

LINK21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

STRATEGIC PROGRAM PLAN

CHAPTER 11: ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

March 2023

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Prepared By:
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ISSUE AND REVISION RECORD

REVISION	DATE	PREPARER(S)	PMC REVIEWER(S)	APPROVER	DESCRIPTION/ NOTES
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1.A	02/06/2020	Adrian Filice, HNTB	Gay Knipper, HNTB	Peter Gertler, HNTB	WPA.01 DRAFT submittal
	02/21/2020	---	Sadie Graham, BART	Sadie Graham, BART	WPA.01 DRAFT submittal review
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SHAREPOINT PATH

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYM/ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
BART	San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
CCJPA	Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
CBO	community-based organization
CEP	Consolidated Engagement Plan
CWG	Communications Working Group
E&O	Engagement and Outreach
EAC	Equity Advisory Council
EAP	engagement action plan
JWG	Jurisdictional Working Group
PDT	Program Development Team
PIMA	Public Information Management Application
PMC	Program Management Consultants
PMT	Program Management Team
Q&A	question and answer
SPP	Strategic Program Plan
UC	University of California

LINK21 PROGRAM TEAM NAMES

TEAM NAME	TEAM MEMBERS
PMC	The HNTB Team
PMT	BART/CCJPA + PMC
Consultants	Consultants supporting program identification/project selection
E&O Team	PMC + Consultant E&O teams
Link21 Team	PMT + Consultants

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11. ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

11.1. Purpose

The Engagement and Outreach (E&O) Team is responsible for making sure the public and stakeholders are aware of and know how to engage with the Link21 Program (Link21). This includes supporting and facilitating conversations with the general public, communities that have been marginalized, stakeholders, media outlets, and elected officials to explain the technical work in a way that allows these audiences to easily digest the information and to provide informed input and feedback. This information is then shared with the Link21 Team¹ to be incorporated into technical and other work as part of Link21's planning and environmental linkages approach. The E&O Team also circles back with these groups to show the results of their input.

Link21 will include new infrastructure to accommodate one or more train services (e.g., BART, CCJPA, and Regional Rail²) across the San Francisco Bay to connect the East Bay, the Peninsula, Sacramento, and beyond. It will be integrated with an enhanced and connected train network that prioritizes the passenger experience, creates seamless connections, improves ease of travel, protects the environment, supports the Northern California Megaregion's (Megaregion)³ economy, and advances equity. These are all important and complex messages that need to be communicated appropriately and clearly to various groups.

Some of the E&O Team's key roles in program delivery are to:

- Identity target audiences for engagement.
- Develop clear and concise messaging that resonates with audiences and that creates transparency.
- Establish tools and tactics for effective communication and engagement.
- Act as a liaison between Link21 and the diverse public to share information and input.
- Facilitate timely collaborative discussions with stakeholders to ensure co-creation of program planning and resolution of issues.
- Build trust, support, and advocacy for Link21.

¹ San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)/Capitol Corridor Joint Powers authority (CCJPA), Program Management Consultants (PMC), and Consultants supporting program identification/project selection (Consultants)

² This could include commuter, intercity, or high-speed rail.

³ 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.



11.1.1. Goals and Desired Outcomes

Initial engagement and outreach goals and desired outcomes were developed during Phase 0: Program Definition. They will be expanded upon and refined as Link21 evolves.

OVERALL GOALS

- Build public awareness about and engagement with Link21 in ways that foster support, advocacy, and action to advance the program and BART/CCJPA's vision and California's *State Rail Plan*.
- 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 with underserved communities.
- Position BART/CCJPA as leaders that deliver innovative regional transportation solutions.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Generate local, regional, and national governmental and legislative support for Link21.
- Gain stakeholder and audience trust and support for program management and decision-making.
- Define equity and how it will be considered for Link21.

11.2. Strategy

Strategic and proactive engagement and outreach is essential to successfully developing and delivering Link21. The E&O Team plans, develops, and executes equitable engagement and outreach strategies that build stakeholder awareness of and engagement in the development of a megaregional mobility solution that will:

- Transform the passenger experience.
- Support economic opportunity and global competitiveness.
- Promote equity and livability.
- Advance environmental stewardship and protection.

The E&O Team is responsible for developing engagement action plans (EAP) for Link21. The EAP is a living document that serves as a roadmap, identifies stakeholders (general public, elected and public officials, advocacy groups, etc.) and defines how and when Link21 will engage with them, and determines what key messages will be shared.



