

A Longitudinal Study Benchmarking Women in Leadership Roles

Report 4

October 2021



Advancing women
Advancing transportation
> San Francisco Bay Area

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- Dina Ferguson, WSP
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Executive Summary

The lack of gender and racial diversity within the transportation industry remains a challenge and a barrier to increasing representation and equalizing management opportunities. This report examines the state of gender diversity in the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area) transportation sector and the initiatives being put in place to address the gender and racial gaps within the industry.

Introduction and Study Approach

This report is the fourth installment of a longitudinal study effort initiated by the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) San Francisco (SF) Bay Area Chapter Glass Ceiling Task Force (hereinafter referred to as "Task Force") in Fall 2010. The purpose of the longitudinal study is to benchmark the leadership roles of women in the Bay Area transportation industry and to determine whether they face a "glass ceiling," and if so, what programs and policies could be advocated by WTS to mitigate the "glass ceiling effect."

The study effort was comprised of the following tasks:

1. Conduct a literature review of related studies and best practices in diversity management.
2. Administer an anonymous survey to Bay Area employers, both public and private, to better understand the current status of women in the local transportation industry.
3. Conduct a discussion panel with women in leadership positions in the Bay Area to identify challenges, barriers, and opportunities.
4. Develop recommendations to local transportation employers and the WTS SF Board to mitigate the "glass ceiling effect" and support the advancement of women in the transportation industry.

Information for this report was collected for 2020, which was an unprecedented year. The COVID-19 pandemic created tremendous challenges for women, including in the workplace (discussed further in Section 3). With this in mind, the Task Force supplemented its methodology to examine what these effects may be for women working in transportation.

Literature Review

The Task Force researched and reviewed news articles, journal articles, and reports related to women's advancement in the workplace and the challenges they face, which may have been exacerbated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key findings include:

- While women in corporate America have made strides towards increasing representation in senior management positions, women of color lagged behind their white counterparts (McKinsey, 2020).
- Black women have faced and continue to face distinct pressures and barriers in the 2020 workplace including lack of mentorship, slower promotion rates than white women, underrepresentation in leadership, acute discrimination, microaggressions, and a lack of leadership sponsorship and advocacy for promotions and new opportunities (McKinsey, 2020 and Lean In, 2020).
- More women lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic than men. In April 2020, women accounted for 55% of jobs lost, increasing the unemployment rate for adult women to 15% compared to 13% for adult men (Gupta, 2020).
 - Women of color were impacted even more with unemployment rates for Black and Hispanic women at 16.4% and 20.2%, respectively (Gupta, 2020).
- The COVID-19 pandemic not only pushed women out of the jobs they once held, but it has also prevented them from seeking new ones, and the implications of these trends could affect women for years to come (Cohen, 2020).
- The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a shift in the way we work—with telecommuting and working from home becoming the norm.

Greater flexibility with work-family policies may help enable men to alleviate burdens on their partners by more evenly sharing household responsibilities.

Survey Findings

This survey effort was conducted in Spring 2021. Forty-nine public and private Bay Area transportation organizations were invited to participate. The Task Force achieved a 71% response rate, higher than any previous year, with 63% of participants representing a public agency and 38% of participants representing a private employer. Participants were asked to provide their organization's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) data reported for 2020, specifically the demographic information of their organization's employees.

In previous years, the mode (the most frequent value reported by the organizations) for percentage of female employees in managerial positions was less than 10%. In 2020, the mode was 20-29%, indicating that the advancement of women to managerial positions has held steady since 2014. While the proportion of part-time employees in 2020 has increased to 72%, as compared to the 66% reported when the survey was last conducted in 2014, this is still lower than the highest percentage reported in 2012 (87%). However, the proportions of organizations offering telecommuting, mentoring, and diversity training have increased to their highest rate since the survey effort was first initiated (see Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.3 for more details).

Leadership Panel Findings

The leadership panel unanimously agreed that the agencies they represent are more diverse at the staff and governance levels and have become increasingly diverse, especially since four of the panelists assumed Executive Director roles within the last few years. They also perceived an upward trend of women on boards and in executive management and leadership positions within their organizations.

Mentoring was identified as being beneficial for staff at all levels of an organization. Mentoring helps women to network and grow their professional networks, develop leadership skills, and provide professional opportunities for advancing their careers

(e.g., presenting at conferences). In addition, flexible work schedules and telecommuting are helpful for women juggling competing responsibilities in the workplace and at home.

Panelists agreed that it is important to acknowledge that racial inequity continues to be a transient issue across all levels of the transportation industry, and that providing a platform to discuss these challenges is the first step to addressing them.

Recommendations

The Task Force will continue to serve as a reference point for assessing the future progress and status of women in the Bay Area transportation industry. To further promote the WTS mission in the advancement, recruitment, and retention of women in the industry, the Task Force offers the following lessons learned and next steps for moving forward:

1. Continue to track progress every two years.
2. Track progress and outcomes of WTS career development programs.
3. Further examine the challenges that women of color face in the workplace and in breaking the glass ceiling and facilitate programs on this topic.
4. Facilitate knowledge sharing sessions with human resources managers and staff from transportation organizations across the Bay Area and with the chapter's corporate partners' senior management.
5. Facilitate a discussion panel with organizations in the Bay Area to review recommendations from McKinsey & Company and Lean In's 2020 reports.
6. Broaden and improve awareness and distribution of the chapter's job bank, including adding a section for executive/management positions.
7. Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies.

1. Introduction and Study Objectives

According to a study published in 2019 by the Mineta Transportation Institute, women accounted for less than 15% of the total transportation occupation workforce in 2017. As part of its mission is to advance women in the transportation industry, WTS must work to address barriers that women face in the workplace. Increasing women's representation levels within the transportation industry and equalizing management opportunities for women and men are essential.

In 2010, the WTS SF Bay Area chapter formed the first Glass Ceiling Task Force to research whether women in the Bay Area transportation industry faced a glass ceiling, and if so, to advocate for programs and policies that could mitigate the glass ceiling effect. Since that time, the Task Force has been leading this volunteer-based effort to gain insight into the status of women working in the Bay Area's transportation professional services industry.

The Task Force published its inaugural study in 2012 to establish a baseline for subsequent studies, and a second survey and third survey were published in 2014 and 2016, respectively. The study presented in this report reflects the fourth survey.

The purpose of these studies is to:

- Better understand the current status of women in the transportation industry and how this data compares to data collected from previous years (2012, 2014, 2016).
- Track the progress of women's career advancement in the Bay Area transportation industry.
- Identify any barriers to women's advancement.
- Identify programs that companies and agencies provide in the workforce that support women's advancement in the profession, and transfer knowledge of best practices to colleagues.

This report will enable WTS to develop the vital tools and support needed for women to succeed in the transportation industry. With programs aimed at equalizing leadership opportunities for both men and women,

and by encouraging a balanced and diverse labor force in the transportation profession, WTS is intimately familiar with the obstacles, challenges, and opportunities facing the industry.

WTS's mission is "to build the future of transportation through the global advancement of women" and is operationalized through programs including leadership training and mentoring, networking, education, and professional development.

2. Study Approach

The Task Force's research method consisted of conducting a literature review and survey of transportation employers in the Bay Area and convening a panel of women chief executives at public agencies in the Bay Area.

2.1 Literature Review

The Task Force researched and reviewed news articles, journal articles, and reports related to women's advancement in the workplace and identified key themes related to barriers and challenges. In addition, the Task Force also reviewed articles that highlighted the challenges that women faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and how the pandemic disproportionately affected women.

2.2 Employer Survey

The Task Force administered the fourth employer survey in March 2021 to continue its benchmarking of the status of women in the Bay Area transportation industry. As with past surveys, EEO reports were used as the primary source of employee demographic data reported by survey participants. Years of EEO data collected now include: 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2020.

2.2.1 Employee Demographic Data: Equal Employment Opportunity Reports.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requires EEO Reports to document gender and racial diversity at certain organizations across the United States. The purpose of EEO Reports is to record and monitor employment data to ensure compliance with federal laws that ban employment discrimination. Employers with over 100 employees and federal contractors with over 50 employees and contracts over \$50,000 must submit an Employer Information Report-EEO-1. The EEOC uses these reports to monitor employment data and enforce nondiscrimination laws throughout the country.

The EEO-1 reports include data on annual racial and gender workforce for various job categories. The listed job categories are:

- Executive senior level officials and managers

- First/mid-level officials and managers
- Professionals
- Technicians
- Sales workers
- Administrative support workers
- Craft workers
- Operatives
- Laborers and helpers
- Service workers

State and local governments in odd-number years submit Form EEO-4, the State and Local Government Report. Data for each department within the reporting government must be reported. EEO-4 forms provide employees' salary, gender, and racial data for various job categories. The job categories for both full- and part-time employees documented in the EEO-4 reports are:

- Officials and administrators
- Professionals
- Technicians
- Protective services
- Para-professionals
- Administrative support
- Skilled crafts
- Service maintenance

2.2.2 Survey Distribution and Participation.

In Spring 2021, the Task Force distributed an employer survey requesting the EEO data they reported in 2020; information related to the policies and programs at their organizations to support career development and women with competing responsibilities at home and in the workplace; and barriers to the recruitment, retention, or advancement of women at their organizations. The Task Force reached out to 49 public and private transportation employers in the nine-county Bay Area.

Of the 49 employers that were contacted, 35 completed surveys were received, representing a 71% response rate, which is the highest response rate achieved over the four survey periods. Of these survey respondents, 63% represented a public agency, while 38% represented a private employer, which is similar to the participation rate of public-private organizations in 2015. Lastly, there have been eight organizations (or roughly 25%) that have consistently participated in all four surveys, which is highly commendable and adds to data continuity of this analysis.

