I don't know what my fellow council members see, but I just think it's much better. It made more sense. It was clear. Thank you.

Ben Duncan

Clarity and making sense is an important bar to reach. Vanessa, thank you for those comments. And they're in line with what some of the other council members replied to in the survey, that this does provide more clarity. It starts formalizing some of the tools like office hours and working groups, et cetera, that we've been attempting to use to provide more opportunities for input. So I appreciate you saying that. Any other comments from members before I pass it back to Tim and have a formal vote? Not hearing any per our current bylaws, to make amendments to the bylaws, we do need to have 75% of all members approving affirmatively to adopt the amendments. I believe we have a threshold of 13, which we do have currently. Harun would add 14. But Tim, I'll pass it back to you and you can move us through the actual decision making.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks, Ben. And for this motion, we will actually, first, I'll need someone to make a motion to approve the bylaw changes, and then we would need a second, and then we'll do a roll call vote. So if anyone would like to make a motion.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

I motion to move forward with this.

Tim Lohrentz

All right. Is there a second?

Gracyna Mohabir

I second.

Tim Lohrentz

Okay, thank you. Now I will go through. Please either raise your hand or say aye if you approve, and if not, say no. Ameerah Thomas. Ameerah is not here at the meeting.

Tim Lohrentz

Angela E. Herring.

Angela E Herring

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Beth Kenny.

Beth Kenny

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Clarence R. Fischer.

Clarence R. Fischer

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

David Sorrell. David Ying.

David Ying

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Elizabeth Madrigal.

Elizabeth Madrigal

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Fiona Yim.

Fiona Yim

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Gracyna Mohabir

Gracyna Mohabir

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Landon Hill.

Landon Hill

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Linda Braak.

Linda Braak.

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Mica Amichai.

Mica Amichai

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Samia Zuber.

Samia Zuber

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Taylor Booker. Think that was a yes. Was that a yes? Taylor?

Taylor Booker

Yes, that was a yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Okay. And Vanessa Ross Aquino.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Yes.

Tim Lohrentz

Thank you. And I see Gracyna Mohabir has your hand raised.

Gracyna Mohabir

Didn't mean to have that raised.

Tim Lohrentz

Okay. All right. The motion passes. We have 13 affirmative votes, so the bylaws changes have been passed. Thank you all for participating. And we will now move to item D on anti-displacement. I will turn over to Frank Ponciano. Frank?

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Tim. And also thanks, Ben, for walking us through those changes in the process. Just so you all know, we also have in the room Darin Ranelletti, who is leading on anti-displacement for Link21. So he will be available in the conversation portion. He may jump in as I go through these next couple of slides. We go on Mark Anthony to the next slide and the slide. After today, we're going to be discussing anti-displacements. We're going to be recapping

the happenings at the last EAC meeting in October and what has happened since. We had a November office hours dedicated to the topic. And then we're also going to discuss an exciting proposal of an anti-displacement subgroup now that these bylaws amendments have been passed. It's a conversation that we're wanting to have with you all to get a really good idea about how do we move forward as we try to figure out this complex topic. We're going to move on to the next slide. So, again, to recap what happened at the October EAC meeting, we proposed the idea of an anti-displacement focus statement. We did this because there is obviously a wide interest in anti-displacement in the EAC, and we wanted to find a way to focus the conversation as much as possible. Now, I think it's important to clarify, it was a topic of conversation in October in confusion, I should say. The focus statement is not a mission statement. It does not mean to sort of make any sort of representation of the values that the EAC wants to take on as it regards to anti-displacement. The idea behind it was simply to establish the EAC's intentions and direction as it relates to anti-displacement in the near term. So sort of looking at all the topics that have to do with anti-displacement that the EAC could discuss and getting an idea about what folks would like to prioritize and it would be a process in which or it was presented as a process in which the conversation shifts as we move on through time.

The Focus statement that was selected at the October meeting reads as follows for anti-displacement, the EAC will explore topics including, but not limited to transit oriented development and race and ethnicity. That statement passed with an eight to seven vote, so it was a close vote and we do strive to reach consensus in this group. So I think that was a message that we had some work to do. We can move on to the next slide. We did receive some really helpful feedback from EAC members on this process. On the focus statement, we heard that it was simply just too narrow for the issue, an issue that demands much more nuance than the process allowed. Folks rightly felt that it's not a matter of prioritizing these important issues as they generally relate to each other. And people also felt that it didn't include the equity goals or values related to enter displacement. And people felt that that was important, the EAC being a public body, that it was something that represented those values. Folks also felt that they wanted more time to reconsider or to consider the topics that were presented. And we found out that there is much interest in a subgroup of some kind that will be able to have dedicated conversation, deeper conversation on anti-displacement and be able to guide our process with a lot more detail. Now the response that we are wanting to present is taking a parallel track or a sort of dual track approach. We are going to take on this existing focus statement and we're going to use that to inform what the anti-displacement conversation looks like at the next EAC meeting agenda. Now we could have that be modified in the future. It could be after the January meeting. If there is more to explore on the transit oriental development, and race and ethnicity and folks want to continue that conversation, we can also do that. So that's one track on the process. The second track is the creation of a subgroup and that could take the form of a working group or a subcommittee. And we're going to go into the difference between the two, the differences between the two in just a bit. But the idea would be, as I said before, to dive deeper into the issues, be able to dedicate more time to this topic and also guide the process that staff takes on to have continuous conversation with the EAC. We go on to the next slide. So the proposed subgroup we just wanted to give you a quick overview of sort of the different characteristics of it. The purpose of it is again to advise the Link21 team and the broader EAC on how to approach anti-displacement. It is important to note that this group would not be making decisions on behalf of the full EAC. This group would only be able to make recommendations to the Link21 team and the full EAC, something important to keep in mind. Now the main task at this point in time to get started and this is what the Link21 team is proposing, but it could be modified by the working group once it convenes, is to develop a draft anti-displacement set of goals and principles that can then be taken back to the EAC for approval. That will give again the detail and nuance that is necessary for this topic as we move forward. In terms of membership, this is a volunteer effort and we're looking to have three to nine members of the EAC step in if they would be interested to have those conversations. The meetings would be held in off months, which is to say in between full EAC meetings. As you all know, these meetings are bi monthly. And whether it is a working group or subcommittee is to be determined based on the input that we are going to receive from members of the EAC today. So we can move on to the next slide, and then after I'm done with the slide, we could have some conversation. Happy to answer any questions that folks have. We go on to the next slide. So there are again two different options in how this subgroup would operate. The amended bylaws that were just passed identified two types of smaller groups that could be formed within the EAC working groups or subcommittees. And what we want today is your input on these two options. And again, based on the feedback today we're making a decision on which we're going to move forward with. Keep in mind that this is an iterative process, this is something that again is not final and can be brought back for conversation. If we form one kind of group and it's not working and we want to try something else, we can always adjust it, we can always end it. So I'm going to go through these options for you all just to make

sure that everybody gets to hear what the differences are and then let's have a conversation about it and happy to answer any questions. So with a working group you got to keep in mind it will be an informal body within the EAC. It would not require an EAC vote to be formed, the meetings would not be public. It would focus on a very narrow specific task which would make it short term. We're looking at two to three meetings, get that task done and then you know, go back to the EAC and the EAC can make a decision to open another one up or start a subcommittee. Now, if the working group was the option that EAC members were most fond of, we would create the working group right after, essentially this conversation. Now the interest from people in the EAC would come right after this meeting here in November, and that would allow us to start right away. So there could be a December meeting, but we can also get started right away in January. The subcommittee now is a formal endeavor, and it requires a vote by the EAC, which would then create some more time that would be needed. The meetings would be public, just like this one is. There would be broader focus on anti displacement, so we would not be set to a narrow task, and it's a longer term endeavor, so it meets until it's identified that it's no longer needed, and it would be created by an EAC vote at the January meeting. Now we would not be able to have members volunteer until after the January meeting, which would only allow us to have our first meeting in February. So these are the two differences between these, and I do first want to open it up for Darin. If there's anything I missed or anything you'd like to add to that before we go into the EAC discussion. Darin, anything?

Darin Ranelletti

Thanks, Frank. Good afternoon, everyone. It's great to see you. Thank you for spending the time. And I think that was well covered and I'm looking forward to the conversation and happy to answer any questions or be of help as issues come up. So thanks again.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Darin. So with that, let's hear from members of the EAC. Y'all could raise your hand, let us know what your thoughts are, or if you were feeling like anything is unclear and you'd like to ask any clarifying questions. Go ahead, Clarence.