11.2.1. Equitable Outreach

Equity is a guiding principle for Link21, and the E&O Team works closely with the Equity Team to develop and execute equitable engagement. All Link21 work should be consistent with the *Equity Vision Statement* and the *Equity Blueprint Plan*, and staff from the E&O and Equity teams and BART's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) support their application to all facets of work. Refer to the *Strategic Program Plan (SPP) Chapter 9: Equity* for more information on Link21's equity efforts.

An overarching goal for equitable engagement is to intentionally involve communities that have been marginalized, including priority populations,⁴ throughout the process. For broad public outreach, this includes creating accessible opportunities to engage audiences in person, virtually, and in language with traditional handouts and electronic communications that reach target audiences in their preferred communication medium and engagement format. These activities might include hosting Link21 events, participating in community-hosted events, or co-creating unique engagement opportunities with the public to best serve their needs while using accessible materials and interpreters to meet the audience's needs. In addition, the E&O Team works to cultivate relationships with influential members of these communities, including elected officials and community leaders.

Additional and targeted outreach to communities that have been marginalized is necessary to capture their input. One of the ways this is achieved is through community co-creation activities that are held in partnership with community-based organizations (CBO) to receive input from groups who are often overlooked or excluded in planning processes. Community co-creation topics are determined in partnership with other tasks. Input from these touchpoints flow directly into program work to influence the Link21 Team's 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 is key to building trust and to maintaining relationships.

Link21 has held three rounds of co-creation and a landscaping exercise to understand communities, stakeholders, travel patterns, and barriers to access, and to co-create solutions to these barriers. For more information about Link21's co-creation workshops and their results, refer to SPP Chapter 9.

A critical part of the Link21 Equity Program is the establishment of the Equity Advisory Council (EAC), which is made up of 18 community members of diverse backgrounds and "lived experiences." The EAC representatives serve a two-year term, and they are compensated for their time as an advisory body to Link21, providing input and guidance

⁴ In Phase 0, priority populations were defined as census tracts that were designated as either State of California Priority Populations or Metropolitan Transportation Commission or County Congestion Management Agency Communities of Concern. In Phase 1, it was updated to 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.



on key program planning efforts to continue advancing equity. For more information about Link21's EAC, refer to SPP Chapter 9.

11.2.2. Public Outreach

The E&O Team began robust public outreach in Phase 0 (summer 2021). Public outreach had two primary purposes in this early phase of Link21:

1. Build public awareness and support for Link21.
2. Solicit public feedback and input to support technical milestones with careful attention given to involving communities with equity concerns and adhering to the spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

11.2.3. 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 E&O Team works collaboratively with the Strategic Advisory Team (refer to SPP Chapter 3: Strategic Advisory) to identify and prioritize stakeholders for early engagement and to explore opportunities for group briefings or meetings that allow the socialization of Link21 with broader groups.

To promote regular partnerships with key stakeholders, the following working groups were created:

- **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.
- **Communications Working Group (CWG)** consists of public information officers and communications staff of rail operators and transportation planning agencies.

The PDT, JWG, and CWG meeting schedules are milestone-driven, and they usually occur on a quarterly basis.

11.3. Implementation

11.3.1. Phase 0: Program Definition

During Phase 0, the Program Management Team (PMT)⁵ developed a *Consolidated Engagement Plan* (CEP) to outline a programmatic approach for providing efficient and

⁵ BART/CCJPA and PMC



strategic engagement and communications among PMT members. By establishing guidelines for these activities, program sponsors, partners, stakeholders, and other target audiences can understand the need for and benefits of Link21, and they can see program decision-making as fair, logical, and transparent.

The information in the CEP guided the development of the 2020 EAP, which details more precise engagement and outreach strategies for near-term work. The EAP is a living document that is adjusted based on Link21's needs.

