

Link21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Link21 Program Monthly Stakeholder Update

The Link21 Team continues to make significant progress on the Business Case, the financial feasibility for the Link21 Program, and in developing program concepts. The start of 2021 has also seen the ramp up of engagement work. The Link21 Team will provide the BART and CCJPA boards with regular updates on engagement and key activities moving forward.

New BART Engagement Manager Named



Nicole Franklin has been selected as the new BART Link21 engagement manager. Nicole is a public engagement and land use professional with more than 20 years of experience working with government agencies, permitting,

funding, and on construction phases of private development and public infrastructure projects.

Nicole previously served as a principal property development officer for BART. She will oversee the Engagement and Outreach contract and consultants for the Link21 Program.

Federal Funding

The Link21 Team is actively seeking funding opportunities to support the program. With equity being the foundation of the program, the Team has

prepared an application for a U.S. Department of Transportation RAISE planning grant (Rebuilding American Infrastructure and Sustainability Equity), formerly known as the BUILD and TIGER grants. These grants focus on safety and environmental protection generating equitable economic opportunity. If selected, the Link21 Program will use these funds to further its equity work and support additional community co-creation workshops.

Preparing the Future - Link 21 Interns

This year, the Link21 Program, partnering with BART, has made a commitment to prioritize mentoring youth and young adults entering the workforce through BART's paid internship program. Capitalizing on BART's holistic approach, Link21 plans to build momentum with our interns on the front lines of equity. The internship program is designed to show future transit professionals the importance of equity from the very start of their careers. Through research, they will develop a youth engagement and outreach strategy using project-based learning. Interns will be exposed to the public agency and consultant worlds and the many facets of transportation planning. The Link21 Team will empower young people to speak their minds and contribute to planning processes that will affect them well into the future!



Public Workshops in Full Swing

With 21 counties and more than 160 cities, the Engagement and Outreach Team has its work cut out for them — and they are ready! Over the summer, the Link21 Team will host several virtual public workshops across the Northern California Megaregion (Megaregion) to educate, engage, and solicit feedback from the public. Workshops have been held for West Contra Costa and Contra Costa County, the City of Oakland and Alameda County, San Francisco and the surrounding areas, and Solano County.

The workshops are interactive, focus on different areas of the Megaregion, and are co-hosted by transportation agencies and other Link21 partner agencies. The input from these meetings will be used to help shape the program during the early planning phase.

Mark your calendar for the next public workshop. A full listing of past events and future meetings can be found at [Link21program.org/events](https://www.Link21program.org/events).

In addition to hosting public workshops, Link21 Team members have been speaking nationally about the program. Camille Tsao (CCJPA project manager) and Peter Gertler (HNTB program manager) served on different panels during the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Rail Conference held in June.

UPCOMING VIRTUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

JULY 15 - PLACER, SACRAMENTO, AND YOLO COUNTIES, 5:30 PM

UPCOMING WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

JULY 19 - JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUP

JULY 26 - STAFF LEVEL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

AUG 5 - EXECUTIVE LEVEL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

UPCOMING VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

JULY 20 & 22 - During these live Q&A sessions, the Link21 technical team will answer questions and use the input to help shape the program.

Look Ahead

The BART Board of Directors authorized four contracts for Planning and Engineering (ARUP/WSP Joint Venture), Engagement and Outreach (HDR), Travel Demand and Land Use (Cambridge Systematics), and Environmental (ICF) professional services to support the further development of Link21. These consultant teams represent a mix of international, national, and local firms with over 80 Small Business Entity/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms expected to begin work later this summer. These firms have extensive experience working in the 21-county Megaregion.

We are continuing our work to introduce the program to stakeholders throughout the Megaregion. Planned activities include:

- Presenting the Market Analysis
- Developing the Preliminary Program Concepts
- Presenting findings of the first round of community co-creation workshops

Equity Update

The Link21 Team has completed its initial synthesis of input received during Round 1 of community co-creation workshops. Feedback from the 350 participants will help shape Link21's approach to equity, including technical work. This summer, the Link21 Team will begin the second round of community co-creation with community-based organizations (CBO) and participants to share back key insights and to update them on Link21's progress.

In this outreach, we are contacting additional CBOs to expand the reach of our engagement work. The second round of community co-creation workshops will help inform the update of Link21's priority populations definition.

Connecting with Link21

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First Public Workshop Series in the Books



This summer, the Link21 Team launched a series of virtual public workshops to introduce the public to Link21. For many, this introduction gave a glimpse of what the program could mean for their travel and their communities. In addition to the

workshops, the team hosted Office Hours events in July for those who had additional questions or wanted to further discuss topics surrounding Link21, including equity, the environment, and the market analysis.