Clarence R. Fischer

Okay, some initial thoughts for discussion. No matter how many of us come on to either a working group or a subcommittee, I like the idea of a subcommittee over a working group because as you said, a working group is very private only of the EAC members, as opposed to a subcommittee is open to the public. And while we haven't had, really that much public participation in, let's say, these EAC meetings, I think by going with a subcommittee where it is open to the public while each one of us who may be on a subcommittee or even a working group can have some input. There's always the chance that as a collective group, we might be missing something, where a member of the public might be able to say, hey, what about this? To give us thought. Okay, so that's something for all of us to potentially think about when we vote, which way do we want to go? The other thing I would like to toss out is if we wait until January or beyond, I think more people would be willing to give great input. Because in December, with the various holidays that different people might be involved with, I might be very limited or stressed out at least to have a December meeting at this point in time, as opposed to waiting till at least January for meetings to start. That's just my opinion. I will close and let's get other feedback from others. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Clarence. Valuable feedback, as always. So we have a few folks with their hands up. I'm keeping track of the order. Next person was Samia. I saw you lowered your hand. I don't know if oh, no, I see you. Go ahead.

Samia Zuber

Yeah, just a couple of clarifying questions. Are there any other topics that are going to be considered for subcommittees as well, and then also for either a working group or subcommittee? I think I'm just curious on what the process would be to determine date and time. Like, is the group going to determine when meeting is going to happen? So just more on logistics.

Frank Ponciano

Yeah. So I'll start with the second one. Staff would work with the members of the subcommittee to make sure that we're able to accommodate people's availability to make sure that we get the most attendance possible. Of course, some meetings may not be attended by everybody, but there'll be an effort to make sure we accommodate the membership. Darin, is there anything different to that in your mind?

Darin Ranelletti

No, that sounds right.

Frank Ponciano

Next second question. I guess I'll throw it back to Tim. There is a question about subcommittees and or working groups for other topics.

Tim Lohrentz

Yeah, I think that's a good question on that. I think there will be additional subgroups. Whether it's working groups or subcommittees formed, I could see one or two additional ones throughout 2024, and it really depends somewhat on the interest of all of you on the EAC. I think there's one thing we will be introducing in 2024 is the concept of our community benefits program. And I could definitely see where there might be a subcommittee formed around community benefits as an example.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Tim.

Tim Lohrentz

Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you, Samuel. We have Vanessa coming up next. Go ahead, Vanessa.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Yes, thank you. Thank you. Frank. I like to agree with what Clarence said, selecting the option B subcommittee versus the working group. I know we're in the preliminary stages of this, seeking our input, so I just think that being transparent with the public is very important moving onward from this point on. And I agree that a lot of folks, the public have not participated in our meetings here or haven't heard money. And so I think having the subcommittee option would be best to hopefully engage more with the public. And one question I have is in regards to the longer term meets until not needed. Sorry, let me rephrase that. What are we looking at to make sure when will be the end of it, if that makes sense. But everything else on this. On the option B, subcommittee, I'm for I like that. The first meeting will be held in February. That way there's some decompression going on in December while we take care of family and friends during the festivities. So that's my input and yeah, I think that's it for the moment.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you. Vanessa, apologize. I have a Capitol Corridor actually passing by on the background if you hear it. The train is just passing by next to our office.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

No worries. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

To your question. Well, I guess let me throw this back to Tim on the question of subcommittees sort of being longer term and just for clarity around what that means and if there are any limitations that we run into on that topic.

Tim Lohrentz

Yeah, I don't think we need to think of the timing of it as whether it's short term or longer term as a major difference between the two options. I think the formality is a bigger differentiator whether it's a formal or informal group. So I think we could form a subcommittee a few months later, disband the subcommittee. So I think both of them could be short term. So I think that's really not the major differentiator between the two options.

Frank Ponciano

So I think there is a point that we ought to clarify. We do run into obviously limited staff time and or capacity for whatever other reasons. And so the proliferation, the potential proliferation of subcommittees and working groups across a bevy of topics might be a challenge. And so I think it's very important to clarify that at this point we are not considering having sort of parallel working group and or subcommittees running. And so at this point, this particular discussion is in regards to anti-displacement specifically. And it may be that later down the line there is a need for something else and that should be discussed then. But at this point in time, again, because of the natural limitations, do want to caution again, sort of the proliferation of these efforts.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you. All right, next person. We have Taylor. I saw you had your hand up earlier. You put it down, but I'm going to give you a second or two to speak up if you have anything to say.

Taylor Booker

No, thanks again, Frank, I kind of answered my own question, but I appreciate that.

Frank Ponciano

Okay, thank you. All right, next person. Fiona?

Fiona Yim

Yeah, my comment was actually pretty related to what Tim just said. I feel like it would actually be more beneficial to have kind of like a group that's going on indefinitely rather than a group that we know is going to be short term, just because I feel like this is a pretty big topic and there's always going to be new questions coming up and new ideas coming up. So I think it would actually be better to have something that's longer term.

Frank Ponciano

Yeah, thank you for that, Fiona. I do want to say and there and jump in at all if you feel the need to. But it could be that if a working group is selected, the task may be figuring out how to set up a subcommittee. Right. It could sort of be focused on sort of a short term goal to create the best structure for the long term conversation. Just keep that in mind. The working group will not be the end of the conversation once that is over. Next person we have. Darin, anything to that?

Darin Ranelletti

No, I think that was well said. Frank. This is an iterative process and I think we heard interest in a smaller group. So let's form that group and see where it goes. And the group might decide to be short term, long term, focus on this or focus on that. So I think we're excited and open to the different places this could take us.

Frank Ponciano

Yes, the main differentiator here is formality versus rigidity. It's not really time, time we have in spades to discuss this issue, and of course it demands that we discuss it for a long time, anti-displacement. But it's really the question of whether we want to do that in a sort of formal structure or a rigid structure and one that is more informal. Gracyna?

Gracyna Mohabir

Yeah. Thanks, Frank. I think I'm echoing the sentiments of other people, but I'm saying something that makes the subcommittee option seem more appealing is the potential for it to go on longer, even though what I'm hearing now with you all's additional context is that working group or subcommittee could both exist for the same amount of time. And I know it's obviously sort of capped by what limitations you have for staff availability to have these sort of additional meetings. But I think another reason that I'm leaning toward the subcommittee that was mentioned earlier is that there's, to my understanding, the opportunity to involve public in it. It's not like I think that this additional subcommittee would radically change public involvement and engagement, but I think it would be valuable for people to know about that and know that there's, I guess, an ongoing or regular meeting where that conversation is continuing and they could listen in or provide input where possible. I just think that that's valuable and parallels the sort of co-creation efforts that Link21 is pursuing. That's just me.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Gracyna. Appreciate the input. Samia?

Samia Zuber

I actually am leaning a bit more towards the working groups and echoing part of what you were saying. Frank. I think being able to start with a working group and grow into a subcommittee is appealing. I think that being able to have transparent communication and effectively executing on some stuff and moving stuff along and being able to build in systems to create more transparency is very possible. Whether it's reporting back to the EAC. Or having notes that are coming out of the working groups that are shared publicly with the rest of the committee until the foundation is really laid out to have a subcommittee.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks for that, Samia. Just noting, we still have six minutes for this conversation, so definitely able to go back and keep having a conversation. We like some reactions, actually, to what Samia said. I did see Clarence, you raised your hand Gracyna. I don't know if this is sort of a hand that lingers from your earlier comment. Looks like it is. So let's hear from Clarence. And yes, I'd love to hear from other folks, as well as reactions to what Samya noted. Go ahead, Clarence.

Clarence R. Fischer

Hey, so two clarities to please point out to the group here. If we did go with a working group at first, then it is possible to eventually have a subcommittee formed out of the working group. My other concern is the Brown Act. Just like, let's say, the BART Board of directors, they can't all join at the local Starbucks and have all nine of them talk about something, but it's still allowable, if I think it's less than 50%, meaning two or three of them discuss something. Would it be allowed, whether it's a working group or a subcommittee, if two or three of us first gather together at Starbucks one day to talk about a few things to then bring back to either the working group or subcommittee where we collect our thoughts first, let us know. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you. Clarence, there were two questions here, a question on the Brown Act and also just a question on wanting to confirm that a working group could lead to a subcommittee. A more long term conversation on that second question. Yes, that is true on the first question on the Brown Act. Would love to hear from Tim.

Tim Lohrentz

Yeah, so the EAC itself is not a Brown Act committee. So as many of you who want to get together, whether it's Starbucks or Farley's or wherever, that's fine. So there's no issues with the Brown Act related to EAC because we were not formally appointed by the BART Board as a committee of the BART Board or Capital Corridor board. So we don't have to worry about that.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Tim. I prefer Pete's myself. Vanessa, I saw your hand up. Go ahead, Vanessa.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Yes, thank you. Well, I also like Blue Bottle in Mission Bay, so just saying. But all of those places sound great for coffee. But I just like to say that this changes the dynamics thinking of the working group. I like the idea of the subcommittee, but after hearing from everyone, I think it's good to go towards the working group and then move forward. Does that make sense?

Frank Ponciano

It does. Thanks, Vanessa. We'd love to hear from any other EAC members. We have three minutes left. Hearing that there is a bit of a shift as we've had more conversation, folks seem to be more amenable to a working group of late in order to set up that long term conversation. Dave, go ahead.

