

# LINK21

CONNECT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

## Stakeholder Update



### A Major Milestone on the Horizon

Link21 is focused on transforming Northern California's mobility for future generations with a faster, more connected train system that provides equitable, affordable, and accessible travel. After much work and stakeholder engagement, the Program is moving toward a milestone to identify which train technology – standard-gauge (Regional Rail) or broad-gauge (BART) – will operate in the new crossing between Oakland and San Francisco. This train technology is an important step toward defining a project that fulfills a long-range vision for rail planning and greenhouse gas reduction in the Megaregion. Link21, along with partner agencies and the State of California, are collaboratively working to improve travel options, spur economic vitality and livability, and protect our health and environment for residents of the evolving Megaregion.

### Learn More: Attend a Virtual Event this June

Join the Program Team this June to learn more about Link21 findings that assess benefits and trade-offs offered by two different train technologies. For additional details, visit the [Link21 Events webpage](#).

#### Virtual Events

Visit [Link21Program.org/events](https://link21program.org/events) to register for Zoom.

- **Thursday, June 6**, 6–7:30 pm
- **Monday, June 10**, 6–7:30 pm



#### Online Open House

Visit [Link21OpenHouse.com](https://link21openhouse.com) anytime, 24/7, starting in **mid-June** to participate.



### Link21 Analysis Results Snapshot

The upcoming outreach events will provide the most recent analysis results of evaluation that demonstrate how standard-gauge (Regional Rail) and broad-gauge (BART) train technology offer similar benefits and where they differ in what they can provide. This work, along with ongoing stakeholder and public input, will inform the train technology that best meets Link21's Goals and Objectives and helps achieve the long-term vision for the greater Bay Area and California. Below is a high-level snapshot of what you'll learn at an upcoming event:

#### Similarities – Offered by Both Technologies

Both train technologies can generate similar benefits when it comes to supporting equitable outcomes, improving livability and economic opportunity, and supporting potential future capacity.

- **Benefits to Priority Populations:**

A majority share of benefits will go to [priority populations](#) including enhanced access to community resources or jobs. Additionally, 50–63% of new trips are from low-income households.

This is a huge achievement because it surpasses the [Federal Justice40](#) initiative aiming at allocation at minimum 40% of benefits to priority populations. 21% chose a new crossing that enables increased frequency and capacity of BART train service.

- **Access to Stations & Jobs:**

Both technologies improve access to stations within a ½ mile and increase the number of jobs within an hour commute. When evaluating for priority population areas, the average person has access to approximately 80,000 more jobs.

## Differences — Offered by Each Technology

Each train technology offers different outcomes specifically related to how they can transform the passenger experience and enhance future connectivity to destinations by train across the Megaregion.

- **Megaregional Connectivity:**

Broad-gauge (BART) technology primarily serves local and regional travel by enhancing BART urban | metro service to existing markets but has a limited impact on megaregional travel. Standard-gauge (Regional Rail) technology connects megaregional destinations and improves both local and regional travel by bringing urban | metro service to stations that only have intercity | express service today.

- **Travel Time Savings:**

Broad-gauge (BART) technology would improve travel times a small amount for the large number of riders within BART's network where standard-gauge (Regional Rail) technology would have substantial time savings and more direct connections for megaregional trips.

- **Interoperability:**

Standard-gauge (Regional Rail) allows multiple service operators to potentially use the new crossing (Capitol Corridor, Caltrain, CA High-Speed Rail) creating a more integrated network while broad-gauge (BART) would only be accessed by BART service.

- **Amplifying Rail Investments:**

Partner agencies across the Megaregion are investing in infrastructure and service improvements to meet the evolving need of riders and advance the California State Rail Plan Vision. Projects that share the same technology as the new crossing would mutually benefit from improved train service, increased frequencies, and ridership created by the addition of Link21.



Link21 will create better connections between Northern California intercity train services and BART.

## Considerations — To Be Further Refined

From evaluating conceptual crossings, Link21 has early ridership projections, high-level cost estimates, and ongoing funding opportunities. While these considerations are critical to understand, they will continue to evolve and be reassessed as the Project is defined.

- **Ridership Potential:**

Both technologies can enable significant new ridership, which is dependent on station locations, alignment, and service levels. All of these are inherently different for each technology, and thus are hard to compare. At this early-stage, ridership is highly variable and will be used to help refine the Proposed Project.

- **Cost:**

Estimates are highly variable with 1-2% conceptual design and will change with Project Identification. However, the initial crossing is broadly comparable between (\$18-\$30B) for either technology. Additional infrastructure will be needed to better connect to the wider train system.

- **Funding:**

Eligibility for federal and state sources is unlocked by specific train technology.

## What Happens Next

Moving forward, Link21 will focus planning on identifying a Project that can then be ready to advance into Environmental Review. To do this, ongoing engagement with agency and community stakeholders will be critical to discuss and assess such elements as station improvements, new station locations, and track alignment.



Camille Tsao, Link21 Program Lead at Capitol Corridor, speaks with University of California, Davis Transit Lab students about Link21 on January 26, 2024.

## Equity Advisory Council Update

Link21's Equity Advisory Council (EAC) began 2024 with meetings in January and March. Several topics were discussed including a future Community Benefits Program, the upcoming decision on train technology in the crossing, and the historical context of race and ethnicity in Transit-Oriented Development. The EAC continued to explore equity topics for Link21 during several office hours and Anti-Displacement Working Group sessions through April. Recent work focused on producing a set of draft Anti-Displacement Principles for Link21 that was provided to the EAC for review in May. The principles will guide Link21's approach to anti-displacement work as the Program progresses through future milestones.



Link21 Team shows members of the public where Link21 can improve train connectivity while tabling at the Warriors vs. Kings NBA game at Chase Center in San Francisco on January 25, 2024.

## Past / Upcoming Meetings and Presentations

Partner agency coordination is critical to development of megaregional rail solutions. The non-exhaustive list below highlights meetings held during this period. Link21 also collaborated regularly with Caltrain and the cities of San Francisco and Oakland, and met with the jurisdictions of Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, Richmond, Sacramento, and San Jose. Link21 continues to schedule ongoing meetings with key stakeholders.

1/15	Tabling: Warriors vs. Kings at Chase Center
1/16	Link21 Equity Advisory Council Meeting
1/26	UC Davis Transit Lab Students Presentation
3/19	Link21 Equity Advisory Council Meeting
3/26	Staff Program Development Team Meeting
3/28	American Society of Civil Engineers Sacramento Section Annual Symposium
4/4	Caltrain Board of Directors
5/1	Link21 Jurisdictional Working Group
5/2	Oakland Bicyclist & Pedestrian Advisory Commission
5/16	City of Berkeley Transportation & Infrastructure Commission
5/24	West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
5/31	Community Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richmond Civic Center Farmers Market</li> <li>• Old Oakland's Farmers Market</li> <li>• Davis Amtrak Capitol Corridor Station</li> </ul>
6/4	Embarcadero BART Station Community Event

### Connecting with Link21

[Link21Program.org](https://Link21Program.org)

Online Comment Form

855-905-LINK (9045)



Link21 is sponsored by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (Capitol Corridor).