The Task Force distributed its fourth survey to a list of participants similar to years past. In order to ensure consistency of methodology, the 2021 survey mirrored the 2015 survey (see the 2021 survey in Appendix A), with the exception of an additional question that was included in the survey to capture the unique events of 2020. The survey was organized into four sections:

1. Demographics (EEO data)
2. Work policies and programs that may be conducive to women in the workplace
3. Identified barriers
4. Policies resulting from unique circumstances in 2020

2.3 Leadership Panel

In June 2021, the Task Force convened six women in leadership positions from transportation agencies across the Bay Area, including:

- Tilly Chang, Executive Director, San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)
- Deborah Dagang, Chief Planning and Programming Officer, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
- Dina El-Tawansy, Director, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 4
- Tess Lengyel, Executive Director, Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC)
- Therese McMillan, Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

- Kate Miller, Executive Director, Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA)

The purpose of this facilitated panel discussion was to collect insight, challenges, and lessons learned from recognized women leaders in the Bay Area, many of whom have been involved with WTS over the years. The discussion was structured around the four sections of the survey instrument (as identified in Section 2.2.2): demographics, organizational policies and programs, barriers, and the impacts of COVID-19 on the workplace. Findings from the panel discussion are incorporated into Section 5 of this report and were used to develop the recommendations presented in Section 6.

3. Literature Review

The Task Force researched and reviewed news articles, journal articles, and reports related to women's advancement in the workplace and identified key themes related to barriers and challenges, particularly in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Task Force also reviewed literature related to the challenges prior to 2020 and potential positive outcomes as a result of the pandemic.

3.1 Pre-pandemic Status Quo

Between 2015 and 2020, women in corporate America were making steady growth in representation at all levels of management positions, but especially in senior management positions. The proportion of women in senior vice president roles increased from 23% to 28%, and from 17 to 21% in C-suite roles (McKinsey, 2020). Despite these gains, women of color lagged behind their white counterparts and a notable “broken rung” marked a lag in promotion opportunities at both entry level and management positions across the board for all women (McKinsey, 2020). For every 100 men promoted, 85 women were promoted—but this figure was reduced for women of color, with only 58 Black women and 71 Latina women promoted for every 100 men (McKinsey, 2020). The managerial pipeline, beginning at the earliest levels, is key to women's advancement into leadership roles. In the transit industry, major barriers to developing and advancing women included male-dominated culture, traditional perceptions of gender roles, and lack of advancement opportunities (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2020).

3.2 Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women

Information for this report was collected for 2020, which was an unprecedented year. The COVID-19 pandemic created tremendous challenges for women, including in the workplace (discussed further in Section 3). This was clearly evident in the Task Force's research findings and was a recurring theme in many of the articles and reports that were reviewed.

3.2.1 Increased Unemployment, Childcare, and Household Labor

In April 2020, women accounted for 55% of jobs lost, increasing the unemployment rate for adult women to 15%, as compared to 13% for adult men. Women of color were impacted even more with unemployment rates for Black and Hispanic women at 16.4% and 20.2%, respectively. Many of these losses were attributed to the fact that the industries hit the hardest by the pandemic—including leisure, hospitality, education, and some parts of health care—are disproportionately non-white and female (Gupta, 2020).

The pandemic also led to a sharp increase in the need for at-home childcare and household duties. School and daycare facilities closed in accordance with health guidelines. Childcare arrangements, such as care by grandparents or shared childcare with neighbors or friends, were discouraged due to increased health risks. As a result, families had to scramble to make alternative arrangements, which included shared responsibilities over childcare or one parent scaling back on their work hours or leaving their jobs altogether. Mothers were impacted more than fathers. Single mothers in particular took the biggest hit (since they are faced with the challenge of accessing other sources of childcare under social distancing

measures and without childcare face little possibility to continue working during the pandemic), with many in a disadvantaged economic position to begin with (Alon, 2020).

The pandemic not only pushed women out of the jobs they once held, but it has also prevented them from seeking new ones. The implications of these trends could affect women for years to come—paring down women's retirement savings and reducing future earnings of children in low-income households. According to the Census Bureau, a third of unemployed women 25 to 44 years old cited childcare demands as the reason they were unemployed compared to only 12% of men citing those demands (Cohen, 2020).

The 2020 McKinsey Report found similar results as part of their women in the workplace survey of 317 Canadian and U.S. companies representing 40,000 participants. The survey found that “1 in 4 women were contemplating... downshifting their careers or leaving the workforce.” (McKinsey, 2020). Three out of four women cited burnout as a reason to downshift their careers (McKinsey, 2020). Additionally, 2020 was the first time in five years that women were leaving the workforce in higher numbers than men (McKinsey, 2020 and Bohn et al., 2021).

3.2.2 Disproportionate Impacts to Black, Minority Women, and Women with Disabilities

Women of color were more likely to be laid off from work in 2020, leading to stalled careers and financial instability. Black women have faced and continue to face distinct pressures and barriers in the 2020 workplace, including lack of mentorship, slower promotion rates than white women, underrepresentation in leadership, acute discrimination, microaggressions, and a lack of leadership sponsorship and advocacy for promotions and new opportunities (McKinsey, 2020 and Lean In, 2020). In 2020, Black and Latina mothers reported feeling pressure to leave the workforce, and Latina and LGBTQ¹ women were twice as likely to cite mental health as one of their biggest challenges during the pandemic (McKinsey, 2020). Women with disabilities were also more

likely to feel stressed, burned out, or exhausted in 2020 (McKinsey, 2020).

Backward steps were also noted for women working essential jobs. Low-income women, minority women, and single mothers often hold jobs with unpredictable schedules, the fewest benefits, and are the least able to afford childcare. Moreover, they fill many of the essential jobs that cannot be done from home; therefore, they are at higher risk for exposure to the coronavirus. At the same time, these women comprise a disproportionate share of the service industries' labor force that have been impacted by the pandemic; therefore, they represent the largest share of women who have lost their jobs (Cohen, 2020).

3.3 Will the Pandemic Lead to Greater Flexibility in Working Conditions?

The Task Force researched and reviewed news articles, journal articles, and reports related to women's advancement in the workplace and identified key themes related to barriers and challenges. In addition, the Task Force also reviewed articles that highlighted the challenges that women faced during the

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning

COVID-19 pandemic and how the pandemic disproportionately affected women.

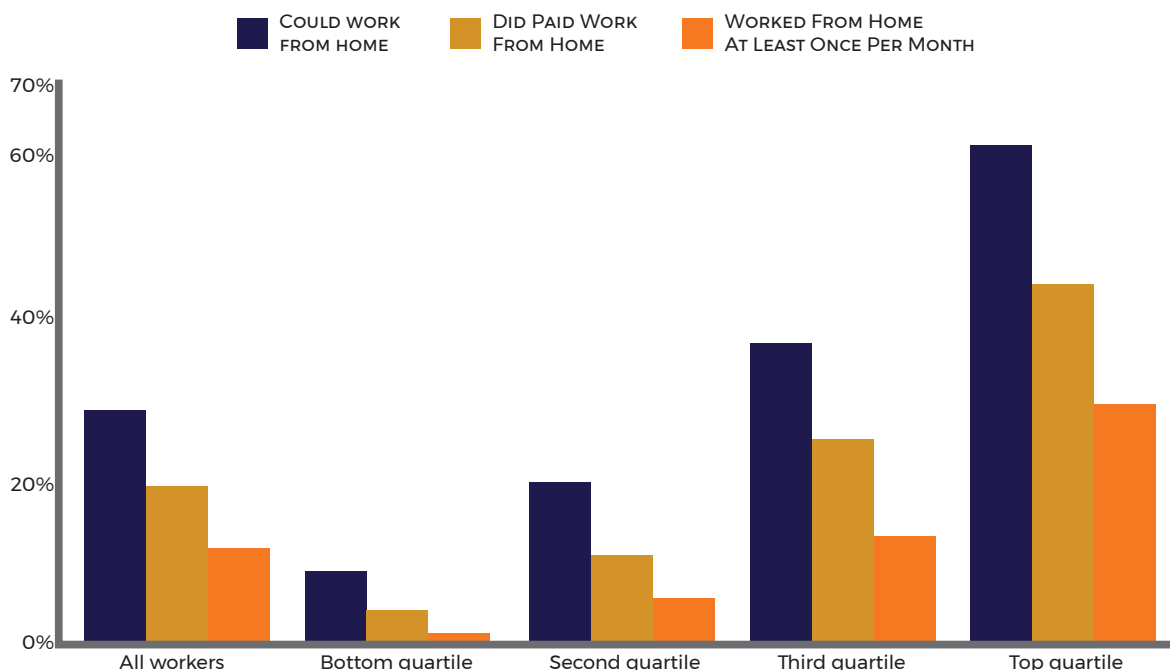
3.3.1 Increasing Acceptance of Remote Work/Telecommuting/Hybrid Models

The pandemic caused many industries to take part in a large-scale experiment in telecommuting and working from home (Guyot, 2020). While some employers may regress back to pre-pandemic working conditions as soon as health conditions allow, where and how work gets done is unlikely to be a one-size-fits-all approach. Historically, there have been disasters, such as 9/11 and Anthrax scares, that have led to employees working from home. However, none have been

as long or as widespread as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on working condition across almost all industries (Abrams, 2019).