Dave Ying

Thank you, Frank. I think doing the working group and kind of working our way up to doing a formal subcommittee might be the path to go on acknowledging that this is probably a conversation that we should have both internally amongst us. Members, but also with the greater public. And there's the potential of writers that our efforts to assist with BART staff can go a long way. So I think that starting slow, starting with a working group, building ourself up to building into a subcommittee might do us a little bit of good rather than just choosing one or the other.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Dave. Appreciate that. We have about a minute and a half. Any other folks, any last one or two comments from EAC members that we have not heard from or folks that spoke up early on and would like to sort of react to the shift in conversation towards a working group? Okay, awesome. Okay, so with that just to close, based on this conversation, staff will have discussions this week and next and we'll reach out with next steps and let folks know what the direction is going to be come December and or January of next year, and we'll have the conversation continue on either way. So thank you all for engaging and asking great questions and sharing your opinions. We are now going to have a ten minute break before we move on with the next topic of conversation. As always, I will get back on two minutes before the break is over, but otherwise, go take care of yourself and I'll see you soon. We will be back at 2:05. Thanks all.

Linda Brock

Frank and everyone. This is Linda Brock. Unfortunately I have to go to another meeting, so I will have to drop at this time. Thank you. Have a good afternoon.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks, Linda, for joining us.

Frank Ponciano

Yeah, thanks.

Ameerah Thomas

I'll also use this as an opportunity to share. I'll be dropping off at 230 for another meeting.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Ameerah. Appreciate it.

Ameerah Thomas

Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

All right, council members and staff, just giving you a two minute notice. It is 2:03. We'll be back at 2:05. See you soon.

Frank Ponciano

All right, everybody, just trying to keep us on time so we could finish up at 330. Welcome, everybody. I hope you had a great break. Got yourself some water or some coffee. We are going to get started with the second half of the meeting. The next agenda item will be regarding fare presentation, regarding fares generally. We'll have a presentation, we'll have a discussion, and then a smaller presentation at the end of it. So going to pass it over to Sadie for some words and then staff will be presenting.

Sadie Graham

Hi, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here today. I think we were really excited to have the opportunity to bring these three speakers to you today because we have heard over and over how fares and affordability and accessibility of fares is really important to you. And so we did want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the work that is already happening in the region and some of the areas where there certainly is opportunity to grow. So today we're going to have Mike Eiseman, who's with us from he works here at BART with me. He's the co-project manager, staffing the Regional Affairs Task Force with MTC. And then we have Jim Allison from CCJPA, the Capitol Corridor. He's the planning manager and his role has been as the project manager fiscal sponsor for the Cal ITP program, which he'll elaborate on after they go. I think we're going to take a break and sort of just ask questions and talk about what we heard. And then we'll end with Alisa, who's here, she's on our Link21 team from Steer, and she's going to talk a little bit about how we're thinking about fares in our modeling, which remember is just some of the modeling as opposed to any policy that's related. So I just want to, as the director, want to say that I come to all these meetings and I do hear that this is a major issue, and I want you to know where we understand that. And we're here to make sure that it's elevated as long as we have the program. And we will make sure that we keep it on our top priority as we're advancing the program. So with that, I'm going to pass it over to Mike Eiseman, I believe.

Mike Eiseman

Thank you, Sadie, and good afternoon everybody. Really nice to be with you. Let's see, so as Sadie said, I am working on fares in the region, also work on fares here at BART. So my team manages fare programs, fare policy and programs for the BART District. And then we're also working on with the Regional Fare Integration Task Force, which is thinking about fares in the broader nine county Bay Area. So I'll start on the next slide, please, just quickly a summary of BART fares, specifically so barrier folks will be familiar with the BART fare structure. It is a distance based fare structure. So the intent is to reflect the value of distance traveled. So longer trips are more expensive per trip, but less expensive per mile travel. Trips up to 6 miles, 215 currently, so in range with a local bus fare, but the average fare overall, bit over \$4 or 26 cents per mile traveled. That's sort of how it comes out from the distance based truck structure. A number of important discount programs, of course, senior and disabled fares, 62 and a half percent, youth fares 50%. And then we also have the Clipper Start program, which I'll say more about in a moment. Currently qualifying individuals with lower incomes receive a 20% discount on BART that'll move to 50% in January along with the rest of the regional agencies in the Bay Area. Just want to highlight also for most of BART's history,

that fare structure has produced revenue that covered about two thirds of the system operating expenses, which is unusually high for a Northamerican transit agency. But of course, when ridership dropped during the pandemic, fare revenue dropped as well. So we're now fare recovery is in. The neighborhood of 25% ish comparable to many of our peer agencies. That gap has been filled in the last few years by emergency assistance from the federal government and from the state. Now the state government, but BART is in a position of having to build a new revenue model and seek new sources of revenue to offset the loss of share revenue we've seen in the last couple of years. Next slide, please. So now sort of zooming out to the broader nine county Bay Area. There are close to two dozen transit agencies in the Bay Area, depending on how you count, seven Bigish ones and the rest quite small. They have a range of fares and fare structures that can sometimes be confusing for riders. On the left there of this slide you can see a list of all the fixed prices, mostly local bus agencies, sort of the central center of the region. And down in the south, SFMTA, AC Transit, VTA have the higher fixed bus fares in the region. And then up in the North Bay, the smaller agencies up there have far smaller single ride fares. A number of agencies like BART that serve longer trips have either distance or zone based fares. So you can see a list of zone based fare structures in the middle of this slide and then distance based fares comparable to BART on the right side. Most of those two dozen agencies offer some kind of single agency pass product, but BART, Golden Gate Ferry and Golden Gate Transit do not offer pass products. So that took a long time to explain and it can be hard for customers to understand. So there has been an effort over the last few years, and actually stretching back many years, to try to rationalize and improve and standardize that system for customers. And on the next slide I'll talk a little more about that. So the current effort is called the Fare Integration Task force. That is a committee providing executive oversight of fare policy initiatives. All the agencies whose logos you can see on the right of the slide sit on the committee. Their executive managers do that group. We did a business case of ways to improve the fare structure. That took about a year and a half, and then that group endorsed a vision statement for how to improve fare policy in the nine county Bay Area in November of 2021. And there's four main initiatives that come out of that. The first two you can see there highlighted in blue, are now underway. And I'll just briefly explain what each of them are. So the first is the Clipper Bay Pass Pilot. It has two parts. We started last year working with a group of universities, including UC Berkeley, with your own Dave Sorrell as a good partner in our project. A number of students in each of four universities and then a group of affordable housing developments have passes that let them ride on any agency in the region without paying a fare. We're comparing those to how folks are traveling when they have a more standard single agency pass to see how an integrated fare structure might affect travel behavior. So we'll be moving on next year to offering live passes for sale to employers. And we'll have our first employers coming online who've paid for the product for all their employees. They'll be starting the first one starting in January. So the second initiative we have underway is no Cost and reduced cost interagency transfer. So right now if you ride two agencies, you take a bus trip and then you get on BART, you're paying two whole separate fares. Starting next year, probably middle to end of next year, when the new Clipper system comes online, we will have most trips involving local bus fares, will have free transfers, and then there'll be a discounted fare when connecting between two long trips. So we'll be piloting that for at least a year and a half and up to two years and see how that affects travel behavior. And then there are two other initiatives that are more long term that haven't started yet, that are still in planning phases. The first is an all agency pass or cap or accumulator product that is for sale or available to individuals, not just through institutional sales. We'll be looking to kick that off later in the BayPass Pilot, once we have some data from how the first couple of pilot phases are going. And then long term, we'll be looking at how to develop a vision to have a single fare structure for all of those regional agencies serving those long trips. So regional bus, ferry and rail. And you can sort of think about that as comparable to what Tim was talking about in the, you know, how those trips are reflected a single sort of per mile cost for all the agencies that's currently what is being modeled as part of planned Bay Area. And you could imagine it as this long term structure as well. Next slide, please. So there's also the, as I mentioned earlier, the Clipper Start program. So that program offers discounts on transit rides in the whole nine county Bay Area for eligible adult riders. The eligibility threshold is 200% of the federal poverty level, which is similar to it's the same threshold as, for example, CalFresh and Medical. And that type of discount program is sometimes referred to as a means based fare, meaning it's based on your income. Clipper Start launched in 2021, and starting next year, all of the participating agencies, including BART, will offer the same standardized 50% discount. Next slide, please. So I talked about fare policy. I just want to quickly summarize the sort of fare payment platform in the Bay Area. So if you ride transit in the Bay Area, you probably have a Clipper card. Clipper card allows you access to any of the participating operators. That can be a plastic card or you can have it on your mobile phone as well. And that is governed by what's called the Clipper Executive Board, which is made up of the same agencies essentially that are on that fare Integration Task Force that I mentioned. So that Clipper card has been around for quite a while,

but we are currently getting close to replacing the technology with a more updated and modern system. So I'll say more about that on the next slide. So referred to as next generation Clipper or Clipper Two will hopefully be deployed next year with some benefits to customers, all new equipment. We will have the option to pay with a credit or a debit card instead of a plastic Clipper card or mobile Clipper card. That is also and you'll hear this about this morning Jim's presentation referred to as open loop payment. As I mentioned, those consistent inter agency transfer discounts will be available at that time and then other discounts and promotions will be possible. And with that I'll wrap up and pass it over to Jim

Frank Ponciano

Thank you Mike, appreciate it. We do have to move on to the next presentation before comments.