The feedback received during the workshops and Office Hours provided the team with invaluable insight, including desired destinations, current travel challenges, and service aspirations. For example, participants listed Monterey, Tahoe, Sacramento, Napa, and San Francisco as top destinations in the Northern California Megaregion (Megaregion). Another poll identified traffic, congestion, frequency, and time as some of the greatest travel challenges. Finally, participants cited reliability, convenience, speed, and longer hours as things they would like to see in service improvements. This information and comments received through the website, email, phone calls, and the goals and objectives survey are being shared with the technical team as they develop the Program Concepts, which will be presented to the public in a future public workshop series.

Several agencies partnered to co-host the public workshops, including from the City of Oakland, Contra Costa County, City and County of San Francisco, City of Sacramento, and Placer, Solano, and Yolo counties.

As the team moves closer to developing a List of Concepts, stakeholders will see a more targeted approach to outreach based on the market analysis and Program Concepts.

Program Receives Funding Letter of Support from U.S. Congressional Representatives

Seven California U.S. Congress members signed a letter to support Link21's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) planning grant application. The RAISE grant is a highly competitive federal grant sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Link21 Team submitted a \$1.5 million request to support additional equity efforts throughout the Megaregion. Congressman Swalwell's office was instrumental in drafting and championing the letter of support. We thank Congress members Mark DeSaulnier, Barbara Lee, Jackie Spier, Zoe Lofgren, Eric Swalwell, John Garamendi, and Ro Khanna for their support of the Link21 Program.

Link21 equity work is in line with President Biden's Justice 40 Initiative, a commitment to deliver at least 40% of the benefits from federal investments to climate and clean energy in priority population communities. Through the RAISE planning grant, Link21 hopes to further its equity work to ensure past harms are not repeated to the Megaregion's most vulnerable communities.

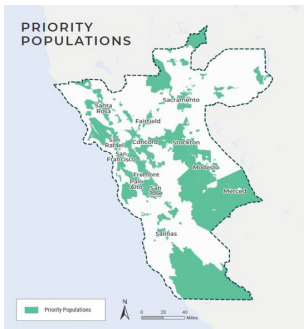
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Awards are expected to be made by November 22, 2021.

Link21 continues to look for additional funding through federal, state, and local resources to support ongoing planning efforts.

Input from Co-creation Workshops Informs Program Development



Over the past few months, the Link21 Team has synthesized and integrated information from the first round of community co-creation workshops into the program's more technical work, including the Business Case and Planning

and Engineering's concept development. Some notable takeaways that emerged were:

- High support for the Link21 goals and objectives, particularly transforming the passenger experience and enhancing community and livability
- Current, pressing issues, such as safety, cleanliness, displacement, COVID service cutbacks, and expensive fares make it difficult for many participants to focus on these long-term projects; we will continue to address these concerns and will gather and share out information on how we are currently addressing these issues to support participants in thinking about their priorities for the future
- Significant interest in using passenger rail for reasons other than commuting to work; we will continue to think through key non-work destinations for the program and to accommodate other service factors these types of trips may need, like longer service hours or more frequent off-peak service

Throughout August, the team will conduct its second round of community co-creation workshops. Feedback from the second round will inform the fall update of Link21's priority populations definition, which is a central piece of Link21's equity work and is being redefined to better reflect inequitable conditions throughout the

Megaregion. In addition to partnering with community-based organizations (CBOs) to host workshops, the team will work with CBOs to distribute a survey to community members. This additional option should further lower barriers for participation, allowing the Link21 Team to hear from more community members.

Link21 Team is Growing

Earlier this year, the BART Board of Directors approved four contracts to support Link21 work: HDR for Engagement and Outreach, ICF for Environmental Services, Arup/WSP Joint Venture for Planning and Engineering, and Cambridge Systematics for Travel Demand and Land Use. Contracts are being finalized with Notice to Proceed expected shortly afterward. The addition of these consultants will support and advance technical work. The Program Management Team is currently working with BART, Capitol Corridor, and these consultants to finalize their first work plan.

Look Ahead

The Link21 Team will deepen its outreach efforts to further educate and engage the general public. There will also be a greater emphasis on identifying and cultivating program champions.

