

Link 21 Equity Advisory Council Office Hours | Topic: Anti-Displacement

June 11, 2024

Office Hours Recap Link21 Equity Advisory Council Office Hours #16 Anti-Displacement

June 11, 2024

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

I. Attendees

Clarence R. Fischer	Gracyna Mohabir
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Staff

Darin Ranelletti, Link21 Manager of Land Use Planning, BART	Iris Osorio-Villatoro, Link21 EAC Facilitation Team
Tim Lohrentz, Equity Programs Administrator, BART Office of Civil Rights	Santiago Vazquez Garcia, Link21 EAC Facilitation Team

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

Tim Lohrentz, Equity Programs Administrator, BART Office of Civil Rights, welcomed everyone to the Anti-Displacement Office Hour and proceeded to call the session to order.

II. Comments and Questions

- A. **Clarence R. Fischer:** Would you have the time to briefly do a review of what was presented at the last office hours?
 - a. **Tim Lohrentz:** We really didn't present any information at that meeting. We had only one member, David Ying, who was present. David had many questions, and we just went through those. I believe that you will be receiving a summary of the office

hours, so you'll be able to see the questions that David asked and the responses that were made.

- B. **Clarence R. Fischer:** I did not receive the email sent to EAC members after the May meeting that contained the draft principles.
 - a. **Iris Osorio-Villatoro:** I will send the draft principles to you tomorrow morning to make sure you receive them.
- C. **Gracyna Mohabir:** I'm curious as to what other suggestions to the anti-displacement principles were made in the May meeting.
 - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Clarence gave a good reminder about how with some of these anti-displacement strategies, it's important to have those in place ahead of the project. We talked about rent increase, for example, and if rent is starting to increase, you need to get ahead of that. David Sorrell thought that the toolkit was a good start with good actionable items, and that will help with working with local jurisdictions. Ameerah then asked if there would be more opportunity to continue reviewing and providing feedback, and we said yes. We then sent the principles out again through email. Angela E. Herring recommended that immigrants be added as a stakeholder to Principle #3.
- D. **Clarence R. Fischer:** We know a lot of immigrants may have challenges with English when they first migrate to the United States. However, in my experience speaking to community members, I've noticed that people from immigrant households often have elder family members of senior citizen status. Although the elderly people have been here for more than 20 to 30 years, they still do not speak English. So it's important to remember that just because some immigrants have been here a long time, they still have language needs. I appreciate calling out groups who don't speak English as separate stakeholders from immigrants.
 - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** There's certainly a lot of overlap between migration and language. So, this just makes it clear that we want to make sure we catch additional hooks. Thanks for that.
- E. **Gracyna Mohabir:** I know we had many opportunities to provide feedback during this process but are there any points of ambiguity or further clarification where you feel like the EAC could weigh in further?
 - a. **Darin Ranelletti:** I'm interested in your recommendations for the best way to have an effective discussion at the July EAC meeting. We presented the principles in May, and you two have certainly seen them a lot. Some people probably only saw them once. The question is, what do you think would be the best way for the group

to get comfortable with these principles with the intent to vote to approve them? We're striving for consensus, so if there's still some questions or concerns, that's fine, we can still work on it. But just wondering your thoughts on the best way to have that meeting. Should we read through them again? Do you think just sending them out ahead of time is good? Do you think we should pose certain questions to the group? What do you think is the best way for the group to get to a final place of comfort with the document?

- b. **Gracyna Mohabir:** Off the bat, all those things sound good. Just for the sake of redundancy, I think email them out ahead of time along with the questions you have for the group. It can't hurt to ask, "do you see anything that's missing or anything that can be further clarified?" Angela's suggestion is a great example of that. This creates an opportunity to stimulate the right train of thought.
 - c. **Clarence R. Fischer:** As Gracyna said, maybe three days before the meeting email these out. Say, "hey, in three days, we have the meeting here. We want you to take a look at these again." Then when we do discuss, I would say to go number by number on the principles and have a little discussion after each one. Ask for suggestions on each principle.
 - d. **Darin Ranelletti:** That's great feedback. Thank you.
- F. **Clarence R. Fischer:** Nothing was really done to help the community around the MacArthur BART station relocate after people were displaced from construction. Everyone went in their own direction and got messed up. We want to prioritize not moving anyone, but if for some reason it really has to come down to that, we must do our best to offer that community the option to find another place where that community, as a group, can move and find the same advantages as where they were. We don't want to move them out into the middle of nowhere. We want to make sure that they will still be an active community.
- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yeah, absolutely. Thanks, Clarence. It seems you're talking about principle #7. What I like about #7 is it says that although we'll strive to avoid displacement, in the event that they are, those folks should be better off with Link21 than before Link21. I think that's a powerful statement. We should strive to improve everyone's lives.

b. **Clarence R. Fischer:** I like that the principle mentions both residents and businesses, because businesses are also part of a community.

G. **Clarence R. Fischer:** One thing that I would like to see if a community really must be displaced to another place is keeping the residents together. Some neighborhoods have transportation options other than rail like bus service. Before the MacArthur station got built, you had a lot of good bus service, and you still do today. You've got buses on 40th, Telegraph, and on Martin Luther King, formerly Grove Street. We should want to make sure that if any displacement takes place, those residents would still have the same opportunities to access bus lines, too, since buses tend to run more hours and serve a few more places that are close by to a community. Rail on the other hand is nice for trips that cover a lot of distance.

a. **Darin Ranelletti:** That's a good point about how the whole transportation system needs to function for folks in different places. There are different amounts of access to different modes, and we want to make sure we're looking at all of them.

