

## Link 21 Equity Advisory Council Office Hours #6

July 25, 2023

### Office Hours Recap Link21 Equity Advisory Council (EAC) Office Hours #6 Anti-Displacement

July 25, 2023  
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

#### I. Attendees

##### Present Members

Clarence R. Fischer	Landon Hill	Ameerah Thomas
Samia Zuber	Angela E. Herring	Gracyna Mohabir
David Sorrell		

##### Staff

Frank Ponciano, Link21 Facilitator	Stefania Diaz, Link21 Notetaker	Iris Osorio-Villatoro, Link21 Tech Support
Tim Lohrentz, BART Office of Civil Rights	Darin Ranelletti, BART Land Use Planning Manager	

*The Office Hours virtual meeting began at 6:00 p.m.*

*BART Office of Civil Rights Tim Lohrentz welcomed everyone to office hours. EAC Facilitator Frank Ponciano introduced BART Land Use Planning Manager Darin Ranelletti. Darin Ranelletti introduced himself and provided a brief recap of the anti-displacement conversation that was had at the June EAC meeting.*

#### II. Questions

- A. **Landon Hill:** With the anti-displacement conversation, there is making sure that there are folks who will not be displaced, who are still currently in the areas wherever they are. But there are also people who have already been displaced to other areas

that they still need to return to whether it be for work, family, whatever the case may be. With Link21, is the approach or the priority no longer displacing anybody else and/or is it about supporting those who have been displaced who still need to access what was their home just before displacement took place?

- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you, Landon; that is a great question. We want to hear what you all say about that. All of that is on the table, and we presented many strategies in the background materials about keeping people in place so that they are not forced to relocate. Support for the folks that have been displaced is also critical. There is also a third dimension in which there has been some work in the Bay Area that I am interested in exploring more: folks who were previously displaced that want to return to their former community, and whether the program can support them in returning. Some cities have a housing preference policy for folks who have been recently displaced, like the City of Oakland. The question is how we can make that more implementable.
  - b. **Landon Hill:** To what extent has Link21 had conversations with stakeholders about that or folks who would be able to support those efforts thus far?
  - c. **Darin Ranelletti:** We are just getting started on the anti-displacement conversation. We introduced it to the EAC, and we're going to start talking with jurisdictions and roll it out in our next round of broader community engagement. Now is the time. If you have recommendations on folks we should talk to, I would love to see those because I believe we can learn a lot from them, not only about the priorities and goals but also about the logistics and practical aspects of making it effective.
  - d. **Landon Hill:** That was very helpful; thank you.
  - e. **Landon Hill (through chat):** I would consider speaking with Black Cultural Zone and the 40x40 collaborative in East Oakland to get insights/suggestions regarding displacement, especially for Black (former) residents with continued ties to the community.
  - f. **Samia Zuber (through chat):** I would also talk to Causa Justa (Just Cause)
- B. **Clarence R. Fischer:** I have two general concepts. First, concerning this new third idea of how to bring back people who have already been displaced: when a new housing development is built, there is usually a division with the market rate and below market rate units that are constructed. For both, especially the below-market rate units, when people fill out their applications, perhaps we could include a box that people can check indicating that they used to live in this area and got displaced. This way, developers and city staff can see that people used to live there and give them some extra points to potentially bring them back. The other thing I am thinking about when it comes to displacement is that Link21 is kind of like a long-term project. As we start planning for stations, be they local or express-stop stations, just like how certain cities already have some sort of moratorium on how much rent can be adjusted each year, perhaps, through the appropriate legislative channels, as the people in Link21 start thinking about potential station locations, we can then go to

the appropriate jurisdiction and legislative bodies and propose that at certain points, such as point X, where we are thinking of putting a station, there should be a provision to memorialize rent and housing within that certain location, preventing it from going above a certain rate for the next X number of years. So that when Link21 starts to come alive, people who are least able to afford to pay for rent or houses, something is already memorialized to giving them an advantage to live near those potential stations. Thank you.

- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Your second point is exactly what our team thinks about working with jurisdictions ahead of Link21. As we continue the conversation with you all, one of the things we want to hear about is successful strategies for doing that. BART doesn't control rent, so we will have to work with our local and legislative bodies to try to get into alignment with these policies. This will be done by building a relationship with you all, the community, and the jurisdictions. Your first point about adding the boxes to the applications is a great example of how we need real-world examples of how to implement these policies logistically and practically. One of the challenges we ran into when I used to work at the City of Oakland is that there are some challenging fair housing restrictions on preferences to avoid discrimination. But what they end up doing is they end up making it difficult to do equity-oriented housing policy. So the jurisdictions that have been able to figure that out have done some creative strategies, and we want to learn more about that so that we don't run into those same kinds of issues.
- b. **Frank Ponciano:** Thank you, Darin. A quick follow-up on that, when there is transit-oriented development to the degree that there has been, it never is BART developed; it is always a private entity? Has there ever been a model where an agency manages property around stations?
- c. **Darin Ranelletti:** There are two kinds of transit-oriented development, the first kind is BART-owned property, and then there is other property in the local city. So if you go around the area, that new tower at the MacArthur BART station, for example, that was built on a BART owned property, and that's where BART partners with a private developer. So there's lots of entities involved. There's BART as the landowner, then the developer that builds it, but then also the local city. In that case, the City of Oakland has the land use authority and the jurisdiction. So they're the ones that actually review and approve and permit the construction. In those cases, BART has quite a good amount of influence with the project because it has an agreement with the developer, and it chooses to either lease or sell the property. The challenge is that when you are off BART property, BART doesn't have as much leverage, and that is why it is important to work with the cities. Clarence mentioned policies that restrict rent, and I think eight cities in the Bay Area have rent control. Rent control is very controversial, and so if we are going into a city that does not have rent control, that is

certainly something that we will be talking to them about to see if there are successful ways to implement it. Back to your point, Frank, about transit agency-owned land use development, there aren't too many examples of that in the US, but around the world, that is a common thing. With Link21, we will probably see a range of property owned by BART that's developed in partnership with folks, and surrounding properties that BART doesn't control that get developed as well.

- C. **Angela E. Herring:** I wanted to make a quick recommendation for you all to look up and make a comparison. The website is called [www.sacramentopromisezone.org](http://www.sacramentopromisezone.org). This collaboration is with the City of Sacramento, the County of Sacramento, Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency, SacRT, and private entities. Certain areas within Sacramento are determined by their zip codes that are considered part of the promise zone. If you dig deeper, you can see that there is an apartment complex called Mirasol Village, which is specifically what we are talking about. This apartment complex was low-income, and they relocated and kept up with everyone to make sure that everyone had funds to move. They all had case workers. The private entity that built the new apartment complex even allowed 10% of the people to return with something similar to rent control. The agreement with SacRT is to build a light rail there. So the idea is like a 15 minutes city, so you can walk within 15 minutes for transportation, things of that nature. So there's more to it, but that's basically a rundown to give you guys somewhat of an insight on how that project has been going on. It's been going on for the past three years and it's somewhat, I think, successful. But I just wanted to bring that to your attention in regards to what they're doing for relocation, how they're keeping up with the individuals that they've relocated and the strategies that they've done. Thank you.
- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you, Angela; this is all great. This is exactly what we are looking for, so I have been taking many notes. Is this Sacramento project complete, or is it still in progress?
  - b. **Angela E. Herring:** It is about 90% complete. The apartment complex is amazing. With their partnerships with different entities, they hired and trained some of those relocated people to do stuff like hold the signs to slow construction. No one was lost in the system and process.
  - c. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you, this is great. Examples like these are super helpful. If anyone has any other helpful suggestions or recommendations, feel free to put them in the chat.
  - d. **Angela E. Herring (through chat):** Mirasol Village...apartment complex. Sacramento Promise Zone. [www.sacramentopromisezone.org](http://www.sacramentopromisezone.org).
  - e. **Gracyna Mohabir (through chat):** the Sac RT light rail connects to the sac valley train station
  - f. **David Sorrell (through chat):** I think that's an earshot of the green line North of Sac Valley, but it does speaks to Clarence's point on the first/last mile point