The team will continue to lay the groundwork for the Equity Council and begin to understand who should make up the Council and what decisions they will provide input on.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

- SEP 9 - BART BOARD OF DIRECTORS** (*tentative*)
- SEP 15 - CCJPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- Q4 2021 - PUBLIC WORKSHOPS SERIES 2**
- FALL 2021 - PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) STAFF AND EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**
- FALL 2021 - JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUP (JWG) MEETING**

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Market Analysis: Identifying Unmet Rail Potential

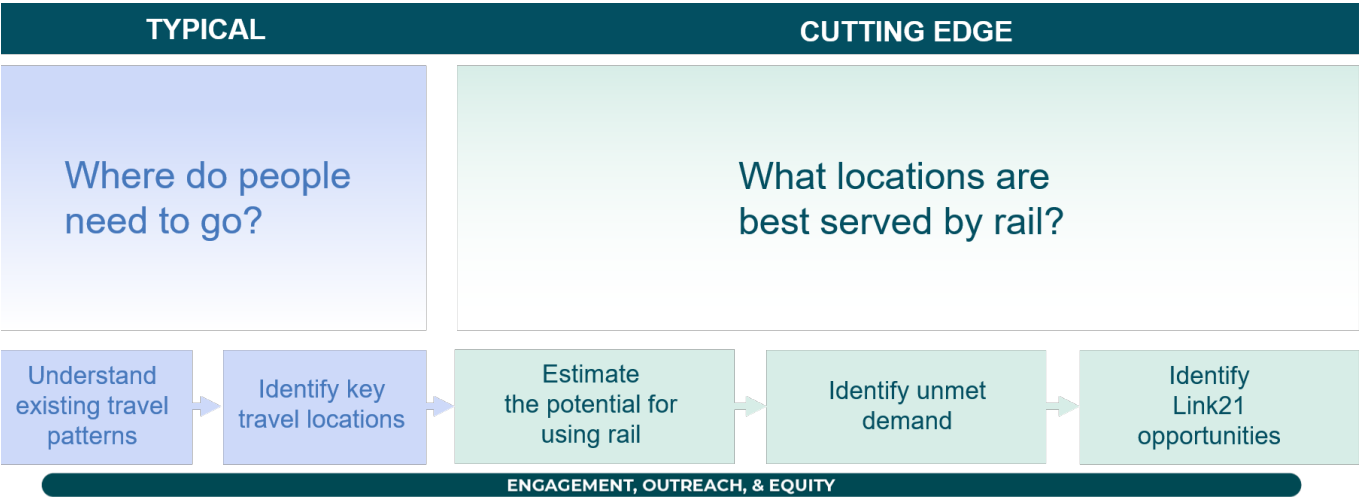
In order for future Link21 projects to offer the highest value to the Northern California Megaregion (Megaregion), the Link21 Team conducted a market analysis to help understand which areas in Northern California have the greatest potential for Oakland–San Francisco transbay corridor passenger rail ridership.

The market analysis covers all 21 counties of the Megaregion and uses traditional and cutting-edge methods to understand where people need to go and what locations might be served by passenger rail. Traditional methods of market analysis focus on understanding where people would like to go by using pre-pandemic travel patterns and identifying key travel locations.

Innovative modeling techniques that incorporate demographic information and traveler surveys were used to analyze:

- Pre-pandemic travel patterns by passenger rail, transit, car, and other modes of travel
- Key travel markets, such as major employment centers, residential communities, shopping, entertainment, and other hubs
- Potential that travel would be conducted by passenger rail if passenger rail were convenient and affordable
- Unmet demand for passenger rail service, including future projections

Priority population neighborhoods are located in underserved areas that Link21 aims to prioritize as part of the program. In order to improve the equity outcomes of



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the project, priority population neighborhoods are being double weighted to make sure they are considered fairly.

The market analysis identified that 45% of unmet rail potential uses the transbay corridor with the highest potential being in areas that are closest to the crossing. These areas are throughout San Francisco and in the East Bay between Richmond and Bay Fair.

Preliminary findings from the market analysis have been shared with Link21's technical panels, Program Development Team (PDT), and Jurisdiction Working Group (JWG). The Link21 Team is currently addressing and incorporating the comments from these groups and preparing a report summarizing the market analysis findings. Key findings will be shared with the public during fall outreach opportunities tentatively scheduled for later this year.

Link
Public Transit

Comfortable

Tech on trains (wifi, charging, etc.)

Trains more often

Cleanliness and amenities

More time on time

More riders

Goal: Transform Passenger Experience

Faster trips

Passenger amenities during the trip

Longer service hours

Less air pollution

Affordable housing

Goal: Enhance Community and Livability

More stations close by

Access more jobs

Goal: Support Economic Growth

Better balance job centers

Goal: Advance Environmental Stewardship and Protection

Less greenhouse gas emissions

workshops and the distribution of a survey to priority population communities. The survey is a new approach designed to further reduce barriers to participation that will allow Link21 to learn from a more diverse group of community partners. Data received from both the surveys and the workshops will be synthesized throughout September and October and shared with the community shortly thereafter. Feedback from the

Round three of community co-creation is expected to launch later this year.

