

# LINK21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

## Stakeholder Update



### Summer 2023 Engagement

Summer kicked off with a bang for Link21's Engagement and Outreach! The Link21 Team was busy, with 40 events in June and July resulting in over 2,000 interactions with people across the 21-county Megaregion. The public was able to participate virtually or in-person. In June, various megaregional events were hosted to reach a broader audience. This included three in-person open houses (in Richmond, Oakland, and San Francisco), a virtual community meeting, and an office hour that offered further discussion in response to public questions.

An online open house ([Link21OpenHouse.com](https://link21openhouse.com)) was also launched in mid-June and available 24/7 through the end of August 2023. Events included different activities to collect input from participants about Program aspects, namely with written comment cards or verbal comments and questions.



Link21 Program Director, Sadie Graham, transcribing comments from youth participants at the in-person open house in Oakland at Oakstop. June 2023

### June & July By the Numbers

Activity	Number of Events	Number of Connections
Agency/Industry Presentations	8	134
Community Meetings & Interviews	13	1,316
Community Tabling	10	508
Government Briefings	6	13
Link21 Committee Meeting	3	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2004</b>

### What We Heard

Discussions with people who attended these events focused on Program updates, Link21 concepts and the train service improvements they would provide, and potential future connections, stations, and routes. Input received from community members primarily focused on crossing concepts and service improvements. Some highlights of the input received included:

- Suggestions for connections to other types of transit at various locations around the Megaregion, such as North Bay, South Bay, Peninsula, Monterey County, specific East Bay and San Francisco locations, the Bay Area airports, Sacramento, Davis, Woodland, and Yolo County
- Interest in and preferences for specific crossing concepts, and associated infrastructure needs and service improvements
- Curiosity about how communities would be affected by changes in transit access and/or new infrastructure

(such as stations), as well as concerns about potential impacts to communities from new development and infrastructure

- Preferences expressed for BART and/or Regional Rail in the new crossing
- Strong desire for a regional approach to passenger train network and better integration of service, transfers, and fares

## Link21 Equity Advisory Council Update

The Equity Advisory Council held a meeting in June, and also participated in two office hour sessions in July. The June meeting focused on an approach to anti-displacement, advancing to Stage Gate 2, concept development, service considerations, the Business Case and initial equity evaluation results. The office hours focused on equity evaluation metrics, and the Stage Gate process. Council members shared comments and questions, notably related to airport jobs and industry, priority populations definition in relation to people with disabilities, levels of outreach to priority populations, anti-displacement policies, risks and effects, vacant housing issues in the Bay Area, train service and fares.

## What's Next?

Feedback received during summer engagement is timely as the Program approaches an important milestone in early 2024, which is to make a recommendation to the BART Board of Directors and Capitol Corridor Board of Directors on which train technology (BART or Regional Rail) will go in the train crossing. Once defined, the concept – which includes alignment, station and service options as well as infrastructure to support those improvements – design, refinement, and assessment will continue in 2024 and beyond as the Program works to identify a project to advance into Environmental Review. As we head into fall, Link21 is gearing up to share new information about the benefits and tradeoffs of BART or Regional Rail in the new train crossing and learn more from communities about how their transit needs would be supported.

## US Department of Transportation (DOT) National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) Grant

In August, the Link21 Team, in close coordination with BART's Grants and External Affairs staff, submitted a USDOT Mega Grant application, titled Link21 Equitable Station Area Planning: Creating Multi-Modal Access for Communities Project. The application is for \$30 million for the Link21 Community Access Project to further support Link21's equity commitment by funding extensive community engagement to make sure stations and station areas are planned with and by the community.

In collaboration with the City of Oakland, the project will focus on up to six station areas for future Link21 stations, and the development of related city policies with an emphasis on community and stakeholder engagement during the site selection and planning process. Community engagement will help shape the development of Link21 policies for community benefits, workforce development, anti-displacement initiatives and other equity-related areas.

## Recent Meetings and Presentations

6/1	Asian Pacific Environmental Network
6/1	Helping Hands East Bay
6/6	Panhandle Annex Council
6/11	Viva CalleSJ with SOMOS Mayfair
6/13	APTA Rail Conference
6/15	Soroptimist International Modesto
6/20	Equity Advisory Council Meeting
7/10	COMTO 52nd National Meeting
7/11	Potrero Dogpatch Merchants Association
7/21	Trybe Town Nights
7/22	Davis Farmers Market
8/22	Equity Advisory Council Meeting

### Connect with Link21

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