H. **Clarence R. Fischer:** Okay now what I'm thinking is the word displacement, to me, almost means the ability to access the services. And what I mean is, suppose you rode the bus today and you want to ride the train tomorrow because the bus has stopped running. The bus no longer runs, but here's the train, and I can ride the train today, and it should be no problem to switch over from one thing to another. My concern is that Link21, along with some of the other rail services that have come up like the Marin Smart Train or Capital Corridor, is slowly replacing a lot of Greyhound services to keep communities moving. While I am pleased that with all the maps I've seen for Link21, a lot of the areas that are proposed might cover some of the areas that Greyhound has abandoned. The thing that I'm worried about regarding displacement is how some groups that we talked about like immigrants will be able to access Link21. Some of the other services that are run by other operators under Federal Railway Administration rules, such as Capitol Corridor and San Joaquins, often ask riders for a form of identification. This is kind of a big question of how we don't prevent people from not being able to access all the services that Link21 will offer. It's displacement concerns and not displacement concerns. It's a very gray area. I don't know if somehow it's proper to at least raise this concern in conjunction with the anti-displacement principles. It's just something for those people who may be affected long

term who are not even in the community yet. As they come, how will they enjoy the same benefits that people today enjoy with our current levels of service?

- a. **Darin Ranelletti:** Clarence, thanks for expressing that. I think it is related to displacement. I think it's good that you've brought it up and you've brought up similar things before. The way I think about it is twofold. I think about it from a macro perspective, that Link21 and rail transportation is one piece of a larger puzzle of enabling our megaregion to have options for where to live and how to travel. But certainly other pieces like bus service, walking, biking, and all that play an important role. So that's why we like to refer back to some of the guiding documents where Link21 is called out and mentioned, such as Plan Bay Area and the state rail plan, which recognize that Link21 is just one piece. So that's sort of how I first look at it, from the macro perspective. On the micro perspective, you're absolutely right. I think what's been great about the EAC is the opportunity to raise these real practical, real world, on the ground concerns. How do you pay if you don't have a credit card? How do you board if you're undocumented? How do you access it if you are seeing or hearing impaired? You know, all of these types of things are so important, and when people are planning macro projects, we want to make sure we don't forget about those really important details. So, as we've been hearing comments and concerns from you all and from the public, we've been cataloging those. And another one that I think you brought up last night at the public webinar, Clarence, was the idea around shifting more transportation to the regional rail system where the platform and the train are not at the same boarding level. And so that's another great example of these details that are so important that we can't forget about when we're looking at this macro. So that kind of comment we record and we work on. I think we're optimistic, but I don't think we can promise that everything will be solved. I think we know it won't be solved if we're not intentional about it. So at least we can be intentional about it. I'm confident that many of these concerns will be addressed. But it's from the continual input that we're receiving from the EAC and the public.
- b. **Tim Lohrentz:** I'll just add on the ID question. As Darin said, we will be intentional talking with our partners like San Joaquins and Capitol Corridor to try to have them change that policy or practice.

I do know a lot of undocumented immigrants do have ID, whether it's a California ID card or ID from a home country. But in any case, we still want to try to solve that issue.

- c. **Clarence R. Fischer:** Yeah. Because as was discussed last night, Caltrain may start in San Jose and go to San Francisco where that is not a problem, but then it may go through the new tube and up to Richmond. What happens when you come out of the tube? Do you have to have ID then all of a sudden? As you mentioned, Tim, it's a work in progress and down the road we have to talk to the operators and see what we're going to do, especially if they merge together into a single governance, to be able to run the train from San Jose to San Francisco through the new tube and up to Richmond and beyond.
- d. **Tim Lohrentz:** Yeah, I think I can fairly say that the urban Metro service, which will be going between San Francisco and Richmond and the Coliseum, no matter who the operator is, will not have conductors on the trains checking ID's. It's simply not feasible when you have dozens or even hundreds of people entering the train.
- e. **Darin Ranelletti:** Yeah. I would add, Clarence, that another important piece about this is the rider and community education. We must do a better job of explaining all this to folks. And one example is the shift that was presented to the EAC around the future of Clipper, where you'll be able to use a credit card instead of Clipper. Some people have heard that as Clipper going away, when actually Clipper will still be an option. Most people probably will just use the credit card, but it's that kind of messaging that hasn't got out there, and we need to do a better job of explaining that to people.
- f. **Clarence R. Fischer:** What's stopping Clipper from expanding to the 21-county megaregion?
- g. **Tim Lohrentz:** I think that's a very unlikely scenario. Easier payment systems are something that do need to be implemented.
- h. **Darin Ranelletti:** I'm just thinking out loud here. You theoretically could have a statewide transit card, right? I mean, that's not out of the question that at some point there would be a statewide transit card, right? I'm not saying we're proposing that. I'm just saying in theory.

- i. **Clarence R. Fischer:** In theory, of course. Yeah. Where you could ride it, you know, all the way from the Oregon border all the way down to the Tijuana trolley in San Diego. It would be a nice thing if it were to happen in theory and maybe in practice, but we'll see if we're still around when that might happen.

Next EAC Meeting Date: Tuesday July 16, 2024

The Office Hours virtual meeting ended at 6:55 p.m. Iris Osorio-Villatoro thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.