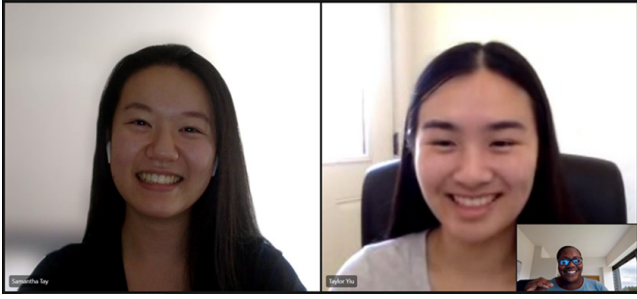
Link21, in collaboration with the BART Government Relations and Capital Finance teams, is working with staff from the California State Legislature, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), and other passenger rail and transit operators on a proposal to amend the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) guidelines. TIRCP is a highly competitive grant program, that is funded by the state's cap-and-trade program and that funds "transformative capital improvements that will modernize California's intercity, commuter, and urban rail systems, and bus and ferry transit systems, to significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, vehicle miles traveled, and congestion." Link21 is seeking to amend the guidelines to specifically allow project development as an eligible program category, along with other recommended changes.

Creating Opportunities for the Future

Over the last several weeks, two students from BART's summer internship program have assisted the Link21 Team with developing a strategy for youth engagement. As a generational program, it is important that the team engage and seek input from current and future riders of all ages. Samantha Tay, a rising senior majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of California at Davis, and Taylor Yiu, a rising senior at Alameda High School, were charged with creating an engagement and outreach strategy to reach more youth in the Megaregion.

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BART interns Samantha Tay (left) and Taylor Yiu (right) during their mentoring session with BART intern alumnae Monet Boyd (inset).

The interns reviewed the results of community co-creation round 1 youth workshops to develop and enhance youth-oriented outreach materials.

Through project-based learning, the interns were exposed to the public agency and consultant worlds, and the many facets of transportation planning. Tay and Yiu's plan will help Link21 empower young people to speak their minds and contribute to planning processes that will affect them well into the future.

As one of their final activities, the two interns met with Monet Boyd, a BART alumnae intern, for a virtual mentoring session. At this meeting, they discussed their experiences as interns and how BART and Link21 can continue to promote youth and equity in the future.

Both interns said they had a great experience during their time on the program and learned not only technical skills, but important soft skills needed to be successful.

"Being open to communication is key," explained Tay. "Clear up confusion and ask questions early on." Yiu learned the value of networking saying, "Having connections with people is important."

At the end of the program, they presented the youth engagement strategy to the Link21 Team and were awarded a Certificate of Accomplishment on behalf of the BART Planning and Development Department.

Link21 Featured at Conference on Advancing Transportation Equity

Emily Alter with BART's Office of Civil Rights and Mydria Clark with HNTB gave participants of the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) inaugural Conference on

Advancing Transportation Equity (CATE) a glimpse into the Link21 Equity Program.

According to the TRB website, CATE features "all areas of transportation practice and research, including those that address links between transportation and housing, telecommunications, health, policing, or economic development."

Presentations at the conference featured those who are working on the front lines of transportation equity and justice within community-based and non-profit organizations. Participants represented a wide range of lived experiences and discussed how diverse perspectives are included in policy development, project selection, and mitigation to advance transportation equity.

Through an informative interview for the conference's video series, Alter answered questions posed by Clark on the Equity program, particularly on community co-creation strategies and how public input is being integrated in Link21's technical work.

Looking Ahead

- Fall outreach will begin in October and focus on the market analysis and an update on technical work being performed. This will also be a key opportunity for the public to provide the Link21 Team with valuable input on the market analysis and service aspirations.
- Onboarding of the Engagement and Outreach consultants is anticipated in late September.
- Round 3 of community co-creation is tentatively scheduled for late 2021/early 2022.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| SEP 15 - | CCJPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS |
| OCT 14 - | BART BOARD OF DIRECTORS |
| FALL 2021 - | PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) STAFF AND EXECUTIVE MEETINGS |
| FALL 2021 - | JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUP (JWG) MEETING |
| Q4 2021 - | PUBLIC WEBINAR SERIES |

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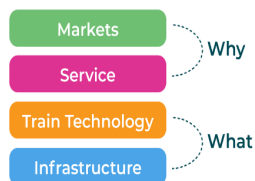
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Building Better Service

The Link21 Team will be evaluating potential markets, service planning options, train technology, and infrastructure to help identify projects that will better connect the Northern California Megaregion (Megaregion) passenger rail network. The Link21 Program (Link21) is different from other transportation projects because it is focused on improving the entire Megaregion.