In 2019, pre-COVID, 16% of the workforce worked remotely at least part of the time and from 2005 to 2015, the number of employees who telecommuted increased to 115% . At the time, these workers tended to be older, more educated, full-time, and non-union (Abrams, 2019). Further, findings showed that when done correctly, telework can improve employee productivity, creativity, and enhance overall morale, as illustrated in **Figure 3-1** (Abrams, 2019).

FIGURE 3-1: PREVALENCE OF WORK FROM HOME IN 2017-18 BY EARNINGS QUARTILE



SOURCE: BROOKINGS INSTITUTE

Since the 1970s, telecommuting has received a lot of attention from researchers and the public because of its potential for widespread benefits at individual, organizational, and societal levels. However, there are potential drawbacks as well, which managers and leadership should consider as they develop policies and processes for telecommuting (Allen, 2015). Recent research has highlighted some of the benefits and downsides of telecommuting or working from home. The findings are summarized in **Table 3-1**.

to which employees should be allowed to telecommute, tradeoffs, how to create a multifaceted approach, and how teleworking can be used to expand opportunities.

In addition, since gender inequality in the labor market is related to gender inequality in the household, structural solutions that enable greater flexibility for both men and women will be critical to enabling women to enter/return and stay in the workforce.

TABLE 3-1: BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES OF TELECOMMUTING (PRE-COVID)

Benefits	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers can hire geographically distributed talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees have fewer opportunities to talk and network with their colleagues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers can reduce overhead expenses/office costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers may find managing telecommuting staff difficult
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees gain flexibility, save time, and reduce transportation and childcare costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional isolation can have negative effects on well-being and career development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees tend to prefer working from home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effects on productivity over a long duration and in a scaled-up system are uncertain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecommuting reduces emissions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecommuting can help employees, especially women, balance work and family roles 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecommuting may increase productivity 	

SOURCE: AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION AND BROOKINGS INSTITUTE

3.3.2 Best Practice and Recommendations

In order to be successful, "formalizing a virtual team's goals, roles, and communication methods at the outset improves effectiveness" (Abrams, 2019). Telecommuting should be thought of as a management tool because, if done and managed well, remote work has the potential to improve performance, increase employee satisfaction, and benefit businesses (Abrams, 2019).

Managers and business leadership must be cognizant when designing their telecommuting practices and policies surrounding the extent

Extending work-family policies, including telecommuting, schedule flexibility, and paid time off, can help people share household responsibilities more evenly, which could facilitate women's career advancement (Carlson, 2021).

4. Employer Survey Findings

For comparative analysis across years, the survey questions and findings are organized in the same manner as the 2011, 2013, and 2015 surveys (with the addition of a new fourth section), as follows:

- 1. Demographic Information** – These findings include an overview of the organization's number of employees, gender splits, and number of women in management positions.
- 2. Policies and Programs** – These findings include an overview of women-supportive policies and programs ranging from part-time or alternative work schedule programs to mentoring and succession planning.
- 3. Identified Barriers** – This section identifies barriers to advancement, recruitment, or retention that exist within transportation organizations in the Bay Area. These findings are based on issues reported during the recruitment and exit interview process.
- 4. New Policies, Initiatives, and Programs Resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic** – This section summarizes the policies, initiatives, and programs organizations put into effect as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Bay Area stay-at-home orders.

Our 2021 findings (capturing data from 2020) are presented in more detail below.²

4.1 Demographics

Table 4-1 presents the distribution of the size of respondents' workforce in Bay Area offices in 2020 (for the 35 survey respondents), as compared to those reported in 2014, 2012, and 2010. For 2020, The participation of organizations across the three size categories are comparable to 2014, although there were slightly more organizations that participated that are 100-1,000 employees. For 2020, 65% of respondents represented public agencies, while 35% of respondents represented private organizations. In 2014, 29% of respondents

represented public organizations, while 61% of respondents represented private organizations.

When looking at the breakdown of local workforce size between public and private organizations (**Figure 4-1**), private organizations are concentrated in small-sized organizations (<100 employees) and medium-sized organizations (100-1,000 employees), while public organizations were spread between all three size categories (and are the only organizations in the large-size category [>1,000 employees]).

Respondents provided employment data that was disaggregated by gender. In 2020, almost half of Bay Area employers surveyed had labor forces that consisted of either 20-29% female employees or 50-59% female employees (**Figure 4-2**). The private sector's largest concentration was in the 30-79% range, whereas the largest public sector concentration was in the 20-29% range. In 2014, the largest category of all female employees was 30-39%, as was the case in 2012 and 2010.

TABLE 4-1: REPORTED NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WORKING IN BAY AREA OFFICES IN 2010, 2012, 2014, AND 2020

Reported Bay Area Workforce	2010	2012	2014	2020
<100 employees	45%	60%	58%	55%
100-1,000 employees	38%	33%	24%	32%
>1,000 employees	17%	7%	18%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

² While the survey was conducted in March of 2021, respondents were asked to report on 2020 data.

FIGURE 4-1: NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN BAY AREA OFFICES (2020)

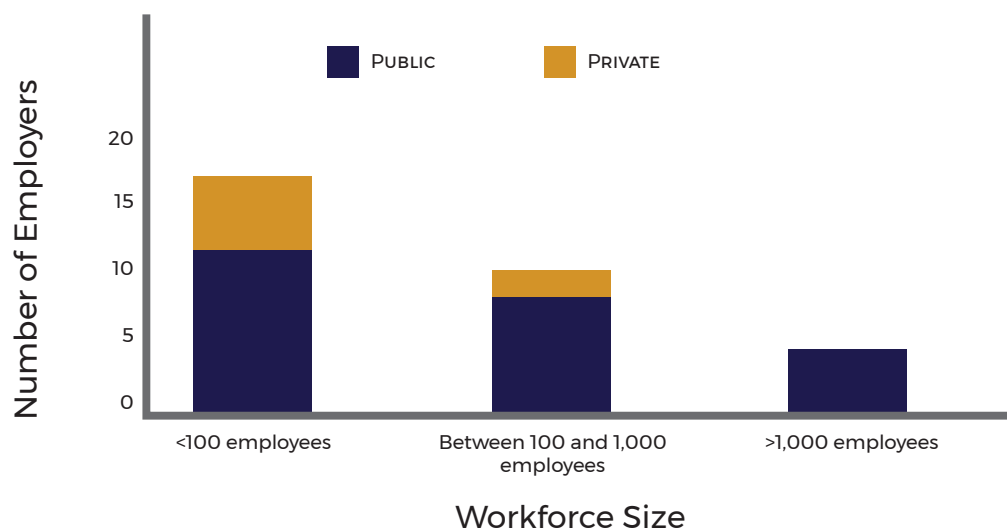
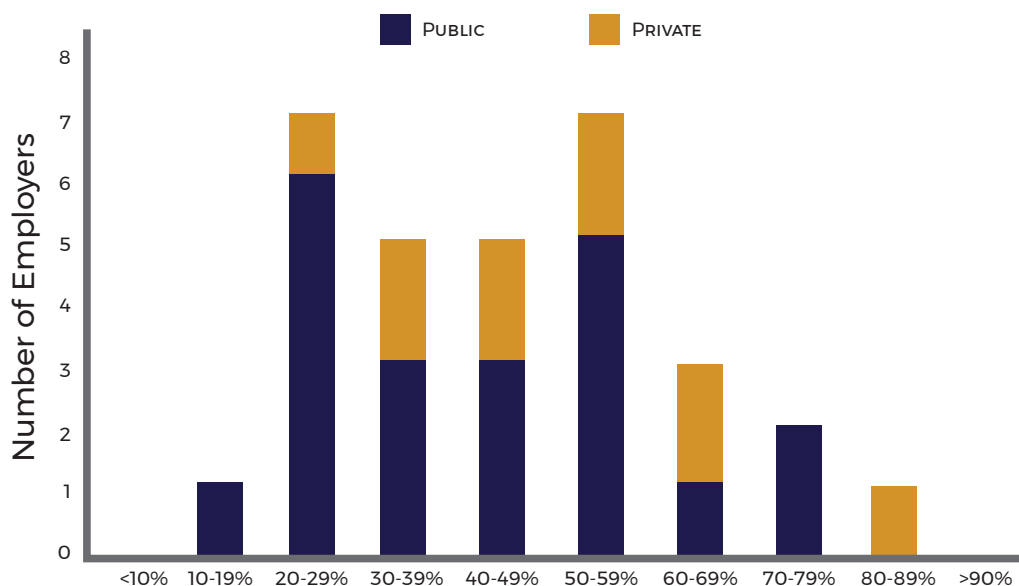
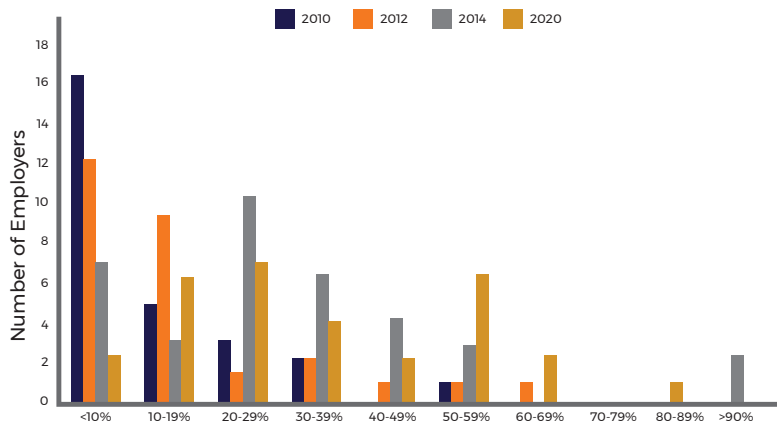


FIGURE 4-2: PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE BAY AREA (2020)



In addition to total female employees in the Bay Area, survey participants were asked how many female employees were in managerial positions. As illustrated in **Figure 4-3**, the majority of Bay Area employers surveyed had 20-29% of female employees in managerial positions. The highest concentration reported in 2014 was also 20-29%, as compared to <10% in 2010 and 2012. The next highest category in 2020 was 10-19% and 50-59% (which were both tied with six employers each). As compared to prior years, there are increases in the number of employers who have 50-59% and 60-69% of female employees in managerial positions, and for the first time ever, one organization reported having 80-89% of females in managerial positions. There was a significant decline in the lowest concentration of female managers (<10%) in 2021 as compared to the prior years of data collection.