- g. **Angela E. Herring (through chat):** Correct Gracyna.....Sac Valley Train is the last stop on the Gold line.
- h. **Angela E. Herring (through chat):** Green Line runs every 30 minutes instead of every 15 minutes like the Gold and Blue line in Sacramento....the Blue Line will have an extra stop added near Richards and or 12th Street for the new development of Mirasol Village....it's the first Transit to be built for this redevelopment project around housing.
- D. **Clarence R. Fischer:** First, thank you to the previous speaker for this information about Sacramento. Hopefully the information can be used, especially near the Sacramento train station, because part of Link21 is getting people who cannot drive, for example, that would benefit from being within a walkable mile of the train station. I don't know if this apartment complex is near Sacramento station, but even if not, perhaps the same ideas can be implemented in any new development near Sacramento station on a test basis. I would like to see all stops within Link21 when we finally decide where the stations will be, that the people who really need to ride trains need to be closest to those stations to get them around. And again, I just want to try and reiterate that when we go to the cities about potential rent control, I'm not talking about doing an entire city. What I'm mainly concerned about, again, is within the 1 mile walking distance of where potential train stations would be. Because here again, the more low income people can afford the rent, the better the low income people will be able to ride the trains and support the system. Thank you.
  - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you, those are great points. Research shows that folks who live near the stations are most likely to use the service. Some of these policies may apply to the City, and others can be just in the area near the station.
  - b. **Frank Ponciano:** Darin, is there a precedent for creating special districts with a particular housing policy aside from the city they may be in?
  - c. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yes, absolutely.
- E. **David Sorrell:** I want to speak on the last two points and acknowledge that the Sac promise sounds like and is an application in process, and it does speak to a larger concern of making sure that neighborhoods, especially with cities and areas with low-income individuals and zero car households, have access to first mile and last mile aspects for regional mobility. In the case of in the immediate Bay Area, there really should be more attention to ensuring that partnerships with local transit agencies and granted, we have 27 here, the 21 mega region, 21 county mega region, I think is pretty close to 40 agencies, if I did the math correctly. And so partnering with those agencies to make sure that when you're talking about 15 minutes cities, when you're talking about high density areas, that there's adequate transit, if not mobility solutions and the infrastructure to support both in order for folks to get from door to door being the door being from their houses to the train station to get to, for example, Texas Valley and points onwards that at least it can provide a fighting alternative in terms of cost compared to driving. And the point that I was

making at the last meeting was that while not everyone's going into the core, the Bay Area core, the sum of the smaller parts are just as important as the larger scope and ensuring that the partnerships and the programs and policies done to support transit oriented development, TDM policies, commuter benefits ordinances and things like that can be well supported moving forward. So, thank you very much.

- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you for that; it really speaks to the importance of weaving together land use and transportation, and mobility. When talking about the first and last mile around stations, we aren't just talking about housing policy; we are also talking about connections, integration, infrastructure, and mobility.
  - b. **Gracyna Mohabir (through chat):** in regard to David's comment on supporting local transit agencies, worth noting that the gold line, which goes to the sac valley station, has experienced regular delays and cancellations due to staff shortages! unsure if Link21 can engage in this aspect of partnership
- F. **Ameerah Thomas:** Have you all been partnering with human service agencies to capture folks who are at risk of displacement? And also just in thinking about strategies when it comes to folks that might already be displaced but are working closer to the San Franciscos and the Oaklands? Because also I think about folks that are receiving services through the San Francisco County or Alameda County, but they've been displaced. They might be going through job programs now in which you might be able to also track opportunities for folks, to be able to get employment that is close to the station, but also, from a preventative measure, being able to track folks that might be at risk for displacement that are going through, like the Family Stabilization program in which they're moving folks to Antioch, but they're receiving all of their services in San Francisco. So just wanted to know if you all are already partnering with human service agencies to be able to capture folks at risk for displacement and folks that have already been displaced that might also help in making the decisions around stations where jobs are and so on and so forth.
- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** That is fantastic. I'm taking a lot of notes. We haven't yet to date, but we will. So this is exactly the kind of feedback and ideas that we're looking for. We've just started this anti-displacement conversation with the community and with you all. I mentioned earlier, we're starting here at the EAC. We started hearing from the community, we're starting to talk to local jurisdictions. We've started reaching into their Transportation Department, then their Planning Department, then their Housing Department and Human Services. And I think it's an excellent point. I'm really looking for ideas, and I'm hearing some great ones around. Once we have these ideas, how can they actually be actionable and implementable? And you raised a really good point. If there is program services, affordable housing, job training programs, special space that goes along with these stations, how do we make sure that that plugs into this social service network that exists in the Bay Area, in the



larger mega region. And I think it's fantastic. I don't think a lot of transit agencies think like that, and they need to. When I was at the City of Oakland, there was a lot of interest, for example, in connecting the affordable housing developers with the social service providers, because there's somewhat of a disconnect. And then bringing in the job training providers was also another step. So I think you're right on. It's a great idea, something that we can work on. And as we continue working with you all, I think we'll present some ideas to you and then get some more feedback so we can continue to drill down and have something that can be effective. So thank you.