The 2020 EAP laid the groundwork for the engagement and outreach program, and it included eight strategies that supported Phase 0:

1. **Branding and Messaging:** develop a program name, logo, and brand so content has a consistent look and feel across all activities.
2. **Legislative:** communicate regularly with federal and state legislators and staff to keep them informed on the program and to position it for future funding.
3. **Local Elected Officials:** communicate regularly with local elected officials throughout the Megaregion to keep them informed on Link21 and to position the program for future funding and for favorable inclusion in state and regional transportation plans.
4. **BART and CCJPA:** communicate with both Boards through monthly updates, and coordinate with agency, legislative, and communications staff through regular coordination meetings.
5. **Program Champions:** identify, inform, and nurture public-sector, private-sector, and individual project champions.
6. **Technical Partners:** communicate and obtain feedback on the program from agency partners and advocacy organizations.
7. **Equity:** develop an equity framework for the public outreach strategy.
8. **Public Outreach:** communicate and engage with the public to obtain meaningful input on the program in advance of the environmental process through activities, including:
 - a. Public workshops (conducted as virtual forums)
 - b. Grassroots outreach opportunities (fairs, festivals, etc.)
 - c. Program website
 - d. Social media
 - e. Media opportunities
 - f. Conferences and speaking opportunities
 - g. Supporting content and informational materials



The 2021 EAP built upon the goals and desired outcomes of the 2020 EAP. It focused on educating the public about Link21 and on building relationships and trust with our stakeholders.

With the goal of expanding its reach, the E&O Team launched several strategies that were tailored to the various needs of megaregional users.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Link21 developed several tools, including a website, social media content, web-based interactive games and quizzes, surveys and polling, and fact sheets to inform and educate the public and stakeholders across the Megaregion.

Public Information Management Application

The Public Information Management Application (PIMA) is a tool the E&O Team uses to manage stakeholders, discussions with agencies and stakeholders, public comments, track public sentiment; and to see the reach of its outreach efforts. PIMA has a geographic information system (GIS) component that allows the E&O Team to understand which communities are engaging with Link21. This data is gleaned from zip code information that is provided by subscribers.

Website

The Link21 website was launched in January 2021, and it serves as the main source of information for the program. It contains progress updates and program event and activity announcements, and it features interactive quizzes and surveys aimed at educating the public and receiving feedback in a fun way. Members of the public can also visit the website to access recordings of public meeting and office hour events, ask questions, provide feedback, and sign up for program updates. Since its inception, the website has had over 200,000 views.

Other notable analytics (as of 12/05/2022) include:

- Social media reach: 5 million
- Social media mentions: 1,328
- Media reach: 18 million
- Media mentions: 782

Social Media

The E&O Team partners with BART and CCJPA's communications departments to develop and post content onto their respective social media channels. They use social media to promote grassroots outreach opportunities, virtual public meetings, and survey participation. Link21 is expected to have dedicated social media channels in the future.



Surveys and Polling

Link21 uses polling and convenience and statistically significant surveys to gauge public opinion and to better understand the public's needs. Polls and surveys dealing with program branding, goals and objectives, service improvements, and equity were used to gain insight from the public that helped to refine Link21 and to inform the technical work. The first poll dealt with the program's branding and whether Link21 should move forward.

Future of Transportation in the Megaregion Poll

The Link21 Team conducted an online poll of more than 1,400 registered voters from June 6 to June 13, 2020, to understand public opinion regarding Link21 in the Megaregion. Launched at the height of the pandemic, poll results showed that traffic congestion still ranked high among issues in Northern California, and that there was support for an integrated rail system concept. Many of those polled indicated that a more integrated system would help to alleviate this congestion and that Link21 should move forward.

The poll's main findings were:

- Given the choice, voters prioritize a rail trip without transfers over a new transbay passenger rail crossing, even for individuals who live in the Bay Area.
- Voters value a project that proves itself reliable and affordable (especially important to Latinx voters).
- Fast, sustainable, and connected are terms that resonate broadly; innovation and creating community fall relatively flat without context or proof of concepts.
- A passenger rail system that is a dependable, affordable alternative to driving is valued across the Megaregion (broadly speaking).
- Income and racial equity promotion is “very appealing” to more than two in five surveyed (for younger, female, Democratic, and Bay Area voters in particular, equity and environmental benefits are compelling).
- Republicans value connection to jobs and the economy (but are less likely to support the proposal overall).
- Opponents believe the project would raise their taxes.



Goals and Objectives Survey

The Goals and Objectives Survey was active from January to August 2021. The survey allowed the public to offer their opinions of Link21 and its goals and objectives. More than 2,000 people completed the survey, which was available online.

The survey's main findings were:

- Providing service is the most effective way to transform the passenger experience, followed closely by connecting the train network and aligning schedules with other transit services, according to most participants.
- Enhancing communities and quality of life by providing alternatives to travel was a top priority for train users.
- Enabling communities to move towards transit-supportive land use ranked high on the survey.