FIGURE 4-3: PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE BAY AREA EMPLOYEES IN MANAGERIAL POSITIONS



4.2 Policies and Programs

Many public and private sector organizations have invested in diversity management strategies to help all employees feel valued in the recruitment and promotion process. By incorporating good management practices, organizations allow employees the opportunity to thrive. Thus, survey participants were asked about their organization's policies and programs ranging from part-time or alternative work schedule programs to mentoring and succession planning programs.

Policy and program-related survey questions included:

- Do some employees work part-time?

- Do some employees work from home or another location outside the office?
- Does your organization have an official mentoring program?
- Does your organization conduct diversity training?
- Does your organization have succession planning?
- Not counting EEO statements, does your organization formally state its commitment to diversity?
- Does your organization have an affirmative action plan?
- Does your organization have a committee or staff person officially overseeing diversity efforts?

4.2.1 Job Flexibility Policies

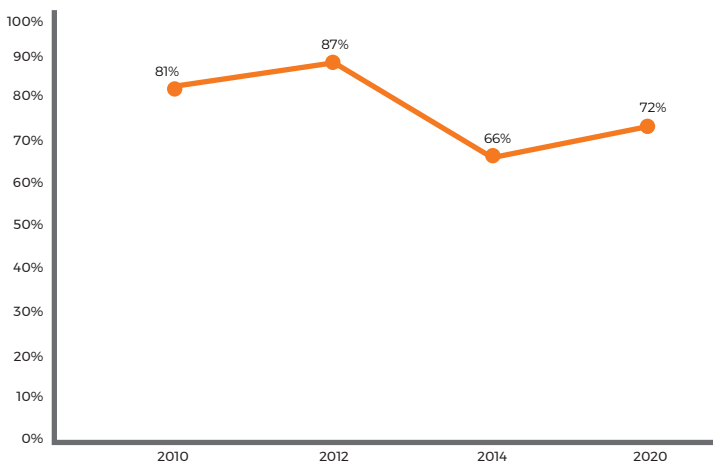
Job flexibility policies include offering part-time positions, job sharing opportunities, alternative work schedules, and telecommuting programs.

Job sharing allows two individuals to share one job by each working on a part-time basis. Job sharing arrangements can range from an even split or some other allocation (e.g., 60%/40%). Regardless of the arrangement, job sharing implies that workers may electively work part-time. Part-time employment generally consists of those individuals working less than 35 hours a week. In 2020, over 28.9% of the female labor force in the United States worked part-time, compared to 13.1% of men (U.S. Department of Labor, 2021). Part-time work is generally seen as a family-friendly policy, since women are typically the primary caretakers and utilize this policy most frequently.

Organizations with part-time employees increased slightly from 66% in 2014 to 72% in 2020, but this percentage is still lower than 2010 and 2012 (**Figure 4-4**).

“Job flexibility is prized now more than ever as remote and hybrid work models become the new normal.”
– Tilly Chang, SFCTA

FIGURE 4-4: ORGANIZATIONS WITH PART-TIME EMPLOYEES



As described previously, telecommuting is another employment policy that offers employees flexibility in terms of work location. Telecommuting is defined as an alternative work arrangement in which employees perform some portion (or all) of their job outside their primary workplace (DaSilva, 2010). This option can be especially beneficial for individuals with families, as it supports increased flexibility and eliminates time that would otherwise be spent commuting. Telecommuters had higher levels of life satisfaction and were more committed to their employers than non-telecommuters—and a more committed workforce is more likely to perform at higher levels (DaSilva, 2010).

In 2020, the number of Bay Area employers surveyed that have telecommuters was 97%, which was the highest percentage since the initial survey was conducted in 2010 (Figure 4-5). This is likely due to policy shifts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bay Area stay-at-home orders.

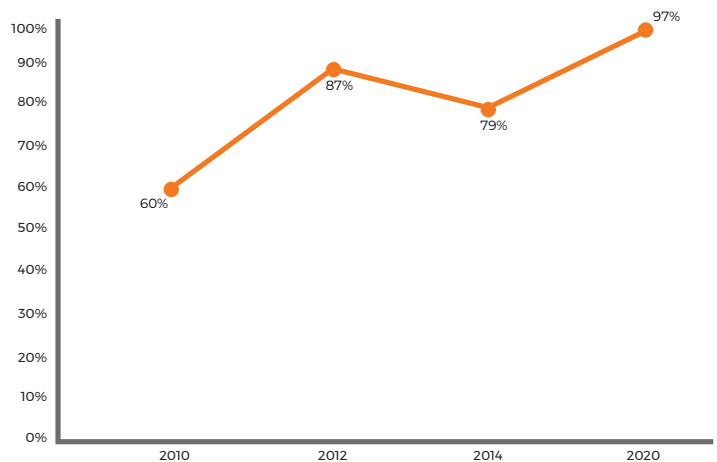
As described previously, telecommuting is another employment policy that offers employees flexibility in terms of work location. Telecommuting is defined as an alternative work arrangement in which employees perform some portion (or all) of their job outside their primary workplace (DaSilva, 2010). This option can be especially beneficial for individuals with families, as it supports increased flexibility and eliminates time that would otherwise be spent commuting. Telecommuters had higher levels

³ “Sponsorship” (as opposed to “mentorship” – providing advice and guidance) is when an employee is being advocated for within the organization, connecting them to important players and assignments and making a measurable difference in one’s career progression.

of life satisfaction and were more committed to their employers than non-telecommuters—and a more committed workforce is more likely to perform at higher levels (DaSilva, 2010).

In 2020, the number of Bay Area employers surveyed that have telecommuters was 97%, which was the highest percentage since the initial survey was conducted in 2010 (Figure 4-5). This is likely due to policy shifts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bay Area stay-at-home orders.

FIGURE 4-5: ORGANIZATIONS WITH TELECOMMUTERS



4.2.2 Employee Development

Research has shown that mentoring can significantly assist women in advancing their careers (Jewell, 1990), and it can have a significant effect on increasing Black women’s representation in management (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2012). Mentoring can also be a useful practice in encouraging women to remain in their workplace or professional field, especially if they are feeling isolated and challenged in a male-dominated organization. Mentoring entails a relationship between an individual with more experience and knowledge, the mentor, and an individual who is more junior, the mentee. The mentor serves as a guide and advisor and supports the mentee to assist her in navigating topics such as work culture, professional development, and career advancement. The mentor may also provide the mentee with a network of contacts within and outside of the organization. Additionally, the mentor may advocate for her protégée and support her application for promotion. This is often referred to as “sponsorship.”

WTS Women's Leadership Program – Adapting to Change

Our chapter's Women's Leadership Program (WLP) provides a unique opportunity for women in transportation to think strategically about their career paths. Participants examine their values, goals, and mindsets in relation to their careers; identify and create the essential ingredients for high-functioning teams; and establish skills for ongoing success, including self-coaching, peer support, and action plans. The program was inaugurated in 2015 and was held twice a year until 2020.

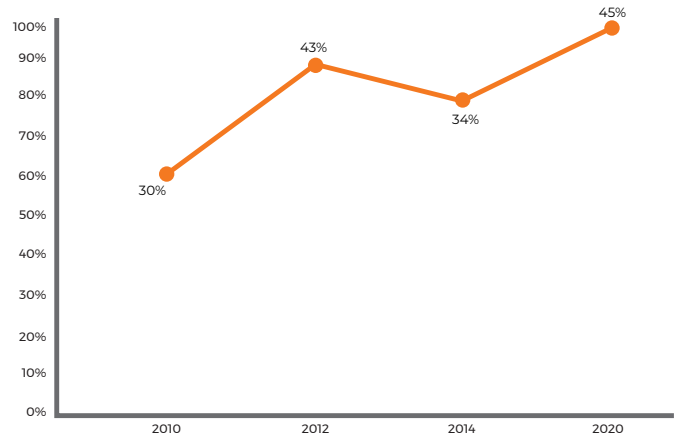
As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home order, the WLP was updated with a two-fold approach for 2020 and 2021, while still maintaining the core of the program's foundation. In 2020, a virtual, advanced course was developed for graduates of previous WLP classes to expand on the knowledge gained in the original multi-day course. The remote platform enabled women from around the country to join and share their experiences.

In 2021, WTS offered a modified WLP as a series of four 1.5-hour, focused online workshops in lieu of the all-day sessions.

"The course was incredibly eye-opening and fulfilling. I feel empowered and excited to step into my values. I feel confident knowing I have a broad toolbox to utilize and continue to develop as well as a network of remarkable women to tap into."

The percentage of Bay Area employers surveyed who offer mentoring programs increased 11% since the survey was last conducted in 2014, as illustrated in **Figure 4-6**.