Jim Allison

Great. Hello, hope you can all hear me. My name is Jim Allison. I am the manager of planner for the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority. It's a pleasure to be with you. And you may have seen some of my colleague Camille Sal before, but she's on the team here at Capitol Corridor . So if it's okay, we'll go to the next slide. Okay, so I'm going to talk about the fares on the Capitol Corridor that we have today and what we're working on as a pilot program and some of the coordination with the state that will be associated with the California Integrated Travel Project. So at this time, most people are aware of the Capitol Corridor as an Amtrak branded service. And so the products that we offer are Amtrak tickets. They are single ride passes, ten ride passes with a discount and monthly unlimited passes also discounted. The tickets can be purchased in various ways online or mobile, which are becoming much more popular. And then also if you have cash, you can do that at the station and also on board, although the cash is discouraged on board and there's a penalty fee fare for cash payments when it's done at a staffed station. So the encouragement is to if you have cash to purchase at a staffed station. If not, then they will accept cash on the train. But we're really trying to move for Amtrak is really trying to move people with smartphones or online to purchase tickets in that way. So it is Amtrak who sets the products and also administers the discounts that are available for veteran discounts, senior student, disabled or child discounts. So we essentially buy into that program for the most part. But we are trying to change things and I'll talk about that in a bit. So if we can go to the next slide. Okay, so our ticketing system, as I mentioned, is Amtrak based because it is coming from the national system. It is not compatible or doesn't hook into the Clipper system or the connect card. Clipper is the system in the Bay area which was talked about. That's more of a closed loop system where you pay into that system only. And Sacramento has a connect card system. Again, a closed loop system. So that's what Michael talked about. But everybody's moving to this next thing, which is to move to an open loop system. But for now, the closed loop Clipper card systems can be purchased on the Capitol Corridor without the \$3 card fee itself. So we try to encourage folks as they, let's say they leave Sacramento or coming into the barrier, they can have access to the Clipper card without that barrier purchasing the card itself. We also allow free transfers to all those participating transit agencies you see on the slide. And when we do fare changes or we hold fares or discount them, especially in the case of what we just did with COVID we do that by collaborating with Amtrak because that's the whole infrastructure behind the ticketing is Amtrak products, Amtrak fare tables and such like that. So, next slide. What we are working on and it was alluded to is a move towards an open loop system. In other words, a system that is the same payment method as you might have at a coffee shop or at a taco truck and that is to use open loop payments. This is a statewide initiative to align transportation payment infrastructure according to those methods. It is led by the California State Transportation Agency and the California Department of Transportation, or Caltrans. We got the original grant to set this infrastructure up with the team that's leading in these directions. And there's really three legs of the stool, if you will. One is the fare payment, one is trip planning and the other one is fare discount eligibility programs. So we are actually launching a pilot at this point in time. It's already been launched, which is part of this CallTP system. So part of this open loop payment system. So I'll go into that a little bit more on this next slide. So our tap to ride pilot system has about 350 volunteer participants. We use the pool of riders that we had email addresses for. We canvassed people to participate in it. And what we're asking them to do is to tap on and tap off with a pre registered card. So in other words, their credit card, their debit card or their cash app or Venmo type of debit cards that are available that can be loaded up with cash. So any card that has the open loop symbol and you'll see in the Tap to Ride logo up the top, it looks like kind of the WiFi symbol there that is a compatible card. So it's not there to replace other ticket options. It doesn't replace the Amtrak ticketing. It's in parallel to it. The benefits that we're able to offer right now are pretty simple as a system. We spread multi-fare payments out over time, basically over a span of a week. And those discounts are automated as long as everybody's tapping in and tapping out. So it allows for something called fare capping. So it stops charging for those trips after a certain number of trips are reached per

week. So the concept would be at this point in time, we have settings at if you did three round trips, your fourth and fifth round trip, 6th, 7th onward, the trips that you take during the week would be free at that point. This does afford us quite a lower cost of collection when it gets going on paper. But right now it's actually quite a high cost because we have such low numbers. We have all the infrastructure, the administrative costs that we're learning about from this pilot to work through. But it's a direction that's coming from the state and this one that we support. Can you go to the next slide, please? So, moving forward with CalITP, we're really taking insights from our Tap to Ride pilot and we've launched phase one of it where we just have these readers on certain what's called the cab cars or the cars that are opposite the locomotive. And so there's a limited place in which you can use these in the train itself. But we are going to expand to put them in the rest of the train next year. And as such, we'll move into phase two where we hope to have a larger population testing these and then we're going to continue to work with Caltrans to develop mechanisms that allow for simple and common payment methods. The nice thing about working at the state scale on this is the state of California has the ability to change the marketplace and work with credit card authorizations, work at scale with various cash accepting options, work at scale with folks who have data about certain eligibility programs. So the state's scale and scope of work that they're looking at overall is able to develop the mechanisms that can make contactless payments and cash more compatible with transit trips. So this would standardize and automate discounts across operators. One fact is that I think there's at least this is maybe a couple of years ago there were 62 different definitions of what a senior discount was across transit operators in California. So the idea is to standardize this and take away some of the confusion and create more accessible banking options for people on a statewide basis. So what we are working on right now at Capitol Corridor is just a test of this and one of the reasons for doing that is to make this more integrated with travel throughout California. And as an early pilot operator, we're certainly learning a lot of things, but we're going to continue coordinating with Link21 is working with CalITP staff for possible future EAC agenda topic so you can get a sense of what the state is trying to develop for transit at scale across the state of California. So I think that's my last slide and I think we're ready for any questions about what's been presented.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Jim. And thanks, Michael. We just had some great overviews on fares as it relates to BART and Capitol Corridor. We were wanting to take any clarifying questions or thoughts people want to share. Keep in mind we do have a presentation following this one discussing fare assumptions as it relates to the Link21 program so keep that in mind as you ask your questions. Dave and then Beth. Go ahead Dave.

David Sorrell

Thank you, Frank. First and foremost it's been an honor and a pleasure to work with both Mike and with Ryan on the BART team. With the launch of the Bay Pass and to get most of our students rolling along, I can at least verify that it's generated an increase of ridership, but also addresses a couple of the gaps in providing adequate and affordable transit service that several universities, such as my campus, Davis, San Francisco State, the participants of the Bay Pass program notwithstanding. And it's going to be important when we develop a policy or at least a strategy that would help kind of bridge the affordability and the transportation gap amongst some of our students, many of them, including myself, growing up 20 years ago as a freshman, definitely broke college student and definitely did not have a coordinated transit system even in the middle of Illinois. And that's extremely frustrating growing up. And that's kind of my personal charge. That being said, programs that would target both limited reduced fares, discounts and things like that, hopefully that should be a priority moving forward along with making sure that employees and as well as regular riders can obtain some of the same benefits that a lot of the institutions are taking advantage of. I'm going to save my question towards the end because I think it's going to be more of a general and a regional context that would be important for the panel and for our group as a whole that would benefit and so I'll save my question towards the end.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks Dave. And I do believe we'll have Mike and Jim at the end as well here so they'll be able to step in with any answers. We have Beth, Clarence, and Harun. I'm not seeing anybody else so I'll say after Harun we can move on to the next presentation. We could take one or two more comments if any come up. Go ahead, Beth.

Beth Kenny

Thanks. And thanks for the presentation. One thing I wanted to mention is that it seems there's a trend where cities are now using some of their paratransit funding for transit passes for seniors and people with disabilities. And so, as you're developing these new fare systems, I would hope that you would be aware of that and create a way in which the cities can directly contribute to these debts for seniors and people with disabilities. Fund some of their

paratransit fundings in that direction. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Beth. Clarence.

Clarence R. Fischer

Okay, just a few things to start to throw out and maybe I could have a private conversation with you at a future time. But regionally here there's a Clipper card which is being pushed for all transit agencies except the Capitol Corridor. However this gets worked out in the future, every transit operator, we need to have one card. Okay, I know it sounds like we're going towards it, but it needs to be done. When you talk about the no cost reduced cost options and you have volunteers, we have 17 members on the EAC board right now. What about using us as volunteers to give you feedback or allowing us to use the Bay Pass to see what's going on since we're able people. Also, BART used to have tickets such as the BART Plus. The BART plus Muni. Where again, those were pilots. And again, we're doing another pilot. How many more pilots are we going to have to deal with before maybe 100 years from now we have a single thing? I'm just curious because there's always pilots. And lastly, for now, as you see, that Amtrak sets the fares. Historically, Southern Pacific used to run Caltrain. Why can't an entity run the Capitol Corridor instead of offering the 15% discount where it could be the 50% discount? I hope part of this plan is to get the Capitol Corridor. Just like how Caltrain is now an operator within the State of California. Capitol Corridor is just within the State of California where Amtrak would no longer be governing us, but at the state level. So that discounts of up to 50% or more for senior disabled, et cetera, et cetera, could be implemented as soon as possible. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Clarence. I'm going to move on to Harun and then Fiona, then we'll move on to the next presentation. Go ahead, Harun.