Service Improvements Survey and Poll

More than 900 people completed the convenience service improvements survey and 1,500 completed the statistically significant poll on service improvements. These tools were used to better understand current travel behavior, major barriers to train service, and perceptions of different service improvements. Paper and online versions of these surveys were made available in English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Vietnamese.

The top five most important improvements to passenger rail service were:

- More frequent service
- Faster trips
- Greater reliability of service
- Easier connections between services
- Quicker station access

Overall, respondents desired many improvements, but they primarily desired better connections.

Equity Poll

The Link21 Team also conducted a poll of 1,500 low-income individuals and people of color to supplement learnings from Round 2 of the co-creation workshops. Details about this survey can be found in SPP Chapter 9.

STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

PDT and JWG Meetings

The E&O Team is heavily involved in developing, managing, and assisting with the development and implementation of staff and executive-level PDT and JWG meetings. These working groups help shape Link21 by offering feedback on the technical aspects



of the program, and they assist the Link21 Team in understanding the unique challenges in the various megaregional communities. The PDT and JWG are engaged for input around key program work and milestones. As Link21 moves forward, these groups are expected to grow, and new groups are expected to be formed.

The following meetings were held in Phase 0:

- Executive-level PDT: 3
- Staff-level PDT: 5
- JWG: 5

Early in Phase 0, the E&O Team hosted a briefing for congressional staff members to introduce Link21 and its goals and objectives, equity foundation, and timeline.

Public Outreach

Summer 2021 Outreach Series

The E&O Team hosted its first series of public meetings in the summer of 2021. Link21 partnered with various transportation agencies and jurisdictional organizations to host four geographically focused virtual meetings. Areas of focus included: West Contra Costa and Contra Costa counties; the City of Oakland and Alameda County; and Solano, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties.

The *goals* of these meetings were to:

- Inform, educate, and energize the public.
- Demonstrate transparency and receive input to further inform Link21.
- Report on pertinent aspects of Phase 0 program development.
- Inspire confidence in the Link21 Team with the public.

The *desired outcomes* of these meetings were:

- Having a better informed and supportive public.
- Engaging with and receiving public input.
- Developing a more comprehensive understanding of major concerns and priorities by region.

Meetings were simulcast in English, Spanish, and Cantonese. Details on and materials for the summer 2021 public meetings are on the [Link21 website](#).

A high-level summary of the summer 2021 outreach is as follows:

- Geographically focused meetings: 5
- Total attendees: 407
- Office hour sessions: 2



Meeting Notification

A variety of tools and techniques, including partnerships with transportation agencies and jurisdictional organizations, website content, emails, media releases, social media, and paid advertising, were used to promote the public meetings and after-hour events.

Email invitations were sent to more than 200,000 email addresses through a partnership with Data Axle. This one-time campaign was used to inform the public about Link21 and upcoming public meetings, and to encourage them to sign up for updates. Print and digital ads were placed in English, Spanish, Chinese, and African American focused publications to promote the virtual meetings.

Paid, geotargeted social media advertisements were deployed through BART and CCJPA's channels on Twitter and Facebook to inform the public in relevant communities of upcoming workshops. These advertisements were targeted to priority population areas within the Megaregion based on zip codes.

Throughout the workshop season, geotargeted social media ads drove 8,190 unique visitors to the Link21 website.

Fall 2021 Outreach Series

The E&O Team hosted the second series of public meetings in fall 2021. Details on and materials for the fall 2021 public meetings are on the [Link21 website](#).

The second public meeting series included the four building blocks of service and the findings of Link21's cutting-edge market analysis. Each meeting was hosted in English, Spanish, and Cantonese, and American Sign Language translation was provided. For this meeting series, the presentation was pre-recorded and included a live question and answer (Q&A) session immediately following the meeting.

A high-level summary of the fall 2021 outreach is as follows:

- Virtual public meetings: 4
- Total attendees: 167

Meeting Notification

Partnerships with transportation agencies and jurisdictional organizations, website content, emails, media releases, social media, and paid advertising were used to promote the public meetings and Q&A events.

Email invitations were sent to more 6,000 subscribers in the PIMA database, a news release was distributed to local print and broadcast outlets, social media posts and ads were placed using BART and CCJPA Facebook and Twitter accounts, and digital ads were placed in local English, Spanish, Chinese, and African American focused publications and radio stations.