FIGURE 4-6: ORGANIZATIONS WITH AN OFFICIAL MENTORING PROGRAM



4.2.3 Diversity Programs

Survey participants were also asked about diversity training. Diversity training encompasses a wide range of short-term activities that are designed to highlight the effects of bias on decision-making within an organization and make employees more cognizant of, and sensitive to, cultural differences, disability awareness, and discriminatory behaviors. Diversity training can consist of team-building, communication styles, decision-making, and conflict resolution trainings (Amant, 2002). The goal of diversity training is to reduce bias in all aspects of the workplace, from hiring to promotions, and help employees understand how various perspectives can enhance organizational performance (GAO, 2005). Proponents of diversity training argue that it is essential to counter entrenched preconceptions, stereotypes, and biases inherent in workplace culture.

Survey participants that offer diversity training is 75% compared to 55% in 2014.

4.2.4 Succession Planning

Lastly, another area of employment policy that is beneficial to women considered in this study is succession planning. It has been defined as:

“...a comprehensive, ongoing strategic process that provides for forecasting an organization’s senior leadership needs; identifying and developing candidates who have the potential to be future leaders; and selecting individuals from a diverse pool of qualified candidates to meet executive resource needs.”

- (GAO, 2005)

When asked whether organizations have succession plans in place, about 52% of all survey respondents reported “yes”, which is slightly less than those reported in 2014 (57%) and the same as those reported in 2010 (52%).

4.3 Identified Barriers

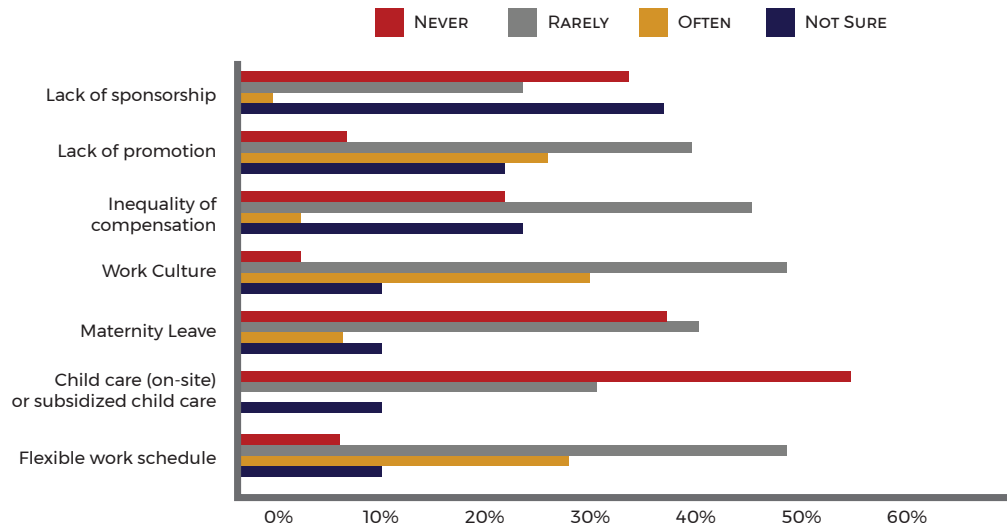
The survey also included a section on the potential barriers to the recruitment, retention, or advancement of women in the workplace. The intent of this section was to identify root causes of the barriers that women face and to inform a solutions- and action-oriented dialogue within the Bay Area transportation industry. Identified barriers could help WTS and other organizations begin thinking about applicable program or policy improvements.

Survey participants were asked to rank how often (with response options of “never”, “rarely”, “often” or “not sure”) identified barriers or issues were raised in recruiting or exit interviews conducted at their organizations. Issues included:

- Flexible work schedule
- Childcare (on-site) or subsidized childcare
- Maternity leave
- Work culture
- Inequality of compensation
- Lack of promotion
- Lack of sponsorship

The issues that were raised most often in recruiting and exit interviews pertained to work culture (31%), lack of promotion (28%), and flexible work schedule (28%) (**Figure 4-7**). In 2015, the issue that was most often raised was also work culture (45%) followed by a flexible work schedule (32%).

FIGURE 4-7: FREQUENCY OF ISSUES/ BARRIERS RAISED DURING RECRUITMENT AND EXIT INTERVIEW PROCESS (2020)



Jacobs' Shadowing Pilot Program and Men Advocating Real Change Dialogue Teams

Jacobs has launched several initiatives specific to helping women develop and advance their careers, including:

Shadowing Pilot Program: This program provides an opportunity for individuals in the Jacobs Women's Network (JWN) to connect with or shadow a leader within the firm. The project allows JWN members to learn more about different career paths, expand their networking connections, and gain insight into skills and qualifications they need to further develop their careers. This program was initiated during the pandemic to allow junior to mid-level women the opportunity to shadow more senior staff and to learn about skills needed to serve in more senior roles.

MARC Dialogue Teams - Fostering Effective Gender Partnerships: Jacobs launched the Men Advocating Real Change (MARC) Dialogue Teams (MDT) Program to help foster effective gender partnerships between men and women (i.e., how men can better support the advancement of women's careers) and support Jacob's 40:40:20 goal (40% men, 40% women, and 20% open to any gender) for gender balance throughout all levels of the firm. The program consists of self-led teams of 8-12 employees (with a 70:30 men to women ratio) from all areas and levels of the organization who gather monthly to discuss a progression of topics with a specific focus on engaging men in gender partnerships.

4.4 New Policies, Initiatives, and Programs Resulting from COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2021, the Task Force included a new section in the survey to identify the policies, initiatives, and program that employers implemented to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders.

Responses included:

- Remote work policy
- Expansion of certain leave/sick policies due to COVID-19
- Flexible work schedules to accommodate childcare
- Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave benefits
- Work-from-home reimbursement (for stipends/ internet, home office equipment, etc.)
- Business continuity plan
- COVID-19 response plan
- Subsidized handful of positions with on-site tasks that made remote work more difficult
- Supervisor training and ability to work with staff on truly flexible work hours
- Changes to flexible spending account dependent and health care plans
- Additional mental well-being support
- Increase in sanitation protocols for office workspaces
- Pledge for no employee layoffs due to COVID-19 related issues

5. Findings from Leadership Panel Discussion

This section summarizes key findings from the leadership panel.

5.1 Demographics

Panelists were asked whether they observed an increase in women in their organizations and in management and Board positions within their organizations.

Panelists responded that the agencies they represent are more diverse at the staff and governance levels and have become increasingly diverse, especially since four of the panelists assumed Executive Director roles within the last few years:

- Almost all applicants for positions at NVTa are women. The office has only three male employees, while the rest of the employees are women. This has been a shift from the past four years.
- Sixty-four percent (64%) of Alameda CTC's Board is comprised of women, which has increased over the last four years. For staff one level below the Executive Director, 67% are women and for the next level down, 75% are women.
- Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the executive management team of nine staff at SFCTA are women and 57% of all staff are women.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) or 15 of 21 members of MTC's Executive Management team is comprised of women. Furthermore, the Commission (or MTC Board) is comprised of more women than ever before in its 50-year history.
- Fifty percent (50%) of Caltrans District 4 (Bay Area) leadership team is comprised of women compared to five years ago when it was only 30%.
- Sixty-seven percent (67%) or six out of nine of congestion management agencies in each of the Bay Area nine counties are led by women (with three of them participating in this leadership panel).

While this discussion was focused on gender composition, panelists noted that racial composition is another data point that would be valuable to examine and consider. A

panelist also observed that mid-level women are migrating from the private to public sector, which could be attributed to greater flexibility or more leadership opportunities that are perceived as being available in the public sector.

5.2 Organizational Policies and Programs

Panelists were asked about the policies and programs that have been most helpful in bringing about changed opportunity and behavior (e.g., flexible schedules, mentoring, diversity training, succession planning, etc.), and how WTS can better support these programs to expedite the advancement of women in leadership positions and in government.

Mentoring was identified as being especially important program that is beneficial for staff at all levels of an organization. Mentoring helps women to network and grow their professional networks, develop leadership skills, and provide professional opportunities for advancing their careers (e.g., presenting at conferences).

Another program that panelists identified as being beneficial for women is flexibility with working remotely and with work schedules. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conventional 40-hour work week was upended and working from home became the norm for many people who had office or desk jobs. While some cautioned that working from home, and the distractions that come with it (including childcare responsibilities), could negatively affect productivity, the panelists did not find this to be the case with their staff.

"Mentoring, both formal and informal, are critical; some of the classes that WTS has supported locally for mid-level folks as well as executives are transformative for people."

– Tess Lengyel, Alameda CTC.

Flexible work schedules and telecommuting are important not only to the workforce, and women in particular, but also to goals for environmental protection, climate action, and quality of life. This includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and other transportation priorities.

Panelists shared their experiences on working from home:

"Regarding remote work experience, I know for a fact that it was hugely supported by women on my team. Not that it was easy when they're struggling with remote schooling and other responsibilities. But the fact that they stepped up and did not miss a beat in being able to deliver quality work despite challenging milestones is amazing. I am committed to a hybrid model (which combines on-site and remote work). This is something we should have done a long time ago in order to help women balance aspects of their work and outside lives."

- Therese McMillan, MTC

"Women worked so much harder, no time for goofing off. It was incredible. Although this report is focused on policies employers are providing, there needs to be a paradigm shift for partners and the work they take on at home. Women are giving up time that men are taking to network and travel—those things that enhance and allow you to grow in your career."

- Kate Miller, NVTa

Panelists also noted that working remotely has also led to the loss of a common culture in the workplace—which tends to be the most pluralistic place people go to. It can be harder to supervise and connect with staff even with virtual meeting technology.

