

LINK21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

STRATEGIC PROGRAM PLAN

CHAPTER 10: ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

April 2022

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ISSUE AND REVISION RECORD

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	02/21/2020	Sadie Graham, BART	Sadie Graham, BART	WPA.01 DRAFT submittal review
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REVISION	DATE	PREPARER(S)	APPROVER	DESCRIPTION/NOTES
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SHAREPOINT PATH

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYM/ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
BART	San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit
CCJPA	Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
CEP	Consolidated Engagement Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EAP	Engagement Action Plan
JWG	Jurisdiction Working Group
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
OCR	BART Office of Civil Rights
PDT	Program Development Team
PIMS	Public Involvement Management Solution
PMC	Program Management Consultants
PMT	Program Management Team

LINK21 PROGRAM TEAM NAMES

TEAM NAME	TEAM MEMBERS
PMC	The HNTB Team
PMT	BART/CCJPA + PMC
Consultants	Consultants supporting program identification/project selection
Link21 Team	PMT + Consultants

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10. ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

10.1. Purpose

The Link21 Program (Link21) is a highly complex, geographically large, and long-term effort, which requires actionable engagement and outreach strategies to achieve its goals and objectives. Strategic and proactive engagement and communications will be essential for its successful development and delivery.

Link21 will include new infrastructure to accommodate one or more passenger rail services (e.g., San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit [BART]/Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority [CCJPA], and Regional Rail¹) across the San Francisco Bay. It will be integrated with an enhanced and connected megaregional passenger rail network that prioritizes the passenger experience, creates seamless connections, improves ease of travel, protects the environment, supports the Northern California Megaregion's² economy, and advances social equity. These are all important and complex messages that will be communicated appropriately and clearly to various groups.

Some of the key roles that engagement and outreach plays in program delivery include:

- Working with the Strategic Advisory Team to build champions and partnerships for sustained program support.
- Engaging early and often with priority populations³ and communities to identify and co-create potential program impacts and benefits.
- Improving internal and external coordination.
- Reducing risk by identifying stakeholder issues early in the process.

10.1.1. Goals and Objectives

Preliminary engagement and outreach goals and objectives have been developed for this initial stage of Link21. They will be expanded upon and refined as Link21 evolves.

OVERALL GOALS

- Build public awareness about and engagement in Link21 in ways that create excitement; build trust; foster support, advocacy, and action; and advance Link21 and BART/CCJPA's vision.

¹ This could include commuter, intercity, or high-speed rail.

² The Northern California Megaregion comprises 21 counties, and it is defined as the area covering the regions of the Bay Area, Sacramento Area, northern San Joaquin Valley, and Monterey Bay Area..

³ In phase 0, priority populations are defined as census tracts that are designated as either State of California Priority Populations or Metropolitan Transportation Commission or County Congestion Management Agency Communities of Concern. An updated Phase 1 definition will define priority populations as the census tracts most impacted by negative economic, mobility, community, health, and safety outcomes due to their race, ethnicity, gender, and other historically underserved identities.



- Enhance understanding of Link21 and address concerns through timely, accurate, and positive education and outreach.
- Support Link21's equity platform through focused and intentional engagement and outreach with priority populations.
- Position BART/CCJPA as leaders that deliver innovative regional transportation solutions.
 - Solicit, incorporate, and respond to public input in the spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and funding guidelines, even in advance of entering the environmental phase.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

- Work with the Strategic Advisory Team to generate local, regional, and national governmental and legislative support for Link21, including funding.
- Gain stakeholder and audience trust and support for program management and decision-making.
- Define equity and how it will be considered and implemented for Link21.
- Support technical planning and engineering work that will be performed by the Task 5: Business Case, Task 8: Planning and Engineering, and Task 9: Environmental Strategy, and Task 12: Travel Demand and Land Use teams.

10.2. Strategy

Strategic and proactive engagement and communications will be essential for the successful development and delivery of Link21. The Program Management Team (PMT)⁴ will plan, develop, and deploy engagement and outreach strategies that will build stakeholder awareness of and engagement in creating a megaregional mobility solution that appropriately fulfills local, regional, and state transit goals; supports economic development; and improves equity and quality of life. The PMT will coordinate with BART/CCJPA communications and government and community relations staff to make sure that Link21 efforts are aligned with larger BART/CCJPA standards.

The PMT developed a *Consolidated Engagement Plan* (CEP) to outline a programmatic approach for providing efficient and strategic engagement and communications among PMT members. By establishing guidelines for these activities, program sponsors, partners, stakeholders, and other audiences⁵ will understand the need for and benefits of Link21, and they will see program decision-making as fair, logical, and transparent.

The information in the CEP guides the development of an annual Engagement Action Plan (EAP), which details more precise engagement and outreach strategies for near-

⁴ Comprised of BART/CCJPA and the Program Management Consultants (PMC).

⁵ These terms are defined in Section 3 of the CEP.



term work. Engagement efforts will be proactive to support the work of other Link21 tasks and will be responsive to larger trends in rail and to current events. To make sure Link21 is agilely and proactively responding to current needs and events, the Engagement and Outreach Team⁶ has two living documents that detail the most current engagement and outreach strategies and actions.