Grassroots Outreach

The E&O Team launched grassroots outreach efforts in late 2021 to begin a more community-focused approach to informing residents about Link21. This included tabling opportunities at farmer's markets, fairs, festivals, and outreach at BART and Capitol Corridor train stations and on board Capitol Corridor trains. The E&O Team made contact with almost 5,000 people, providing information about Link21, survey opportunities, and upcoming public meetings and office hours events. These efforts will continue through Phases 1 and 2.

11.3.2. Phase 1: Project Identification and Subsequent Phases

The E&O Team continues to build upon the foundation that was established in Phase 0. Equitable engagement priorities for Phase 1 and future phases include:

- Ongoing grassroots tabling at community events and festivals.
- Presenting to established conferences, organizations, and associations.
- Bridging relationships and building trust.
- Partnering with CBOs, non-governmental organizations, and trusted community leaders.
- Understanding diverse engagement and outreach needs.
- Launching the EAC.

The following goals and objectives were identified to facilitate equitable and inclusive engagement and outreach for Phase 1:

- **Increasing megaregional, statewide, and national awareness:** Regular connections with policymakers, industry leaders, agency partners, freight railroad partners, community stakeholders, and the public will occur across the Megaregion, statewide, and nationwide to share information and to promote Link21 progress and benefits.
- **Prioritizing and advancing equity throughout delivery of Link21:** Implement equitable processes and outcomes that include regular co-creation with members from communities that have been marginalized, including priority populations, and establish the EAC.
- **Maintaining transparency of the process:** Continual education and proactive information sharing and education to solicit informed input that can be reflected within Link21 and reported back to show how input has been incorporated into the program.
- **Providing innovative and dynamic engagement:** Use of traditional and digital tools to increase reach across the Megaregion and to create opportunity for meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and the public.



- **Gathering local, state, and federal support:** Targeted and timely briefings to local, state, and federal stakeholders to establish and maintain trust, understanding, and support.

The desired outcomes for the Phase 1 effort are to:

- Provide broad and diverse engagement of the Megaregion.
- Increase participation in Link21-hosted activities.
- Improve understanding of the program.
- Establish trust and program champions/advocates.
- Develop Link21 projects that reflect the input received and that meet the needs of the communities they will serve.

Phase 1 includes ongoing equitable outreach at each level of the community from the general public to policy stakeholders in conjunction with three large-scale public outreach milestone campaigns (fall 2022, summer 2023, and fall 2023).

In April 2022, Phase 1 kicked-off, and throughout the remainder of the year a targeted outreach program was implemented. This included engaging with elected officials and industry and advocacy organizations; convening Link21 working groups; and conducting grassroots community tabling, CBO co-creation workshops, and a fall outreach milestone campaign.

FALL 2022 OUTREACH SERIES

The purpose of the fall outreach series for Phase 1 was to educate the public about the work that would be occurring between 2022 and 2024, promote engagement opportunities, and solicit early input into potential transbay passenger rail crossing concepts, stations, and service needs.

Communications with stakeholders and the public focused on the development of concepts and how they would be analyzed and refined to move Link21 forward towards project identification. Outreach included sharing example concepts for a new transbay passenger rail crossing between San Francisco and Oakland.

Discussions started with agency partners and jurisdictions through presentations and briefings, then shifted to our public stakeholders and community partners through in-person tabling and virtual meetings. In total, Link21 Team members presented or briefed over 430 stakeholders through presentations, briefings, and Link21-hosted virtual meetings and office hours. They also connected directly with over 1,400 community members through 22 tabling events.

In October, Link21 hosted three virtual and geographic-focused meetings (Megaregion, East Bay, San Francisco) and four virtual office hours with 181 total attendees.

The virtual meeting format included a Zoom™ platform that offered a live presentation, interactive poll, and facilitated Q&A session. To complement these virtual meetings and



to provide the public with more opportunities to connect directly with Link21 Team members, the program hosted four virtual office hours where participants could join and ask questions or provide input.

The desired outcomes of these virtual activities were to:

- Broaden participation and advocacy.
- Reach key priority populations adjacent to concept examples.
- Gather valuable input for consideration in concept development and service planning.

Outreach Event Notification

Promotion of fall 2022 engagement opportunities, including grassroots tabling events, virtual webinars, and office hours, was conducted through social platforms, digital ads, press releases, email notifications, Link21 website, and flyer distribution. Trilingual flyers were distributed at all tabling events from late August through October. Three email notifications were sent to more than 7,000 email addresses through the PIMA database. Print and digital ads were placed in 23 English, Spanish, Chinese, and African American focused media outlets. Using BART and Capitol Corridor's social platforms, Link21 placed three social media ads and made five posts between September and October.

PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Public affairs works to identify Link21 funding, find opportunities to receive policy support by elected officials and agencies, and build recognition, understanding, and Link21 champions in the Megaregion. The E&O Team works collaboratively with the Strategic Advisory Team to set strategy for meetings with public and elected officials and other key stakeholders and to develop applications for funding opportunities. In late 2022, the CWG was introduced, which consists of public information officers and communications staff of rail operators and transportation planning agencies. The E&O Team works with CWG members to help promote Link21 meetings and events and to gain insight on community issues that are relevant to program planning. These relationships are key for support from the public and for potential funding opportunities.

Goals for public and government affairs outreach includes:

- Building and maintaining support and creating Link21 champions within the BART and CCJPA boards throughout Phase 1.
- Reaching, deepening, and maintaining positive and transparent relationships with elected officials, partner agencies, jurisdictions, and staff to allow for ongoing education and to build trust and Link21 support.
- Increasing recognition for Link21 among diverse stakeholders to build understanding and buy-in to potential local and interregional benefits.



- Identifying, pursuing, and securing federal, state, and local measures and grant funding.

The E&O Team has assisted with more than 46 briefings with elected officials, government agencies, and business and advocacy groups.

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT

Link21's tribal engagement approach helps the E&O Team better understand systemic and underlying issues and obstacles related to transit programs, associated climate and resilience needs, and how to enhance and expand access to transit-related programs and opportunities for tribal communities throughout the Megaregion. During the fall of 2022, the E&O Team began its outreach to tribal communities by identifying and participating in the Auburn Pow Wow event that attracted tribal representatives from across Northern California. This event is one of several identified for outreach opportunities to engage with megaregional tribes during Phase 1 of Link21. In addition to special events, the Link21 Team is directly reaching out to federally and non-federally recognized tribes within the Megaregion to offer additional opportunities for engagement and information sharing.

The E&O Team has developed a database of tribal communities, organizations, and contacts. Goals for tribal engagement include:

- Identifying megaregional tribal representatives and building relationships with them.
- Conducting briefings with tribal stakeholders and participating in tabling opportunities at special events.
- Regularly communicating with tribes in the Megaregion so they are notified of Link21 developments and key milestones, and their concerns are heard, understood, and given a platform.
- Facilitating meaningful engagement with interested tribes or tribal organizations and factoring in their unique cultural history and inequities.
- Meeting Link21's commitment to developing and implementing equity-focused processes and outcomes.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

As a multigenerational program, Link21 will need the support of the future generation of individuals who may see the most direct benefits of the program. The E&O Team's approach towards student and youth engagement is focused on raising awareness and educating students (defined as those attending a post-secondary academic institution) and youth (defined as individuals 18 years old and under) about Link21 and transit projects with a goal of growing support through meaningful engagement and identifying advocates to advance Link21 while ensuring a diverse reflection of the community it encompasses.



During Phase 1, initial student outreach began with tabling events at six Bay Area colleges.

- University of California (UC), Berkeley
- San José State University
- San Francisco State University
- San Francisco City College
- California State University, East Bay
- Laney College

The colleges were selected based on their proximity to the proposed transbay crossing concepts and to target a variety of higher education institutions. In addition to tabling at universities, the Link21 Team will look to partner with institutions in search of other ways to engage with students. The student/youth program includes opportunities for internships, presentations to youth commissions, and partnering with UC Berkeley graduate students on target planning efforts. Additional opportunities for the future may include participation in student career fairs and club presentations.

MEDIA RELATIONS

The E&O Team works closely with the BART/CCJPA Communications Team to leverage media opportunities. The Phase 1 media relations strategy uses general, trade, and ethnic media platforms on a local, regional, state, and national level to increase awareness across the Megaregion and the country about Link21.

Prior to each outreach series, the E&O Team develops a news release and works with BART and CCJPA to distribute it to local media outlets. As Link21 continues to evolve, the E&O Team will engage in more targeted outreach media activities, such as op-eds, editorial board briefings, and article placement.

11.3.3. Stage Gate 2 and Future Stage Gate Support

As part of Stage Gate 2 and future stage gate documentation, the Link21 Team will need to demonstrate that feedback from stakeholders and the public have shaped the project development process. The E&O Team will support the preparation of stage gate documentation by producing deliverables, including an engagement summary report that can be appended to the stage gate report as evidence and materials used to engage with the BART and CCJPA boards as they consider stage gate actions.