

ADVANCING EQUITY IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The plan to define and deliver benefits to priority populations

We know that past transportation and infrastructure projects have negatively impacted low-income groups and communities of color. While prioritizing benefits for wealthier and often whiter communities, these projects have displaced residents and businesses and led to environmental harm in these underserved communities.

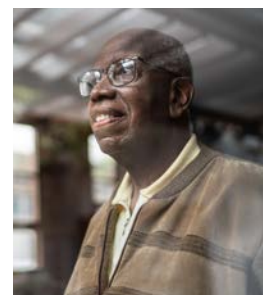
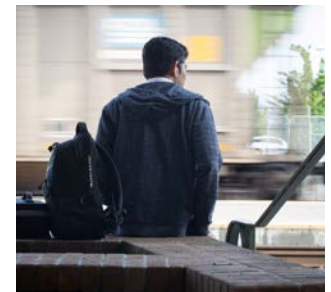
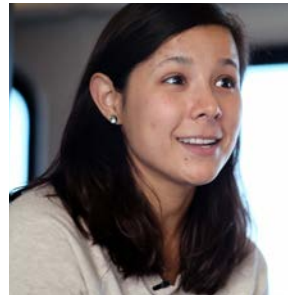
The Link21 Program strives to deliver benefits that are needed by communities that may have been harmed by past infrastructure projects or may not have received their fair share of benefits.

Link21 has identified communities that have experienced past or present harms and designated them “priority populations.” The definition focuses on two main factors: personal characteristics (such as race, gender, disability status, and others) and harms that some communities experience more than others (such as air pollution, unemployment, housing costs, and others). Link21 will revisit and refine the priority populations definition throughout the Program based on feedback from megaregional communities.

What is Link21?

Link21 will transform the passenger rail network serving the Northern California Megaregion. Our goal is to improve the quality of life for residents of the Megaregion by connecting, upgrading, and building upon the current passenger rail system, as envisioned by the California State Rail Plan.

A key project within Link21 is a new transbay passenger rail crossing between Oakland and San Francisco. The new crossing will increase capacity on the Megaregion’s most congested route, facilitate new connections, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provide better access to opportunity and jobs.





EQUITABLE PROCESSES CREATE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

By prioritizing open and transparent engagement with communities that have been harmed or overlooked in the past, Link21 will be better able to design and deliver equitable passenger rail service that meets the priorities, needs, and values of megaregional communities.

Through a community co-creation process, the Link21 Team is partnering with local community-based organizations (CBOs) to gather input from our priority populations through a series of workshops and surveys. This process overcomes known barriers to participation in traditional engagement strategies for systemically marginalized community members.

Working directly with trusted CBOs, the Link21 Team is able to design workshops that meet the access needs of community members with flexible timing, locations, technology, interactive and accessible content, smaller meetings, and breakout rooms to increase trust and accountability.

The personal experiences and opinions shared in these workshops shape the Program's efforts. Participants and CBOs are compensated for the lived experience expertise they provide to the Link21 Team.

Community co-creation update

By October 2021, the Link21 Team had hosted two rounds of community co-creation and had reached 550 community members through workshops and more than 1,000 through surveys. These efforts allowed the Link21 Team to hear directly from underrepresented groups including people of color, the formerly and currently unhoused or displaced, formerly incarcerated, people with disabilities, residents with low-income and low to limited English proficiency, the elderly, youth, and many others.

The Link21 Team will continue this community co-creation process throughout the Program and plans to establish an Equity Accountability Council (EAC). The EAC will comprise of trusted community representatives who can stay actively involved in the Program's development and implementation.

Partner with Link21

Link21 is actively seeking CBOs who would like to play a role in shaping and defining the Program. Learn more at Link21Program.org and contact us to express your interest at co-creation@Link21Program.org.



Link21 is sponsored by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (Capitol Corridor). The Program Team is also working closely with our Northern California rail partners and the state of California to ensure an integrated rail program. For more information visit Link21Program.org.