- b. **Frank Ponciano:** I do not see any raised hands; feel free to do so if you have any questions or comments. You can talk and ask about anything; it does not need to just be about anti-displacement.
- G. **Landon Hill:** Yeah, this is actually, I guess, partially related to anti displacement and maybe general. I know that there has already been surveys and other data that had been collected from community members about transportation needs and all of those things. And I can't remember I believe one of the Link 21 staff mentioned that part of the challenge is that by the time a lot of that data gets in and gets analyzed right, it may be old because there are certain new decisions that have been made and things of that nature. I'm wondering if there's a plan and I believe that there was mention of a plan to do maybe some other rounds of iterations. And I'm just offering because I think at the last office hours, we mentioned some form of subcommittees or something like that. For any future kind of gatherings for community, I'm happy to bring parents, family members, community members to the table for focus groups or something of that nature, even if that is part of a subcommittee something came up with one of the other focus groups. And so just offering that as a suggestion, knowing that, especially even for our own knowledge now, when some of this information first came out and we sent information to some of our participants, we didn't even have the full background that we do now currently. And so with this new information and being able to better equip some of the community members with what this may be, a second round with them could be useful and beneficial. So this offering, I would be open to doing some form of subcommittee and then helping to bring community members to the table, be able to.
  - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you Landon.
  - b. **Frank Ponciano:** I'll defer to Tim.
  - c. **Tim Lohrentz:** We are looking for creative ways to involve EAC members more in the process, and we will be hearing more about that in the August EAC meeting to let everyone know at the same time. Landon, we will be following up with you.
  - d. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you for the offer, Landon. And to your point about things being too late, from an anti-displacement perspective, nothing is ever too late. This is a long-term project and is very iterative. We are just beginning the conversation and will still need to do a lot of work with you all

and the communities. There are many people we need to talk to and ideas that need to be bounced around. Nothing is ever too late or a dumb idea, and I am happy that we are starting to get to this and dive deeper into these real-world effects on communities.

- e. **Frank Ponciano:** I'll also mention that on the other side of Link21, not directly EAC related, we are partnering up with other CBOs in the area to carry out community conversations, and we are having the second round of engagement events this year. If you have suggestions or contacts of people who we should reach out to, feel free to reach out to us.
- H. **Samia Zuber:** Looking at the anti-displacement strategies, I know they are really focused on protecting, preserving, and producing, but the one thing that comes to mind is what kind of education is going on in the community in the places where there are going to be stops/stations around displacement and transit impact? I think that there can be a lot of power in even just information sharing on what potential impact can be to proactively inform folks and prepare folks. Depending on where these stations are, we might have folks who are homeowners, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they're middle or high income. So how do we prepare folks for what's to come and how their neighborhoods could possibly change?
  - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yeah, that's really great. I totally agree with you that this analysis we're doing, it doesn't really mean anything unless it's actually informed by real world experiences and is shared with the real world. And so up until now, when we've talked to communities, we've talked to them about these concepts of the mega region and BART gauge versus regional rail gauge and service and these abstract comments and concepts, and we hear things like, well, yeah, is there going to be a station in my neighborhood? And we don't know yet. And that's a hard answer to say. We need to make sure that these communities are prepared so they can help us make that decision, and then we'll be ready to roll out with all the necessary actions needed when the decision is made to try to avoid any of these impacts. So really, really good point, Samia. And I'm taking a lot of notes, and I think as we work more with the EAC, I'm hearing a big theme around community engagement, and it'd be great to hear more like that from you all about how to message that, how to have that conversation. We have a great engagement team that should probably come back and speak and present to the EAC again and to really make that as effective as it can be. So thank you and looking forward to continuing that.
  - b. **Tim Lohrentz:** I would just add that Link21 will not be operational until 2040. Darin and his team are already making those connections with the jurisdictions and trying to have policies put in place to stop displacement. Those policies will be in effect now, or whenever they are passed, so it is not waiting for Link21 to be implemented for those protections and things to be done to stop the displacement. And then the other point is, a lot of the BART



and Capitol Corridor, too, but BART is learning from this process as it implements more transit-oriented development. And so every year or two, there's a new station like MacArthur where there's a transit oriented development being put in place. And so as much as we can learn from this in Link 21, we can attach some of these strategies to BART's own transit-oriented development processes that are taking place now at stations across our system.