Lastly, panelists identified the importance of having more initiatives that support the recruitment and retention of women. For example, panelists identified the need for initiatives that will lead to increased diversity within recruitment (including having diverse interview panels) in order to expand diversity within the transportation industry.

"Diversity training is for everyone. You cannot have experience that you aren't getting, so you if you are not with people learning what diversity means, in terms of personality type, etc. you can't learn."
– Carmen Clark, Panel Facilitator,
CCC Consulting

5.3 Barriers to Career Advancement

Panelists were asked about the effectiveness of organizational policies and programs that were previously discussed in addressing the following barriers:

1. Lack of flexibility in scheduling work
2. Inadequate childcare (available, on-site, subsidized)
3. Inadequate maternity and parental leave
4. Work culture
5. Inequality of compensation
6. Lack of promotion
7. Lack of sponsorship

In addition, panelists were asked about how WTS can better support women either transitioning back to the workforce or transitioning back to the office and helping them stay engaged in the workforce.

Panelists noted that in order to retain and develop staff, providing opportunities for advancement and mentorship opportunities are both critical.

Panelists agreed that it is important to acknowledge that racial inequity continues to be a salient issue across all levels of the transportation industry and that providing a platform to discuss these challenges is the first step to addressing them.

Alameda CTC recently initiated an effort to develop statements on culture, diversity, and inclusion; to implement the statements; and to evaluate progress through pulse surveys. The agency is focused on institutionalizing culture change so that they can become nimble to it by approaching these initiatives from a bottom-up approach and having staff provide input to drive the initiative.

Panelists also discussed the double standard that women face in order to be recognized. Women often have to work harder to advance and gain recognition from their peers, as compared to their male counterparts. Panelists agreed that women often have to put in more effort to be heard and listened to and to have successful careers.

“We have to create safety in the workplace, and safety is perceived differently from different lenses. We need to find places where people have voices in the organization, where people of diverse backgrounds are part of creating what the culture is, not just me as a white woman creating the culture. I would like to have the voices of the people in the organization creating the culture.”

- Tess Lengyel, Alameda CTC

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6. Lessons Learned and Recommendations Moving Forward

The WTS SF chapter now has four important datasets for the years 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2020 to support the region-wide benchmarking effort. These data points will continue to serve as a reference point for assessing the future progress and status of women's roles in the Bay Area transportation industry.

From the 2020 data, the literature review, and the findings from the 2021 leadership panel, seven key lessons learned and recommended steps are outlined below:

- 1. Continue to track progress every two years.** Regular survey distribution every two years to all identified public and private transportation organizations in the nine-county Bay Area is essential to tracking progress within the region. Future study updates should continue to identify any changes or trends since the base year and continue to help the local WTS chapter understand how they can best continue to support women in this field. Study updates would include identification of potential areas for improvement and additional opportunities to support leadership development – whether internally within an organization or externally within the industry, or other opportunities individuals can seek out and take upon themselves.
- 2. Track progress and outcomes of WTS career development programs.** WTS SF should consider tracking the progress and outcomes of its mentoring, leadership, and scholarship programs, and they should seek to measure the impact of those programs on supporting and advancing women's careers. This could create a feedback loop for how these programs can be modified and improved to evolve with the challenges that women face, and it can help the chapter understand how it can better support women in addressing these challenges.
- 3. Further examine the challenges that women of color face in the workplace and in breaking the glass ceiling and facilitate programs on this topic.** The research and data in this report points to challenges that women of color face

as a result of the additional pressures the COVID-19 pandemic placed upon them, and the pressures they face as they navigate the eventual return to the workplace. The Task Force recommends partnering with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee to evaluate how WTS can continue to create a more inclusive environment in the industry and address the systemic barriers that are preventing women of color from being able to advance in their careers. Potential actions may include:

- Provide more access to mentoring and sponsorship.
- Track metrics on diversity of hiring, promotions, raises, and layoffs, and share the progress against identified metrics.
- Conduct microaggression and bias training.
- Provide more opportunities to talk about outside factors that are impacting staff's emotional well-being.

- 4. Facilitate knowledge sharing sessions with human resources managers and staff from transportation organizations across the Bay Area and with the Chapter's corporate partners' senior management.** Discuss lessons learned and opportunities for improvement to help promote a more equitable workplace for women. Involving senior management would be valuable as an opportunity to direct and influence local company policy. Knowledge sharing across organizations could provide valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities that women face in the workplace, and it can inform how the organizations these women work for and the WTS SF chapter can begin to address these issues.

5. Facilitate a discussion panel with organizations in the Bay Area to review recommendations from McKinsey & Company and Lean In's 2020 reports.

Discuss opportunities to implement recommendations in organizations across the Bay Area. This report identified a few key areas that continue to be barriers for women and women of color in achieving leadership positions. Panels are often effective ways to daylight common issues, share best practices, and inspire positive change. The purpose of this panel would be to share best practices related to hiring and promoting women into the first few rungs of leadership, retention of women employees, and how the workplace can be better aligned with attracting women of color in leadership positions.

6. Broaden and improve awareness and distribution of the chapter's Jobs Bank, including adding a section for executive/management positions.

The chapter's Jobs Bank provides valuable career opportunities for women professionals in the Bay Area. Improving how these jobs are communicated and advertised can help increase access to potential career advancement opportunities.

7. Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies.

Since the inception of this effort by the WTS SF chapter in 2010, many other chapters across the country have also initiated similar efforts. The WTS SF and WTS DC Chapters' Glass Ceiling Task Forces are continuing to engage with several WTS chapters around the country who have expressed interest in conducting similar studies to aid in identifying barriers

and tracking the advancement of women in the transportation industry. WTS SF will also share its lessons learned with other chapters and interested organizations through presentations at future conferences and panel events.

In addition, **Table 6-1** lists additional recommendations from past reports and the progress made towards implementing those recommendations.

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TABLE 6-1: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PAST REPORTS

Past Recommendations	Year Recommended	Status
Promote internal capacity building by offering studies templates and lessons learned from other WTS chapters who want to do similar studies.	2012	NYC, DC, and Puget Sound Chapter have launched similar efforts. WTS International now has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative.
Promote best practices in diversity management by developing a management toolkit.	2012	N/A
Promote best practices by providing a facilitated workshop for human resources managers and professionals that will aid in the successful implementation of diversity management strategies.	2012	N/A
Invest in mentorship and leadership development.	2014	WTS SF annual trainings (whole program dedicated to this)
Promote women, local, small, and disadvantaged business enterprises.	2014	Many agencies have performed disparity studies and enhanced their Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)/Small Business Enterprise (SBE)/LGBTQ+ goals.
Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies.	2014/2016	See above
Promote self-educated leadership development (reading leadership books).	2014	N/A
Learn from the Bay Area's technology sector to see what policies and programs they have in place to support the advancement and retention of women.	2016	N/A
Encourage organizations to institute programs and educational tools in place to eliminate second generation bias.	2016	N/A

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Literature Review Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic indisputably posed challenges for women in the workplace, particularly working mothers, women of color, and women with disabilities. The Task Force felt it was also important to recognize gains made prior to the pandemic and potential positives to emerge from the pandemic. This section summarizes literature reviewed as part of this report.

1. Abrams, Zara. "The Future of Remote Work." *Monitor on Psychology*, American Psychological Association, 1 Oct. 2019. www.apa.org/monitor/2019/10/cover-remote-work

This article explores the pros and cons to telecommuting, and how it must be done correctly and with buy in to be effective. Moreover, when it's done right, telework can improve employee productivity, creativity, and morale. Researchers found that remote work can benefit employers and employees. Employers can hire geographically distributed talent and reduce overhead expenses, while employees gain flexibility, save time, and reduce transportation and childcare costs. Researchers acknowledge that the downside is fewer opportunities to talk and network with their colleagues.

"Researchers also caution that teleworking is rarely an all-or-nothing arrangement." Gajendran and his colleagues found that teleworkers often go above and beyond—e.g., by responding to emails outside of work hours—to demonstrate their organizational commitment (*Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 62, No. 2, 2015). But experts say that without firmer boundaries, employees can experience exhaustion and burnout and that such overwork should be discouraged by managers and organizations.

Lastly, a portion of the article was concerned with connecting remote teams. Psychologists are exploring how to maximize the efficiency and productivity of teams that are geographically dispersed. They found that the way teams are configured—the number and distribution of members and sites—also

matters. Research shows that communication and shared identity within a team can mediate the effects of physical separation. -- "perceived proximity"—or relational closeness—than it was to physical proximity. Teams with a strong group identity—e.g., those that have unified against a competing team or organization—tend to have more perceived proximity. Researchers found that formalizing a virtual team's goals, roles, and communication methods at the outset improves effectiveness, and that when formally exploring any cultural or ideological differences, collaborators should also consider how such teams are led. They found that shared leadership rather than traditional hierarchical leadership is associated with improved team performance.

"Telecommuting is a management tool just like any other," Gajendran said. "It's time for organizations to move beyond seeing it as a family-friendly work arrangement. When done well, remote work has the potential to improve performance, increase employee satisfaction and benefit a business."

2. Allen, T.D., Golden, T., and Shockley, K. How Effective Is Telecommuting? Assessing the Status of Our Scientific Findings. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 2015, Vol. 16(2) 40–68.

Telecommuting was first coined in the 1970s. The objective in this article is to review existing research on telecommuting in an effort to better understand what we, as a scientific community, know about telecommuting and its implications. The article noted the community and societal effects of telecommuting, including its effects on traffic and emissions, business continuity, and work opportunities, as

well as the potential impact on societal ties. The authors found that telecommuting represents a fundamental change in how organizations have historically done business, and it has implications for a wide range of issues, such as work-family balance, greenhouse emissions, and the expansion of work opportunities.