Harun David

Sorry. I was away for 1 hour, so I listened to the presentation, I believe by Frank, and it talks of different methods of payment. He talked about the credit cards, talked about cash app, Venmo. And still I think we miss out on a large section of the users of the transit system who are low income people. A lot of them do receive their benefits through the EBT card, through the cash aid and they use this in a lot of other places in the groceries and other places to buy whatever they need. So why haven't we included this section so that people can use their EBT cards like especially those who are receiving cash aid, they have both cash and food. We can integrate this so that we also support this part of the population. Right now it looks like nobody thinks much about this population and they need this transportation more than we do, especially after the transit system has got so much money. I think it's high time that we also pass down those benefits to our less fortunate members of the community to uplift everybody because right now it doesn't look like that's what we are doing. We are forgetting the majority population. The other thing is also I wanted to address the issue of BART going to stop the use of the paper tickets as November the 30th and everything is going there's not going to be any more cash payment. So we automatically going to lock out a big section of the people who need to use our transit systems. We are causing hardships, yet most of the transit systems have survived because of a lot of benefits and other revenue they get from state and federal funding. And we don't pass those benefits along to the most needy people. So among the people who are in the policy, have we thought about this population that's being left behind every time a policy is done? Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you Harun. So I do want to give a moment for Jim to respond to some of the comments made here by Clarence. But Mike, anything to say on this comment from Harun?

Mike Eiseman

Thanks for that Harun. I did just want to clarify on that, let's see in November this month is when we indeed BART starts going all Clipper and what that means is we won't have the paper tickets that BART has traditionally had before the Clipper system and we've had them in parallel. The system will work largely the same with respect to cash though. So if you go into a BART station, you can put cash into the machine there and get money on a Clipper card. Today or you could get a paper ticket starting next month you will not be able to use a paper ticket. The machines will still accept cash. There is a \$3 fee for that Clipper card. If you get a virtual card, which is potentially for some users on mobile, there is not a fee although you have to put at least \$3 of fare of cash use on transit on your virtual card. So just with that clarification, maybe I'll just leave it there but happy to talk more about that.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks Mike. Jim, I want to give you an opportunity to answer any of the comments that we heard from Harun or

Clarence.

Jim Allison

Sure. Let me say it's difficult to answer from the Amtrak ticketing perspective because it's just not integrated. It's not integrated in the East Coast with New York, Boston or any of those other systems. It is its own standalone ticketing system. And that's what has largely driven us to look towards the state and the integration opportunities that are happening with the CallTP program. And what I think is really interesting about the CallTP program and where I think it has the most promise is that it's trying to solve those issues that were just raised about the EBT cards and working with the banking system to solve for a common payment technology, which is the embedded chips that can be in those cards and can be loaded up with cash or they come from employers or what have you. As long as money can be transferred into that medium, be that in a card itself or on a smart device like a phone or watch, any of those mechanisms is what is being designed for in terms of the open loop system. And that way it won't matter whether you're in the Clipper world because they would be open loop in the future or you're outside of Clipper or you're in Sacramento or you're in Stockton. The idea is that the open loop payment system, however you got an open loop card or device loaded up with value, that's the simplifying step there to make the medium of digging your wallet, to find the right thing and reloading thing. That's the big change there. The other big change, I think, is working at the end for those who have eligibility qualification. This is one of the big frontiers of CallTP, is that they can access standard databases that we all have CalFresh or what have you, and create programs that reflect the eligibility that's provided, so that when you use a card that's been signed up and linked to that eligibility, you do get those discounts that are offered. And those discounts can be set by the transit agency through the technology involved in that. So I think I'm most excited for this CallTP because we couldn't touch this before with Amtrak and in the future, at scale that works, rather than reinventing the wheel slightly differently at different transit agencies, at scale, there should be a solution. So I think it would be very interesting to get CallTP staff that are focused on these things to interact with this group, to get some direction and hear the concerns that are common around the state and that we're thinking of and help that program hone itself and develop its future in a better way with that kind of input that you all can provide.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Jim. Fiona, I see that you have your hand up. I hope you don't mind. We're going to move on to the next presentation. I'll call you first on the next comment segment. We do have 14 minutes left in this particular conversation, so I'm going to pass it on to Alisa and then we'll start with you, Fiona, and Mike and Jim will be here at the end of this segment as well. Go ahead, Alisa.

Alisa Zhu

Thanks, Frank. Hi everyone. My name is Alisa Zhu. I have been supporting Link21 in terms of methodology, development and cost benefit analysis. I'm delighted to be here today just to discuss the fare assumption included in Link21's travel demand model and how it impacts our business case evaluation. Go to the next slide please. So future Link21 fares will be determined through policy decisions made by real operators affected by Link21. These decisions will be reached through collaboration with stakeholders and Metropolitan Transportation Commissions, which is the Bay Area's Metropolitan Planning Organization. Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPOs are responsible for regional transportation planning in California where there are 18 designated MPOs. So the current Link21 fare approach is to remain consistent with future MPO fare assumption. We are making these fare assumptions for the purpose of evaluating Link21. However, for these assumptions to actually happen, it will require policy action from rail operators in the Bay Area. MTC's fare Policy Plan Bay Area PBA 2050 assumes that buses and light rails will use a flight fare and all other modes including rail. Operators will first adopt the same distance based fare structure and second, offer a 50% discount for low income users. In Northern California, low income is defined as 200% of the federal poverty level. For instance, if the total income for a household with three persons is below 43K, they will be considered as low income household for the rest mPOS in the Megaregion. They currently assume fares will remain the same in the real terms as 2021 prices. Next slide please. In our travel demand model, we have included three baseline fare tides throughout the Megaregion, within the Bay Area, outside the Bay Area and crossing into the Bay Area. Trips within the Bay Area will align with the PBA 2050 distance based fare structure. Well, for the trip outside the Bay Area, it will align with MPO's adopted plan throughout the rest of the Megaregion, which means the fare will remain the same as the 2021 price. In the case of the trips crossing into the Bay Area, Link21 has chosen to implement a hybrid fare system that combines elements from the first two fare types. Next slide please. So how does a hybrid field system work for rail trips that cross into the Bay Area? The trip will be divided into two legs, one leg within the Bay Area and the other leg outside the Bay Area. For the leg of the journey outside the Bay Area, users will follow the existing field per mile by operators in that region. Once the trip enters the

Bay Area, the field policy outlined in PBA 2050 will come into effect. Users will follow the guidelines specified in PBA 2050 for the journeys within the Bay Area. Next slide, please. So let's look at a few examples of how these fares would compare to current fares for both regular transit riders and low income riders who qualify for the main based fare program. If we look at the four fare scenario first, for the trips within the Bay Area, the differences in fares will vary depending on the route and also transit operators. A trip between Oakland and Martinez on Capitol Corridor, for example, will see a noticeable reduction, dropping from sixteen dollars to five dollars seventy one cents. This is due to a high current day cost of Capitol Corridor fares. On the other hand, a trip between Oakland and downtown San Francisco serviced by BART will see a relatively small decrease due to the distance based fare structure in place on BART today. A trip between Sacramento and Vacaville, which is outside the Bay Area, is not expected to see any reduction in fare. Even our new Link21 service thinks the mPOS outside the Bay Region do not currently anticipate regional changes to their fare policy. For the trips crossing into the Bay Area, transit riders traveling between Sacramento and Oakland will experience a nearly 30% discount on fares due to the new distance based fare structure for the trip lag within the Bay Area. MTC's main based fare program was designed to provide a 50% discount for eligible low income riders making less than 200% of the federal poverty level. So on all trips that occur in the Bay Area, no matter if it originates in the Bay or cross into the Bay from the rest of Megaregion as a result, we can see that Link21 assumes that low income riders traveling from Sacramento to Oakland will receive an additional 30% discount on their total trip cost. I want to note here that BART offers a 20% discount for low income riders throughout the BART Service area, which is not reflected here. The current day fare for qualified low income riders from Oakland to downtown San Francisco should be 3.8 cents. So we have included all these fare assumptions mentioned above in our travel demand model. Go to the next slide, please. Thank you. So we have included all these assumptions in our travel demand model, regardless of rail technology, either regional rail or BART. And our model shows that we would likely see an increase in ridership and user benefits, including for low income transit users as a result of these fare assumptions. Thank you for the attention.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you, Alisa. So we have some time. We have about seven minutes. We could stretch out to ten for questions and comments. I promise. I'll start with Fiona. So let's get started with Fiona and then I see we have some other folks. Go ahead, Fiona.

Fiona Yim

Yeah, my comments don't really have to do with this half the presentation, but I do want to second and say that the Bay Pass is very awesome and it's definitely led me to take transit with agencies that I wouldn't otherwise have. And I will say, as a recent grad who just lost Bay Pass and it's definitely influenced my travel behavior, I'm less likely to go out and spend money in places that are outside my immediate vicinity. I think it would be really useful to kind of explore options for young adults, like maybe people under 26, to have Bay Pass because I don't really think there is a mechanism for that yet. And my second question had to do with commuter cards. I may have missed this, but if you have a commuter card where you load money, like pre tax, how would that work with the credit debit system using those? Would you use that directly in place of a Clipper or would you still have to load that money onto Clipper?