1. **Link21 Website and Content Strategy:** The PMT worked with BART/CCJPA communications staff on the development of the Link21 website. The website is public facing and includes content updates on a monthly basis (approximately). The Link21 website and content strategy accounts for both general program information and materials and tools that are needed to support Task 5: Business Case, Task 8: Planning and Engineering, Task 9: Environmental Strategy, and Task 12: Travel Demand and Land Use work. The PMC engagement and outreach delivery manager is responsible for keeping the website up-to-date. The website launched to the public in January 2021.
2. **Calendar:** The engagement calendar contains up-to-date information on engagement-related events, including stakeholder meetings, board presentations, and deliverable milestones. Since arranging meetings is fluid and exact dates cannot be projected too far in advance, the Engagement Calendar contains a more detailed set of engagement-related events than the EAP or P6 schedule. It is updated weekly at Engagement Team meetings, and it is the responsibility of the PMC Engagement and Outreach delivery manager.

Approved, up-to-date materials to support engagement and outreach are available on the Link21 SharePoint Collaboration Site from the Engagement Toolkit button on the home page. The Engagement and Outreach Team will regularly monitor the Engagement Toolkit section to make sure the contents within it reflect Link21 developments. Before being “approved for the public,” materials must go through the informational materials quality cycle.

10.2.1. Equity

Equity is a guiding principle for Link21. The Engagement and Outreach Team, in partnership with the BART Office of Civil Rights (OCR), is responsible for setting an equitable direction for all program work and executing equitable engagement. All Link21 work should be consistent with the Equity Vision Statement and the Equity Blueprint Paper. Staff from the Engagement and Outreach Team and OCR will support the PMT, as well as the Consultants supporting program identification/project selection (Consultants), in applying the *Equity Vision Statement* and *Equity Blueprint Paper* to all facets of its work.

⁶ Consists of the BART engagement manager and PMC staff working in Task 6: Engagement.



An overarching goal for equitable engagement is to intentionally involve marginalized communities, including priority populations, throughout the process. For broad public outreach, this will include promoting events to marginalized communities and making materials accessible to individuals with varying language preferences and familiarity with government work. The PMT will also work to cultivate relationships with influential figures from marginalized communities, such as elected officials and community leaders.

More targeted outreach to these communities is necessary to capture their input as well. This will be achieved through community co-creation workshops held in partnership with community-based organizations to hear input from groups of people who are often overlooked or excluded in planning processes. Community co-creation topics will be determined in partnership with other tasks. Input will flow directly into program work to influence the Link21 Team's⁷ understanding of equity and how it should be incorporated in qualitative and quantitative ways. Reporting back to communities about how their input was considered and incorporated will be key to building trust and maintaining relationships.

The PMT has started equitable engagement work, including conducting two rounds of community co-creation workshops. Responsibility for the execution of equitable engagement has been delegated to the Consultants.

Equity-focused PMT staff within the Engagement and Outreach Team are also responsible for overseeing and advising on the implementation of equity program-wide.

10.2.2. Public Outreach

The PMT began robust public outreach in summer 2021. Public outreach has two primary purposes in this early phase of Link21:

1. Build public awareness and support for Link21.
2. Solicit public input to support technical milestones with careful attention given to involving communities with equity concerns and to adhering to the spirit of NEPA, CEQA, and funding source engagement guidelines.

All public outreach materials will be designed using the *Link21 Branding Style Guide*. Social media will be driven through BART and CCJPA's existing platforms with potential turnover to dedicated Link21 accounts in the future. Social media guidelines are detailed in the *Social Media Strategy: Proposed Collaboration Process* memorandum.

The Link21 website and Public Involvement Management Solution (PIMS) will be leveraged to support public outreach efforts. PIMS will interact with the website to support surveys, mailing lists, stakeholder management, and other features with public interaction. Additional features supported by PIMS will include meeting and, comment

⁷ PMT and Consultants



tracking, and stakeholder databases. The discussion tracker was recently added to PIMS, and it is designed to log and track small group meetings and eventually action items.

10.2.3. Stakeholder Outreach

Engagement with stakeholders, such as government agencies, elected officials, business groups, and advocacy organizations, is key to the success of Link21. Given the 21-county scale of the program, the PMT will seek to identify and prioritize stakeholders for early engagement and explore opportunities for group briefings or meetings that allow the PMT to socialize Link21 with broader groups.

To promote regular partnerships with key stakeholders, the PMT has created the following groups. These groups are engaged for input around key program work and milestones. As the Program continues, these groups are expected to grow, and new groups are expected to be formed. These groups meet on an approximate quarterly basis and are milestone driven.

- **Program Development Team (PDT)** consists of rail operators and planning agencies. There are two types of PDT meetings — one is attended by agency executives and the other is attended by agency senior staff.
- **Jurisdictional Working Group (JWG)** consists of staff from city and county governments.

The PMT will work with the Consultants to establish connections with additional stakeholders and support continued collaboration with already contacted stakeholders.