This study shows the history and prevalence of telecommuting, noting that the practice was sparked by the oil crisis and telecommuting first entered the U.S. public vernacular in the 1970s. The idea at the time was to move the work to workers rather than move workers to the work in an effort to alleviate traffic problems and reduce energy consumption. Companies, such as Control Data Corporation and IBM, began exploring work-at-home arrangements as a way to recruit and hire computer programmers who were in high demand but short supply. Additionally, as the number of dual-earner couples climbed in the 1970s and 1980s, telecommuting was touted as an option for helping individuals manage work and family responsibilities. In the 1990s, organizations were further motivated to develop telecommuting work arrangements in response to The Clean Air Act - 1990 amendments that required states to revise their plans to call for employers to develop employee commute option programs. The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 further spurred interest in telecommuting as a way to expand hiring of disabled workers.

Telecommuting has received enormous attention from researchers and the public because of its potential for widespread benefits at individual, organizational, and societal levels. Lastly, the article states that the notion of work no longer being a place, but what you do, and new ways of working are likely to continue.

3. Alon, Titan, et al. "The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equality." National Bureau of Economic Research, April 2020. www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26947/w26947.pdf

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected women's employment. School closures have increased childcare needs and based on the existing distribution of childcare responsibilities in most families, mothers are more likely to be affected than fathers, and single mothers are impacted the most. These impacts may outlast

the pandemic—studies show that earning losses from job losses are highly persistent and more severe when they occur in recessions, and workers that lose their jobs are more likely to have less secure employment in the future.

There are two forces that will help to address these challenges and promote gender equality in the labor market: adopting more flexible working arrangements, which in turn, will enable greater flexibility for men to increase their participation in childcare responsibilities. Since mothers carry the majority of the childcare burden, they are likely to gain more in relative terms from this shift in flexibility, allowing more flexibility with their own work because of increased contribution and participation from fathers.

4. Bohn, S., Mejia, M., Lafortune, J. "Multiple Challenges for Women in the COVID-19 Economy." Public Policy Institute of California, 11 March 2021. www.ppic.org/blog/multiple-challenges-for-women-in-the-covid-19-economy/

At the onset of the pandemic, unemployment spiked more among women than men. Unemployment from March 2020 to Jan 2021 remained higher for women than men despite being similar in February 2020. Underemployment measured over the same period was generally also higher for women than men. Women were 11% more likely to work in the hardest-hit sectors than in the workforce overall, and Latinas are especially overrepresented in these sectors. Women are also overrepresented in frontline workers and are 30% more likely to work in frontline sectors than any other, and Black women in particular are overrepresented as frontline workers.

Carlson, D., Petts, R., Peppin, J. "To Keep Women in the Workforce, Men Need to Do More at Home." Harvard Business Review, 20 April 2021. hbr.org/2021/04/to-keep-women-in-the-workforce-men-need-to-do-more-at-home

The pandemic has been especially tough on caregivers as a result of school closures, remote learning, and a lack of adequate policies in place to provide paid leave and job flexibility. Prior to the pandemic, unemployment rates for men and women were roughly the same, about 4.4%, but in April 2020, after shutdowns went into effect, the unemployment rate for

women rose to 16.1% and the unemployment rate for men rose to 13.6%. While the gender gap in employment rates subsided during the summer of 2020, it increased for women age 20 and over in September, likely due to the start of the school year.

A recent study, published in *Gender, Work & Organization*, found that in families where fathers do a greater share of the childcare, mothers were far less likely to suffer from negative employment outcomes during the initial days of the pandemic. Mothers who were doing the majority of childcare (i.e., 80-100%) prior to the pandemic were more likely to voluntarily leave their jobs or reduce their hours—specifically, one in two women voluntarily left their jobs or reduced their hours. This likelihood decreased to 15% when childcare responsibilities were shared equally between the father and mother (i.e., fathers did 40-60% of childcare). The study found that for every 20% increase in a father's share of childcare, a mother's time in paid labor increased by three hours per week.

The challenges of caregiving require structural solutions to facilitate fathers' domestic labor, and these solutions must be supported by business and government. Extending work-family policies—including telecommuting, schedule flexibility, and paid leave—will enable men to spend more time at home and alleviate some of the burdens on their partners. Although the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) provided paid leave for primary caregivers, the additional round of stimulus funding that was passed by Congress in December did not. Using the language "primary caregiver" implies that only one parent is responsible for caregiving, which tends to result in mothers as the one to take leave. Explicitly including fathers in legislation (instead of singling out the primary caregiver) is important to mitigating this.

5. Cohen, Patricia. "Recession with a Difference: Women Face Special Burden." *New York Times*, 17 November 2020. www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/business/economy/women-jobs-economy-recession.html

This article noted three destructive waves during the pandemic:

- Early job losses were ones where women dominate—restaurants, retail businesses, and health care.
- Next were local and state government jobs where women dominate.
- Childcare centers closed/shifted to remote schooling which meant working mothers more than fathers took on "overwhelming household responsibilities."

This article asserted these impacts could lead to preventing women from seeking new jobs and limit individual earnings over a lifetime and across the nation, it could stunt the growth of the economy via loss of educated/experienced/dedicated workers. Typically, recessions gut manufacturing and construction where men hold most jobs. Burdens of the pandemic-induced recession have fallen most heavily on low-income and minority and single mothers. From 2015 until the pandemic, women's increasing participation in the work force was a primary driver of the economy's expansion. Notable quotes from the article include: "We are creating inequality 20 years down the line that is even greater than we have today," said Betsey Stevenson, who was a member of President Barack Obama's Council of Economic Advisers. "This is how inequality begets inequality...I think we're really at a crossroads," said Julie Kashen, director for women's economic justice at the Century Foundation and one of the authors of a new report on the pandemic and working women. "We've never built a workplace that worked for people with care giving responsibilities."

6. Da Silva, N., and Virick, M. "Facilitating Telecommuting: Exploring the Role of Telecommuting Intensity and Differences Between Telecommuters and Non-Telecommuters." Miñeta Transportation Institute, June 2020. www.transweb.sjsu.edu/sites/default/files/2803_09-14.pdf

This report from the Miñeta Transportation Institute documented research on telecommuting in Silicon Valley organizations prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study collected data in 2008 from 624 survey respondents, of which 262 were telecommuters, 181 were non-telecommuters, and 181 were supervisors. The study addressed

nine hypotheses on different aspects of telecommuting, such as job satisfaction, personality, family work interference, commute times, supervisor attitudes, and human resources perceptions and practices.

The research showed that there was no one-size-fits-all telecommuting program, and the program should be adapted to different situations. The research found that there was a curvilinear (inverted-U shape) relationship between the extent of telecommuting and employee job attitudes, such as job satisfaction and turnover intention. The report suggests that the best balance for managing employee outcomes is to allow moderate levels of telecommuting after taking into consideration individual level factors such as personality.

7. Gupta, Alisha Haridasani. "Why Some Women Call This Recession a 'Shecession.'" New York Times, 09 May 2020. www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/us/unemployment-coronavirus-women.html

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted non-white females more so than any other demographic. In April 2020, women accounted for 55% of jobs lost, increasing the unemployment rate for adult women to 15% compared to 13% for adult men. Women of color were impacted even more with unemployment rates for Black and Hispanic women at 16.4% and 20.2%, respectively. According to an analysis conducted by the National Women's Law Center, this is the first time since 1948 that the female unemployment rate has reached double digits. Many of these losses were attributed to the fact that the industries hit the hardest by the pandemic, such as leisure, hospitality, education, and some parts of health care, are disproportionately non-white and female.

Women were making gains in the labor market prior to the pandemic, but it has resulted in a significant step backward. Many of the jobs that are predominately held by women, including hospitality and childcare, tend to be underpaid and undervalued, which means that these women have less financial security to fall back on. This issue is exacerbated for single mothers, who have even less financial security to fall back on. These challenges highlight

and reinforce the need for more support and protection for women and families.

8. Guyot, K. and Sawhill, I. "Telecommuting will likely continue long after the pandemic." The Brookings Institution, 6 April 2021. www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/04/06/telecommuting-will-likely-continue-long-after-the-pandemic/

This article discusses the pros and cons to telecommuting, and how teleworking in/ post-disaster are possible and an essential component of the economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a massive experiment in telecommuting – up to 50% of American workers are currently working from home – more than double 2017-2018. As a practice, telecommuting has been slower to take hold than many predicted when remote work technology first emerged. This inertia probably reflects sticky work cultures, as well as a lack of interest from employers in investing in the technology and management practices necessary to operate a tele-workforce.

Interest in telework spiked following 9/11 and the anthrax attacks. The federal government became a leader in telework under the Obama administration with the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 that required federal agencies to develop a telework plan and to encourage employees to use it. However, many federal agencies have rolled back their remote work policies in the last few years.

Broadband is shown to be a technological limitation to the development of American telework. Pew estimates that three-quarters of American adults now have high-speed broadband internet at home, that rural areas are left out, and that 14% of households in urban areas are still digitally disconnected.

The pros of telework are often seen to be saving money on office space and reducing the time employees spend commuting. The article showed that successful telework experiments have generally taken place in workplaces that have had time to prepare for a switch to remote work and where performance is based on clear, measurable outputs, such as calls per minute. The authors noted that this requires a different management approach because managers cannot measure teleworkers' performance

by how much time they spend in the office even though this is not a great performance metric. They also noted that telework will not be the best option for all employees, and that performance gains for the work-from-home group nearly doubled under self-sorting.