Frank Ponciano

Yeah, thanks, Fiona, for the question. I believe Mike, I'll throw that one to you.

Mike Eiseman

Let's see, the real answer is I'm not sure, and I haven't thought that much about it, but I believe you could have. If you had a dedicated account into which those funds went and a dedicated card for your commuter benefits, then that could be used in an open payments setup. Jim, actually, do you have more insight?

Jim Allison

Yeah, I do. As long as the card has that technology, that little symbol on it, you could load up your employer, let's say, loads up \$100 worth of transit benefit, and you use that card until it runs out of that. And then you would switch to another card if you didn't have enough to complete the month. It really depends on as long as it has that technology. And there may be ways to transfer your money to that card. It really depends on the banking system and the commuter benefit situation. But the idea is if you have a medium that can read an open loop transaction, in theory, you can use it until it runs out of money and gets reloaded.

Fiona Yim

Okay, yeah, that's really helpful. Thanks.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, everybody. And just want to know if we could stop screen sharing for this conversation. Would really appreciate it. We'll pass it on to Dave.

Dave Sorrell

Thank you, Frank. So I'm going to supplant what Jim and Mike had said, because in my previous life, I worked on the Venture card in Chicago where you're dealing with an account based system and two things have popped up. Yes, you can use your commuter benefits card. For example, fiscal year, calendar year, 24, it's going to be 315 a month that you can set aside pretax. If there are ways to help with fare capping, that could help with curbing costs or at least in terms of budgeting out. The other challenge that seems to be an issue, and I experienced this while in New York because they just launched the Omni system earlier this year, was that you have to make sure that your vendor does so, for example, like Eden Red wage works. Those cards, while definitely have that capability of tag on, tag off the contactless payment system, you have to make sure that their back end software can accommodate for multiple taps either in a single day or within a single week so that you don't get blocked out. I experienced this problem with Omni, and I had to go back and forth with Cubic and with MTA because there was a hiccup between my contactless card and the Omni system. While I don't think I haven't had the experience with Ventra, even though I'm in Chicago right now, I'm going to at least talk from the future that we have to make sure that we have these safeguards in place so that folks do understand what their options are. So I have comments or at least a question segueing in terms of making sure that the fare policies are translatable to those that are not tech or financially savvy as this collective group. Can there be safeguards, at least in terms of marketing and making very clear sense of any changes to fare policy that would be reflective of traveling in and out of the Bay Area, traveling within different fare systems? And then the second question, I'm sorry, this is a long winded, MTC has historically, and this is coming from me being an outsider and working in transit for 15 years, that it's very hard to get 27 transit agencies with multiple fare patterns and multiple fare products to get on the same page. In order for us to get some level of fare integration, but also in terms of coordinating fares, but also in terms of fare capping and everything in that nature, can we be assured to the MTA and can we hold them accountable in terms of ensuring and enforcing that we have a straight line in a streamlined, seamless fare coordination program. Because in order for us, whether it be me or those that are bankless or phoneless, we have to make sure that those fare policies make total sense. And with multiple fare products, you're going to end up with folks that are going to give up and they're going to switch to driving instead.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Dave. I'll leave this. Mike and Jim, I'll let you decide who goes on this one.

Jim Allison

Well, first I do want to say it's very important to test, and you pointed out a very key thing in our pilot. We had a person who had a wage works type card. I forget exactly the version. It went to the banking system and it got denied. And it turns out we had to call Visa to say, hey, you don't recognize this as a vendor on this mode. It's not transit. So you denied it, you should have allowed it. So you're exactly right. We need to test all those things. As for the rest of the observation and statement, it's very difficult to do fare integration, especially with 27 transit agencies. But the way to solve it is there has to be a back end that talks to each other, keeps track of your trips wherever you're in the Bay Area outside the barrier, that has to say at the end of the day, okay, you did this. Let's send 60% of the total amount paid to this agency, 20% here and 20% to this other one because of the trips that you did. So it is very complicated. I think the Bay Area is aware of it, we're aware of it, and even talking outside the barrier into the barrier, we're going to have to work on the agreements and the technology that pulls that kind of stuff off. It's very complicated. Michael, to you?

Mike Eiseman

I will just agree, speaking for the Bay Area context, we are working hard at it. We're making incremental progress. Each of those agencies has a governing board and fund sources that they're responsible to their voters and local governments for. We certainly can't promise it's going to be a straight line, but we've made more progress in the last few years than in the prior ten or 20 years on this particular topic. And I will say, for a long time, BART was one of the agencies that was most protective of the status quo. Given our reliance on fare revenue and seeing as how the Pandemic has kind of turned everything upside down for BART, we've been able to be a little more open to new ideas, a little more flexible and trying to be a leader in the region on this. And I think there's lots of agencies, but nearly all of the transfers in the region, nine out of ten transfers in the region do involve BART. So I think BART,

working very closely with MTC, is trying to keep progress on building at least incrementally.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, both. We have three more folks councilors in line, and then we'll move on to the next presentation. We have Beth, Clarence, and David Ying, in that order. Beth, go ahead.

Beth Kenny

Thanks. And I want to thank you for having a means tested program that you're floating here, but I'm wondering about the decision to tie it to federal poverty levels. Federal poverty levels aren't really applicable to life in the Bay Area. For instance, even at 200%, an individual making \$30,000 would not pass your means test in the Bay Area. Nobody's going to argue that that person is not living in poverty, but they would not qualify under your means test. If 200% of the federal poverty thing was the same with a family of three making \$50,000 a year, they wouldn't qualify under those means tests. So I'm wondering if you would consider having a more Bay Area or Megaregion region based poverty level test. Thank you.

Jim Allison

It's an important point you make, Beth, and it's something that has been talked about by the Clipper Executive Board as well as a number of participating agencies. The threshold leaves a lot of folks who may need help. I think the main reason that that standard was chosen is for administrative feasibility. Actually, even with the standard tied to the same standard as CalFresh and MediCal, for example, the administrative burdens for folks signing up have left a lot of people out as well. So we know that the rate of uptake so far in the program is not as high as we want it to be. And if we were going to change the threshold, which is certainly going to be discussed, we would have to come up with a verification system that is independent of those other sorts of channels. But it has been discussed and I don't think it's off the table. And we'll see where the conversation goes.

Frank Ponciano

Okay. Clarence

Clarence R. Fischer

Okay. Two things I'd like to have clarified at some point. We keep talking about the 200% poverty level or whatever poverty level you end up with for discounts. One thing I'm not hearing though, with a lot of us on the EAC board, what about the disabled rider? What about the senior rider? It seems like we're not being included because I'm only hearing the poverty level. We need to also include seniors and disabled. My other thing I would like to state about you talk about in region, out of region. Here again, we need to say Megaregion because, for example, SolTrans runs a blue Line, Walnut Creek BART to Sacramento and you can look it up on the schedule yourselves. \$10 adult fare, \$5 disabled fare. One way I'll look forward to being able to pay \$5 on my next Capitol Corridor trip. Thank you.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, Clarence. Don't know if there's any reaction to that. We'll go to David Ying and just leave any comments from Jim and Mike to the end. David, go ahead.

David Ying

Yeah, I mostly wanted to just offer my support to what David Sorell had shared about just in general, making sure that this is an intuitive system from the perspective of a rider. I've had a lot of people who aren't as familiar with transit ask me like, oh, why are there 27 or so public transit agencies in the Bay Area? Why are all of their fare systems different? So I think as much as possible, making it so that any of this kind of stuff is on the back end and that from the perspective of a rider, it really is just one system. I think that is good and we should keep moving toward it. I wonder also if this is an opportunity for us not only to do fare integration, but also to look at reorganizing our trans agencies just in general and seeing if there are ways, for example, if we could combine like BART and Caltrain, where I feel like especially with Caltrain electrification and providing a much higher level of service, there would be an opportunity to sort of combine them into a single agency or to look at. Other areas where bus rail integration can be supported also through organizational consolidation. Or if it is the case that this can all be done while maintaining our agencies as is, then sure, we can do that. But basically, whatever it takes to get there, then I will support it.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, David. I do want to check in with Vanessa. I see you raised your hand. We are needing to move on to the next presentation. We're running out of time. But Vanessa, go ahead and we'll finish with you. Go ahead.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

Thank you. As you can see, I'm in transit. It'll be very short. I just want to react to Clarence. I want to say that I want to believe that what we're discussing in terms of poverty and it would include our seniors and those with disabilities because they all have different incomes. So that was just my feedback on that. I'm hoping that they're part of that under that as well if that makes sense.

Frank Ponciano

Yes. Thanks, Vanessa. Mike and Jim, just want to give you or Alisa, just want to give you a moment to speak on anything you heard before we move on to the next presentation.