The first two building blocks are markets and services. The Link21 Team needs to understand the Megaregion's markets, or areas, and what services are needed before decisions on train technology and infrastructure can be made. The Link21 market analysis shows the team which areas in the Megaregion can be best served by passenger rail improvements by evaluating which areas have the most unmet rail potential.



The second building block is service, the passenger experience, which includes travel time, frequency, and service hours. Through a survey, the Engagement and Outreach Team will be asking the public about their service improvements — what they consider to be good service — longer hours, frequency of trains, system resiliency, capacity, and others.

The third and fourth building blocks, train technology, and infrastructure, will come later in the Program.

Plan Bay Area 2050 Touts Link21 as Anchor Rail Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted the final version of Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA 2050) at a joint meeting on October 21.

PBA 2050 is a long range regional plan that focuses on housing, the economy, transportation, and the environment. The plan includes 35 strategies that aim to improve these elements in the nine county Bay Area. According to the plan, Link21 is seen as a vital component to modernizing the regional passenger rail network, and helping to position the Bay Area's rail network as a world-class system.

Now that PBA 2050 has been adopted, MTC and ABAG will now focus on an implementation plan that identifies goals and objectives to ensure it is successful.

Creating New Definitions

Last month, the Link21 Team completed its second round of community co-creation workshops and distributed a survey to help increase the team's reach. Nearly 200 community members participated in workshops co-hosted with 11 community-based organizations (CBOs). The Link21 Team partnered with additional CBOs and a research firm to conduct a survey and poll that reached over 1,600 additional stakeholders. The Link21 Team focused on hearing from community members throughout the Megaregion, often overlooked in early planning. This

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included collaborating with CBOs with connections to communities such as the unhoused, formerly incarcerated, and those vulnerable to displacement. To be successful in this effort, the Link21 Team did outreach in Oakland and San Francisco and the counties of Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, Stanislaus, and Merced.

Feedback from these workshops and surveys will be used to develop a new priority population definition. Link21's priority populations are underserved areas experiencing inequitable outcomes, which the Link21 Team has committed to prioritizing throughout planning.

This new definition will reflect feedback regarding burdens, concerns, and desired outcomes. The Link21 Team is collaborating with BART's Office of Civil Rights to develop a strategy to publicize the results of this outreach.

More broadly, input from both rounds of community co-creation is being considered throughout program work, including the efforts to identify desirable service aspirations of priority populations.

Fall Outreach – A Deep Dive into the Community

The Engagement and Outreach Team will take Link21



on the road in November through a three-pronged approach (grassroots outreach, webinars and live Q&A, and partner agency

and advocacy group meetings) that is designed to reach more stakeholders, meet people where they are, receive feedback that can be shared with the Link21 technical teams, and continue to cultivate relationships with partner agencies and advocacy groups.

The Link21 Team plans to do this through a robust grassroots outreach effort that includes stops at major fairs and festivals, and performing outreach onboard various BART and Capitol Corridor routes and stations.

Stakeholders reached through these methods will be

provided with information on the upcoming webinars and live Q&A sessions, and will be encouraged to take a survey that will help the Link21 Team better understand the service aspirations of travelers. Information gleaned from these surveys will help the technical teams with service plan development.

In addition to grassroots outreach, Link21 will host webinars that provide an update on what the team has been working on, our findings so far, the market analysis, next steps, and how the public can help us get there. Four live Q&A sessions will be held on November 13, 16, 17, and 18 with subject matter experts from Link21.

The third prong of this approach includes meeting with partner agencies and advocacy groups to provide an update on Link21 and to encourage these agencies to share information about the fall outreach series and the survey.

Upcoming Events*

FALL 2021	VARIOUS FAIRS AND FESTIVALS
FALL 2021	IN STATION & ON TRAIN OUTREACH
NOV 13	FALL OUTREACH LIVE Q&A, 10:30 AM
NOV 16	FALL OUTREACH LIVE Q&A, 6:30 PM
NOV 17	FALL OUTREACH LIVE Q&A, 6:30 PM
NOV 18	FALL OUTREACH LIVE Q&A, 6:30 PM
1Q 2022	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM EXECUTIVE AND STAFF LEVEL MEETINGS
1Q 2022	JURISDICTIONAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

*For more information visit [Link21program.org/events](https://www.Link21program.org/events)

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