The article noted that cons include that productivity boosts are not guaranteed, especially if employee performance is difficult to monitor. They noted that many of the downsides of remote work apply to extensive rather than occasional telecommuting, and that professional isolation from telecommuting can have a negative impact on well-being. Telework appears to be most successful when alternated with face-to-face contact. It was further explained that face-to-face groups perform better than virtual groups in creative teamwork tasks, and that telecommuting may have a negative impact on employees' career development. It was also noted that working away from the office can improve focus on individualized tasks.

9. Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., Kelly, E. "Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies." *American Sociological Review*, 2006, Vol. 71 (August:589–617). www.scholar.harvard.edu/files/dobbin/files/2006_asr_kalev.pdf.

This article published in the *American Sociological Review* (Vol 71, August 2006) examined the effects of seven common diversity programs: affirmative action plans, diversity committees, diversity managers, diversity training, diversity evaluation for managers, networking programs, and mentoring programs on representation in the management ranks of private sector firms. The study found that structures that embed accountability, authority, and expertise (e.g., affirmative action plans, diversity committees, and diversity managers and departments) were the most effective means of increasing the proportion of white women, Black women, and Black men in private sector management. Practices that targeted managerial bias through feedback and education showed virtually no effect in the aggregate, though further research may shed additional light. The authors also noted the impact of federal antidiscrimination legislation on influencing

companies to establish diversity programs and on the effectiveness of civil enforcement.

10. LeanIn.org. "The State of Black Women in Corporate America." 2020. www.leanin.org/research/state-of-black-women-in-corporate-america

This study found that women of color, especially Black women, are suffering more during the COVID-19 pandemic, and long-standing inequities are increasing. Accountability and metric-based action are needed to correct this. Persistent workplace discriminations need to be focused on and corrected through accountability, training, tracking/monitoring, and reporting. Specific actions to combat these issues included focusing on unique barriers and removing them, among other suggestions. Companies need to be clear that they will focus on Black women's advancement and set representation targets and track and share the targets with the company.

11. McKinsey & Company. "Women in the Workplace." 30 September 2020. www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace

This 2020 report examined 317 companies, and 40,000 employees participated in the survey covering the U.S. and Canada. Previous years reporting covered 600 firms and 250,000 employees from 2015-2019. Five transportation companies were surveyed in 2020, 15 from the public sector and 15 engineering and manufacturing firms. This year's report focused on how the pandemic impacted women at work, including women of different races and ethnicities, working mothers, women in senior leadership, and women with disabilities.

The study found that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted women greater than men. However, not all women are being impacted to the same degree. Black and Latina women and mothers were especially impacted. The study also tracked changes in women's representation over the past six years and looked at how COVID-19 could impact previous trends. Between 2015-2020, slow but steady progress was made in increasing women in corporate leadership ranks, but there is a "broken rung" at the first step up to manager for women. Pre-pandemic, there were more women in corporate America

and more women in senior management – between 2015 to 2020, there was a 22% increase in women at the C-suite level, an 18% increase in women at the senior vice president level, and a 3% increase in women at the manager level. There is a persistent “broken rung,” for every 100 men promoted, 85 women were promoted, and only 58 Black women and 71 Latinas were promoted. Pre-COVID-19, women held 38% and men held 62% of manager positions.

Existing disparities were laid bare by the pandemic. A few key observations for 2020 included:

- Women, and especially women of color, were more likely to be laid off during the pandemic, stalling careers and impacting financial security. Women are working double shifts, a full workday then a full day of childcare and household labor.
- Black women face more barriers and the emotional toll of racial violence.
- For the first time ever, the workplace saw more women leaving the workforce than men; prior to 2020 the rates were similar.
- Some challenges loom larger for certain groups of women. Compared with women overall, Latinas are more likely to worry about layoffs and furloughs. And LGBTQ+ women are almost twice as likely to cite mental health as one of their biggest challenges during the pandemic.

The study outlined specific remedial actions. Without suggested actions, women will take a large step backwards on the previous five year gains at all levels of the employment ladder. The study also asserted that more needs to be done to support Black women. Suggestions included providing remote work/flexible schedules; reducing workplaces stresses; resetting work hours and other norms to allow more flexibility; minimizing gender bias (provide bias training of all kinds); tracking outcomes from promotions, raises, and layoffs by gender; adjusting policies to be more supportive; allowing more paid time off for homeschooling; raising awareness for what the company already offers; and strengthening employee communication.

Transit.” Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2020. www.doi.org/10.17226/25741.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, acting through the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and the Transit Development Corporation, Inc (TDC), published the Attracting, Retaining, and Advancing Women in Transit report to synthesize strategies deployed in transit and related agencies in order to attract, retain, and advance women in a variety of roles. Authored by Allison Alexander, the study presented findings from a survey of 94 participants in the transit industry, provided case studies highlighting different approaches taken by transit agencies, and recommended strategies on how to overcome barriers for women. The study and the survey results show that numerous and varied efforts are being implemented by transit agencies, generally to meet their own needs or internal strategic diversity goals and increase female representation in the workplace. Five major barriers were identified: lack of job opportunity outreach, social factors, masculine culture, safety concerns, and inflexibility regarding personal responsibilities. The study noted that successful implementation of strategies would benefit from leadership buy in and a culture committed to strategies and diversity overall.

12. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. “Attracting, Retaining, and Advancing Women in

Appendix C

Employer Survey

Respondent Name: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Office Location⁴: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Survey Questions	Comments/Instructions
1. In what city is your Bay Area office located?	Please note: if you have more than one Bay Area office, we'd like a separate survey for each office. If this is cumbersome, please focus on your largest office.
2. Is your organization public or private?	
<i>The next five questions will ask for employment data in 2020. Please provide counts for calendar year 2020, not 2021. If your organization completes EEO-1 forms, you will find the information on that form. Please only consider jobs that are filled (i.e., vacancies should not be included in your answers).</i>	
3. How many total employees (full and part-time) worked in this office in 2020 (calendar year)?	Please do not include consultants affiliated with the Bay Area office but physically working outside the Bay Area. Please also do not include consultants that are on-site but not employed directly by the organization itself.
4. Did your organization collect employment data that was disaggregated by gender in 2020?	If answer is "no" or "I don't know," please skip to question #8.
5. How many female employees worked in your Bay Area office in 2020?	
6. How many female first to mid-level managers worked in your Bay Area office in 2020?	
7. How many female senior-level managers worked in your Bay Area office in 2020?	
<i>The next few questions focus on your organization's policies and programs. Please answer with a 'yes' or 'no.'</i>	

⁴Please Note: Ideally, if you have more than one Bay Area office, we'd like a separate survey for each office. If this is cumbersome, please focus on your largest office.

Survey Questions	Comments/Instructions
8a. Do some employees work part-time?	This question would include job sharing and any employment less than 35 hours a week. If "Yes," please move on to #8b. If "No," please move on to #9a.
8b. If the answer to #8a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	If yes, please specify whether this policy was adopted before or after Bay Area stay-at-home orders went into effect in March 2020.
9a. Do some employees alter their work schedules with supervisor approval?	This includes flex time and work that varies from the traditional 9-5 working hours. If "Yes," please move on to #9b. If "No," please move on to #10a.
9b. If the answer to #9a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	If yes, please specify whether this policy was adopted before or after Bay Area stay-at-home orders went into effect in March 2020.
10a. Do some employees work from home or another location outside the office? (i.e., telecommute)	If "Yes," please move on to #10b. If "No," please move on to #11a.
10b. If the answer to #10a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	If yes, please specify whether this policy was adopted before or after Bay Area stay-at-home orders went into effect in March 2020.
11a. Does your organization have an official mentoring program?	If "Yes," please move on to #11b. If "No," please move on to #12a.
11b. If the answer to #11a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	
12a. Does your organization conduct diversity training?	If "Yes," please move on to #12b.
12b. If the answer to #12a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	
13a. Does your organization have succession planning? Succession planning is defined in this survey as "...a comprehensive, ongoing strategic process that provides for forecasting an organization's senior leadership needs; identifying and developing candidates who have the potential to be future leaders; and selecting individuals from a diverse pool of qualified candidates to meet executive resource needs" (GAO, 2005).	If "Yes," please move on to #13b. If "No," please move on to #14a.
13b. If the answer to #13a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	

Survey Questions	Comments/Instructions
14a. Not counting Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statements, does your organization formally state its commitment to diversity?	If "Yes," please move on to #14b. If "No," please move on to #15a.
14b. If the answer to #14a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?	
15a. Does your organization have an affirmative action plan?	If "Yes," please move on to #15b. If "No," or "I don't know," please move on to #15c.
15b. If the answer to #15a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2020?"	
15c. Does your organization have a committee or staff person officially overseeing diversity efforts?	
16a. Does your organization conduct an internal employee satisfaction survey?	
16b. If the answer to #16a is "yes," how frequently is the employee satisfaction survey conducted?	
<i>The next set of questions will ask you to rank how often the following issues are raised in recruiting and exit interviews in your organization. Please answer with 'never,' 'rarely,' 'often,' or 'not sure.'</i>	
17a. Flexible work schedule	
17b. Childcare (on-site) or subsidized childcare	
17c. Maternity leave	
17d. Work culture	
17e. Inequality of compensation	
17f. Lack of promotion	
17g. Lack of sponsorship	
18. If you ranked "16d. Work culture" as "Often," can you please elaborate on it?	
<i>The last set of questions are intended to address the unique circumstances of 2020.</i>	
19. What new policies (e.g., work from home, flexible work schedules, unlimited PTO, etc.) or initiatives/programs did your organization put in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bay Area's stay-at-home orders?	