Jim Allison

I'll just say senior student, veteran, disabled, all those are in the conversation and or already dealt with. Even Amtrak has those delineations right now, so they're not going to leave the conversation. It's just a matter of I think what we're wrestling with at the state level is to provide the mechanism, the easy mechanism, the friendly mechanism, to become eligible and therefore use those systems without a lengthy proof of here's my birth certificate, and you go into one agency. Yes, I now qualify for this. There's much easier ways to pull these things off. And I think that if you're looking at what the state's going to do, I think a presentation by CallTP and an interaction with this group would be very informative in terms of how to reduce barriers that even eligibility programs themselves create. But all those populations are in the conversation without question.

Frank Ponciano

Okay, Dave, I see you raised your hand. We do have to move on, though. I apologize. Fares is a complicated conversation. There's less to talk about. It is going to come back to the EAC at some point down the line. But we do have to get to the next topic. Apologies there. So with that, excuse me?

Dave Sorrell

I said that's fair.

Frank Ponciano

Okay. Thanks for being understanding, Dave. I'm going to pass it on to Nicole. We're going to have a conversation on community engagement. Go on, Nicole.

Nicole Franklin

Good afternoon, everybody. Can you hear me? Excellent. I just want to reintroduce myself before I do it, I'll tell you, I'm getting over a cold, so please bear with me of my raspy voice. Nicol. I'm the public engagement and outreach manager. I met many of you during the EAC recruitment process and had great conversations with you during your onboarding. So I'm glad to see everybody is here and engaged. I'm going to give you an overview of our engagement we've done this year, as well as our engagement approach and some of the engagement that we're planning going forward. And really going to keep my presentation short because I want to really hear from all of you about things that you want to recommend that we can do going forward. Next slide first. Can somebody mute themselves? I'm having some feedback and getting a little distracted there. Thank you so much. First, I want to just talk about the team again. I'm the engagement manager working with Leah Robinson Leach with our HNTB, who's our program management oversight consultant, and Kim Pallari, who is with HDR. And a lot of the team members that work with you here at the EHC are on the it's just we only had enough room on the slide for three people, but it's a whole team of folks who are really actually putting in the work and being thoughtful about it. Next slide, please. This slide here kind of gives you like a snapshot of the different layers of the engagement, all the different stakeholders and groups that we engage with on a regular basis as we advance the program. And it's always a two way street. It's putting information out there, asking questions, getting feedback, and figuring out how to evaluate that as we make decisions on the program. You see there the communication tactics and engagement tactics that we have deployed in the last two years. Next slide, please. And these are more specifics about the actual engagement we do with various stakeholders. We have a lot of briefings with different segments of the community and business and government around the. We also work very closely with our community based organizations, especially early on in the process. And those activities were co created with community based organizations and we also paid our community based organizations for their expertise, just like we would compensate any other consultant on the Link21 team as well as with our priority populations who participate in those activities. We also believe in really providing a variety of ways of engaging with the community. Some people still are like hands on, like, that grassroots engagement. So we will go to the train stations, we'll go to community events, university, we

work with our tribal communities. But also we have found since the pandemic, a lot of people are really benefiting from online engagement as well. And so therefore, we are kind of doing all different types of tactics to reach as many people as we can. Next slide, please. I do want to say, and you all have been involved since the beginning of this year. And so, you know, Link21, we're two years in. And one of the things that's a little bit different from this program than other programs I've worked on is we're really starting early with our engagement and bringing the community to look under the hood early and often. And so this slide kind of represents, I'm sure you've seen it like the different stakeholders who have influenced the work we've done thus far. And at the very bottom, it talks about the things that community and other stakeholders have influenced, things that we have done. The research, went out to the community, went out to stakeholders, got their feedback, all of your feedback, and then made modifications based upon that feedback. And so I know we have limited time. So you'll just see that slide and you can ask any questions during Q & A about how things were changed and informed by community input. Next slide please. This is just a snapshot of our engagement for 2023. These are things that we've done just this year alone, just events, presentations and briefings and then different ways we kind of get the word out to the community on the right. Next slide. And this is what we've heard. We do have data around what we've heard from different geographic areas, but just in general, this is what we've heard from the community and the public over the year is really, folks are looking for access and connectivity and putting community first in this work. Folks want easily accessible stations by bike, walking and other transit, just minimizing transfers and better connections throughout the Megaregion and really new community connections. And at the heart of this is faster service, increased service, better integration. And again, we don't shy away from some of the topics that we hear. A lot of things folks talk to us about are safety and security on transit, the impact to the community, including displacement, which I know that this group has been talking to Darin and others about, as well as ridership and of course, cost. We just had a full conversation about that and I'm sure we will continue. Next slide please. Give me a second. My apologies. I mentioned earlier that in addition to the folks that you all deal with regularly on the EAC who are part of our engagement team, we also have other community or relationship managers throughout the Megaregion who do work in the various markets in the Northern California Megaregion. They know the community, know the landscape, know what their concerns are. And so one of the engagement tactics we talked about earlier about going to community meetings and co-creation and other meetings that we have in the community and I work with these folks, Civic Edge, Varner PR, Winter Consultants, and we'll go to another slide and talk about them too. Just to help us identify community groups, community members for our key leader interviews that we conduct and where we should go, because we do have tactics where we'll have something online and we will host it and have people come to us. But a lot of the things we do is going out, and I am out many a night and weekend, as well as other members of Link21 with these folks on this screen meeting with community before we go to the next slide on the top left hand corner. We work very closely with Dr. Beverly Scott. This group, if it wasn't for Sadie, our director, and Dr. Scott, this EAC would not be what it is. And so we want to thank her and for her guidance. She has probably 40 years of experience in transit, keeping diversity, inclusion and equity at the forefront. And Leslie Rogers also is on our team and advises us on a variety of topics, including community engagement. Next slide please. Again, we have other markets that we engage in. Imagine is incredible. Mr. Molina is a prior Mayor of Patterson. And Virginia. They know that community, they tell us what the community needs to hear from us, as with the folks in Sacramento and Marie Rainwater in the North Bay and then our other friends at Urban Planning Partners in the East Bay. So again, we work very closely with them to identify community groups we should talk to. Next slide, please. This is just an example of a really strong relationship we have with a community based organization, a well regarded community based organization, the Unity Council. They participated and co hosted two rounds of co creation where we actually co created the content engaged priority populations. Also, we've done tabling at the Unity Council and then I think we've done more. Ms. Sanchez for a key leader interview or we have some scheduled. So yeah, that's just an example of like when we go all in to engage a community with our trusted community based partners. Next slide please. Excuse me. I understand that the EAC has expressed interest in helping to get the word out. So this is just one example of ways that you want to get the word out. We have an online open house that launched recently. It's going to be open through December 15. And this is really our opportunity to get out to folks a way to get engaged and informed about the program from the comfort of their home at any given time of the day. That works for them. I recently heard, I think it was earlier today, my counterpart Kim Pallari, told me that over the Thanksgiving holiday it was some crazy number of people who were logged in. So I guess people like turkey or whatever they're eating and going online. So this is really very convenient for folks if you have to work two or three jobs and you want to come home and look at this, get informed about Link21 and give your input because there is a survey as part of this about the differentiators between regional rail and BART and people can do that. So we can provide this information to

you if you want to get it out to your network. Next slide please. I mentioned earlier, I'm sure you've heard about this since you've been on board the program. It's been around for about two years and we are really getting the community involved early. Here are some of our ongoing work targeted mega regional collaboration with yourselves and transit and community advocacy groups, as well as local jurisdictions and agency partners. Some of the work that we brought to you about ridership modeling and cost and the like. But then on the right hand box, those are some project milestones that we will be engaging in between now and May of 2024. And all those tactics that I showed you and talked about early in the slide, we'll be using those to get the word out and get community feedback. Next slide, and moving forward, and this is really where we really get into some detail work is where Darin and his team talking to the community about anti-displacement toolkit, business case metrics, and then, as Tim mentioned, really getting input on community benefits. And then the key focus of this now, alignments and station design and service considerations. And on the right are all the different ways we will be doing that work. So we have limited time here, so I will stop there. Thank you for your time and would love to turn it back over to Frank to see if you have any questions or recommendations for us as we continue with our engagement program.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks Nicole, for all that. So we go into the next slide. We want to hear from folks for the next ten minutes. Do want you to look at these questions and think about them and incorporate your answers into the response if possible. We're really interested in hearing how you'd like to have the EAC participate in Link21 events moving forward, and also interested to hear what communities or community or CBOs you think we should engage with in your area. Let's go and hear from Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Madrigal

Yeah, thanks Nicole, for the presentation. I did notice in the Community Advisor slides that there doesn't seem to be any advisors covering the Monterey Bay region. I for myself live in Santa Cruz and we have a bus that actually connects us to Santa Clara County. So it seems like there's a gap in between there and would just love for there to be some coverage. I know Monterey County recently also started a bus that runs to Gilroy, so really just focusing on connecting those communities and want to make sure we're leveraging that as well.