- I. **Gracyna Mohabir:** From my own understanding, you mentioned that you are still in the early stages of communicating with jurisdictions about what anti-displacement can look like if there was a stop in that area, and when I was looking at the anti-displacement slides, it mentioned the anti-displacement toolkit which described that it gives jurisdictions guidance and strategies. Just for my own clarification, does this mean that these are just suggestions for jurisdictions to follow or are they somewhat bound in any capacity to carry out the anti-displacement strategies?
  - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yeah, that's a really great question. And this is something that I think we're mapping out how to continue this conversation with the EAC. And this is something that we might dig a little deeper into because we're coming up with a lot of strategies that could be implemented in a lot of different ways. It could be implemented, for example, with how BART designs its station, so BART has control over that. It could be implemented with how BART uses some of its land. So we could have space set aside for community groups or for below market housing or nonprofit community space, that type of thing. But then when you get beyond that, since BART doesn't have any authority over these regulations in communities, it's really a matter of finding what's the best way to effectively implement these things. And we're just now starting to come up with strategies and I think we're going to be interested in hearing your thoughts on how to do that. In some cases, I think there's strategies that communities would be interested in implementing. I think there's some strategies that communities would be interested in implementing if it is in conjunction with a new station, for example. And then there are other strategies that might take a different route to implementation. It might require the funding that goes to cities to be contingent upon these strategies. It might require changes to state law even conceivably, I mean, we're looking at all the ways that we could be most effective, but we're not just intending to put out a piece of paper and say, here you go, these are ideas, take it or leave it. No, I think we're saying this is an investment in the billions of dollars and we need to be serious to do something really transformative. I mean, transit agencies don't usually think this way. They usually think of where the tracks go and where the stations go. But this idea around making sure that communities that are there now enjoy the same benefits is a new idea. And so another thing that just comes to mind is it's conceivable that the project will need to raise a lot of funding to pay for this.

And it could come from a variety of sources, state and federal government there.

- b. **Gracyna Mohabir:** Thank you for clarifying. You mentioned changes to state law. Do you mean pursuing through the legislative process?
- c. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yeah, possibly, but we don't have anything proposed, and everything is on the table. But we are not that far into it at this point. This is not a commitment, but it is an idea. We need to dream big, but we also need to be realistic because some of these things will be challenging.
- d. **Gracyna Mohabir:** I do stuff with environmental policy in Sacramento, so I was curious, and I know it is too early to tell.
- J. **Angela E. Hearing:** In our last meeting, there was a suggestion for the subcommittee. What is the status of that?
  - a. **Tim Lohrentz:** Thank you, Angela; we have been thinking about the best way to do that. We will have some things to share in the August EAC meeting. The first idea for that will be anti-displacement, but more to come.
  - b. **Frank Ponciano:** We will have the subcommittee conversation later in the next EAC meeting.
  - c. **Ameerah Thomas (through chat):** Throwing out a suggestion for utilizing breakout rooms for subgroups during our meeting
  - d. **Tim Lohrentz:** We would love to do breakout rooms, but that may not be possible. Because the EAC is considered a public meeting, it is not possible for a public member to be present in all the breakout rooms, making it very difficult in a public meeting to do a breakout room.
  - e. **Frank Ponciano:** So, it is a matter of public access, correct?
  - f. **Tim Lohrentz:** That is correct.
- K. **Clarence R. Fischer:** It's important to think big even if we may have to scale back eventually. When it was first proposed, BART was nine counties, 600 miles of track; they eventually had to scale back to three counties and 75 miles. But they've grown so much over the years. So with Link21, think big, we may have to start out small, but over the decades it can grow also. Thank you.
  - a. **Frank Ponciano:** Thank you, Clarence. That's a great comment to end on. Darin, is there any last note you want to put out there?
  - b. **Darin Ranelletti:** Thank you to everyone on the call. These are all valuable insights.
  - c. **Frank Ponciano:** Thanks, Darin, and thanks for everyone else for all your feedback.
  - d. **Tim Lohrentz:** Thank you, everyone, for your participation, and with this, we will close off.

### III. Next EAC Meeting Date: August 22, 2023, 1:00 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.

*The Office Hours virtual meeting ended at 7 p.m. Tim Lohrentz closed the meeting.*