Nicole Franklin

I think that's a good point, and I think you and I spoke about this during your interview process. I do know that in the past we've had some agencies down there who expressed to us that they didn't want us to come out down there yet because they want to make sure we're not confusing the public with some of the planning efforts they have. But I think it's probably time to ask again and find a way to collaborate. So we definitely will take that point.

Frank Ponciano

Thank you, Nicole. Let's hear from Dave.

Dave Sorrell

Thank you. So continue the great work, y'all, because I've been to one or two of these events and folks are asking the valid questions. I'm anticipating a need, at least at the college level, the university level that I would like to possibly invite you and Sadie to join a call with. Most of us transportation folks in the university now are both wearing my Berkeley hat, but also as kind of the de facto chair of our regional TDM group, which is basically everyone from San Luis Obispo all the way up north to Humboldt but at least trying to understand, at least from a long term planning perspective of how this could impact student travel as well as employee travel and trying to make that as affordable and accessible as possible. One comment in question is that oftentimes just passing by in terms of the political changes that are necessary to create the changes that we need. A couple of the comments from some transit board members have been anti-regional connectivity, as if this is not an equity strategy, in fact, that this is only impacting and affirming affluent white male tech bros. And I've encountered many times in saying that this is a net good. Acknowledging that, yes, you are getting those choice riders who could be driving an \$80,000 Tesla or a BMW. But when you're looking at the externalities of, say, housing which over the past 15 years have forced folks further east getting them to the central core while not everyone is going to San Francisco getting that connectivity is going to be important as we continue to evolve. So my question is more of a political question of is there any efforts of convincing transit board members, whether they be selected or elected, into saying that this is an equity strategy that would benefit the communities of whole as well as the smaller parts.

Sadie Graham

Thanks Dave. First of all, Nicole and I, we go wherever invited. So as long as you give me a week's notice, I'll be there or you can bribe me with cookies and coffee. Same here. For the mean the other comment is so yes, I think

ultimately that is my job, right? I think this integrated network that we're trying to create is definitely an equity solution. And so I don't know specifically who you're talking about but I do know that stakeholder management, the political side of things, is difficult because of the way our sort of governance structure is set up right now and because we have so many different agencies that are sort of competing for funds. And so I will just say yes that that is one of them, as part of my job I feel like it's my responsibility with my executive staff and the people I report up to and my boards to promote this as an equity solution and to continue to champion that. I don't know if that really answers your question because I think your question was a little bit of a statement. But I'm happy to elaborate.

Dave Sorrell

Worst case scenario, Sadie, I can talk with you and Nicole offline.

Sadie Graham

Gotcha.

Frank Ponciano

Great. Thanks, Dave. Thanks, Sadie. Let's hear Vanessa and Clarence. We are approaching the end here, so going to stop at Clarence before we finish. Go ahead, Vanessa.

Vanessa Ross Aquino

I'm here. I am about to get started. So this was the perfect segue for me. I just want to say that based on the input here on this slide, I have participated in the Link21 over in Dog Patch and had the pleasure to meet Nicole Franklin and it was fantastic to have Potrero Hill community members as well as Dog Patch. And so I think what I'm trying to say here is we need to continue to have this ongoing and I like someone's comment and forgive me, I forget your name. You mentioned that we should include kids, schools as well as seniors, those that are still able to take public transit to get also involved with these community events. So I just want to say I had a great time. We had pizza and we also had some beer, but that being said, unfortunately, I have water. That was the option. That was the option too. But no, besides that, I think pizza always gets people together. But that's my feedback. I was trying to read the other comments here, but I don't want to hold. I want Clarence to speak and I'm going to have to sign off. I'm on the clock already, but just wanted to give my two cents. Have a wonderful evening, everyone, and happy holidays and happy New Year.

Frank Ponciano

Same to you. Vanessa. Going to move on to Clarence, I see. Taylor, you raised your hand. Hopefully we have a minute to get to you. Go ahead, Clarence.

Clarence R. Fischer

Both Sadie and Nicole, what would be nice since we are part of the EAC and we are supporting Link21, your very first question, have you ever participated in a Link21 outreach event? I'm sure a lot of us, if not all of us on the EAC Committee would like to support you more so that maybe as you find out about these events that one or two of you are going to. Could we be emailed? If you think we would also be of benefit to the community that you're going to, to allow us to come with you. If you tell us where you're going, we can email you and say, I'd be interested in going to this event to help promote Link21 in the future. Thank you.

Nicole Franklin

Sure. That's a great idea. We do provide this information, the stakeholder update and on the website, but we would be happy to do that. Clarence, thank you for the recommendation.

Frank Ponciano

Awesome. And Taylor.

Taylor Booker

Hi. Can you hear me okay?

Frank Ponciano

Yes.

Taylor Booker

Okay, great. I'm in the airport. Excuse me, but I just wanted to just make a quick comment to Ms. Franklin and Ms. Graham. Wonderful presentation. I love seeing the community engagement piece. That's my thing. But I just wanted to mention that currently in my new role, I'm at the planning department at SF, and I would love to be able to

connect with you on a couple areas in the city that focus on low income and specifically the African American black community. Love to connect some CBOs to you to have these discussions further, and then also connect with my colleagues who's focused in the Mission and some of the cultural districts as well. And I would love to see if there, during those conversations with our other divisions, we can loop you guys in. So I just wanted to mention that and just say thank you for the presentation overall. Thanks, Frank.

Nicole Franklin

Yeah. First of all, safe travels. Yeah, we'd love that information. And I will connect with you through Frank or Tim. Thank you so much. No problem. Thanks.

Frank Ponciano

Thanks, everybody. We're going to pass it on to Tim, unless, Sadie, Nicole, anything more on the engagement side. Thanks. Going to pass it on to Tim for public comments and adjournment. Go ahead, Tim.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks, Frank. We will now hear public comments for items that are on today's agenda. Please state your name and which agenda item you are commenting on. Keep in mind, public comment is limited to two minutes per person at this time. If you are on the phone and would like to provide a verbal public comment, please dial star six to unmute yourself. Do not believe we have anyone on the phone. So now anyone participating on Zoom, if you would like to provide a public comment, you can do so, but first by raising your hand.

Frank Ponciano

Tim. We have one person. Pamela Morris.

Tim Lohrentz 2:29:41

All right. Go ahead, Pamela.

Tim Lohrentz 2:29:52

Can you unmute yourself, please?

Pamela Morris

Well, is it unmuted now?

Tim Lohrentz 2:30:00

Yes.

Pamela Morris

Okay. It took three times to have it take on the last presentation on fares for the paired trips in 2050, the potential costs. I would just note that the trip between Sacramento and Vacaville was listed as wholly outside the Bay Area, and that is not correct. Solano county is generally recognized as part of the nine county region, at least until the billionaires take over. And so you should perhaps check your example geography. Thank you.

Tim Lohrentz 2:30:45

Thanks for that comment, Pamela. We'll take that into account. Any other public comment?

Frank Ponciano

Hey, Tim. We do not have any public comments. We do have Angela E. Herring from the EAC with their hand up. So I don't know if that would qualify as a public comment.

Tim Lohrentz 2:31:04

Go ahead, Angela.

Angela E. Herring

Thank you. Okay, so I have three comments. My first one is food for thought. I don't expect to answer right now, but how will we move forward in deciding the working groups and subcommittee since this is our last meeting? Something for you guys to think about. Will we be in contact before the end of the year or the beginning of the year? So, food for thought. No answer now, but how are we going to move forward in deciding the working group and subcommittee? My second comment is, I strongly suggest after every agenda item, that we have an opportunity for public comment from the public. I think it's very important that they are able to chime in right after that agenda item instead of waiting till the entire meeting is over and they might drop off. So if we go back to our previous comments

from some of my board members on how they prefer to have a working group or a subcommittee to have the public involved, I think that we should start doing that the first meeting of 2024. And then my last comment is, I will strongly suggest, if we can extend the invitation for Mr. Allison to come to one of our EAC office hours, I think it would be super duper beneficial for us to have more time to engage with him and ask him more questions. Thank you.

Tim Lohrentz

Thank you for those comments, Angela. And I think you probably will be hearing soon about everyone who will be hearing soon about the working group and subcommittee. That's a great suggestion about public comment, and we will be discussing that and deciding if we want to make that change. And then in terms of office hours, we will also discuss with both Jim and Mike if that might be possible to do in office hours following this meeting. So thank you for that. Those suggestions are all very good. So, with that, we'd like to close the meeting, and we'll see if anyone would like to make a motion first, we'll talk about the next meeting date. Sorry, the next meeting date is Tuesday, January 16. It will also be an afternoon meeting at 01:00, one to 330. And so we hope to see you all there. And you should all have a list of all the meetings for 2024. They're also on the website right now. So with that, I will see if anyone would like to make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Clarence

Clarence moves that we close out this last meeting of 2023.

Tim Lohrentz

Thanks, Clarence. A second?

Dave Sorrell

Second. Dave Sorrell.

Tim Lohrentz

Sorrell and all in favor, please raise your hand. Say aye.

EAC Members

Aye.

Tim Lohrentz

Thank you. Great meeting, and see you in January. Happy New Year.