

A Longitudinal Study Benchmarking Women in Leadership Roles

Report 5

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Executive Summary

While the San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area) has made some progress towards increasing gender and racial diversity and representation within the transportation industry, challenges still exist to provide women with equitable opportunities to advance in the workplace. This report examines the state of gender diversity in the 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 fifth installment of a longitudinal study effort initiated by the Women’s Transportation Seminar San Francisco (WTS SF) Bay Area Chapter Glass Ceiling Task Force (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 with men and women in the Bay Area to understand the challenges and barriers that women of color (WOC) face with advancing their careers.
4. Develop recommendations to local transportation employers and the WTS San Francisco Bay Area Board to mitigate the “glass ceiling effect” and support the advancement of women in the transportation industry.

Information for this report was collected for 2022, two years since the COVID-19 pandemic. With this in mind, the Task Force supplemented its methodology to examine the lasting impacts of the pandemic on 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, including the lasting impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on women and more specifically, WOC. Key findings include the following:

- While women bore the brunt of job losses early in the pandemic, they are also returning to the workforce faster than their male counterparts. Women’s labor force participation rates have increased by 3.4 percent, as opposed to a 2.1 percent increase for men (Bhattarai and Melgar, 2023).
- Women of color are disproportionately affected by economic and societal factors that have impacted their pay and earnings potential. Not only were they more likely to be laid off during the pandemic, but they were also more likely than their white peers to have been made redundant (Cox, 2023).
- Women leaders are leaving their companies in unprecedented numbers due to barriers to advancement, lack of recognition, and being overworked, and are demanding more opportunity, flexibility, and better culture (McKinsey & Company, 2022).
- A lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is a shift towards remote and hybrid working. While working remotely diminishes the opportunity for feedback from managers, colleagues, and clients for more junior staff—it provides flexibility that is especially important to women with caretaking responsibilities.

- According to a study published in 2022 by the Mineta Transportation Institute, women still only account for a fraction of the transportation workforce, and African American and Hispanic workers are even less represented than women in many senior-position transportation jobs (Da Silva and Virick, 2010).
- Women of color face layered barriers to advancement—they are penalized because of their race and then penalized again because of their gender (IBM, 2021).
- Women continue to be underrepresented in management roles. Based on an analysis of 2019 Census Bureau data, an estimated 42 percent of managers were women, which is less than the 48 percent of women in the workforce (GAO, 2022a).
- The pay gap between men and women still persists. Women earned 82 cents for every dollar than a man earned; Hispanic or Latina women earned 58 cents and Black women earned 63 cents for every dollar that a White man earned (GAO, 2022b).

Survey Findings

This survey effort was conducted in Spring 2023. Fifty public and private Bay Area transportation organizations were invited to participate. The Task Force achieved a 64% response rate, with 53% of participants representing a public agency and 47% of participants representing a private employer. Participants were asked to provide their organization's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) data reported for 2022, 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 and 2022, the mode was 20% to 29%, indicating that the advancement of women to managerial positions has held steady over the last two years. While the proportion of part-time employees has decreased from 72% in 2020 to 66% in 2022, this percentage is still lower than in 2010 and 2012. 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).

Group Discussion Findings

Participants of the group discussions agreed that there is a lack of representation for women and WOC in the transit and transportation industries and that there are challenges and pressures with integrating with workplace norms and culture. Women of color also grapple with unintentional/unconscious individual bias, microaggressions, and flawed hierarchies, and struggle with being their authentic selves in the workplace. To address some of these challenges, participants suggested the following opportunities:

- Creating more diverse panels (race, gender, and business type (MWBE, SBE, DBE, etc.)
- Broadening the outreach to bring in more diverse members into WTS.
- Broadening the definition and parameters of the Women Business Enterprise certification and agency definitions to include women-led contracts (not just women-led firms).
- Introducing a blind selection process for hiring and scholarship selection.
- Identifying opportunities to increase flexibility to better support women who have to juggle multiple responsibilities both within the workplace and at home.

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, connection, attraction, 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. Identify programs and career development opportunities to help advance WOC in the workplace.
4. Develop and convene a steering committee (representing private and public sector leaders) to meet quarterly and discuss ways that employers can better support women in the workplace.
5. Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies.

1 Introduction and Study Objectives

As part of its mission is to advance women’s careers to strengthen 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 Women’s Transportation Seminar San Francisco (WTS SF) Bay Area chapter formed the first Glass Ceiling Task Force (Task Force) to research whether women in the San Francisco Bay Area (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 second, third, and fourth surveys were published in 2014, 2016, and 2021 respectively. The study presented in this report reflects the fifth survey (2023).

The purpose of these studies is to accomplish the following:

- 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, and 2021).
- 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.

WTS, founded in 1977, is an international organization of more than 6,000 transportation professionals with more than 45 chapters representing cities and states in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. 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.

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.

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 lasting impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on women, and more specifically, women of color (WOC).

2.2 Employer Survey

The Task Force administered the fifth employer survey in March 2023 to continue its benchmarking of the status of women in the Bay Area transportation industry. As with past surveys, Equal Employment Opportunity (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, 2020, and 2022.

2.2.1 Employee Demographic Data: Equal Employment Opportunity Reports

The United States 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 include the following:

- Officials and administrators
- Professionals
- Technicians
- Protective services

- Para-professionals
- Administrative support
- Skilled crafts
- Service maintenance

2.2.2 Survey Distribution and Participation

In Spring 2023, the Task Force distributed an employer survey requesting the EEO data they reported in 2022: 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 50 public and private transportation employers in the nine-county Bay Area.

Of the 50 employers that were contacted, 32 completed surveys were received, representing a 64% response rate. Of these survey respondents, 53% represented a public agency, while 47% represented a private employer. Lastly, there have been six organizations that have consistently participated in all five surveys, which is highly commendable and adds to data continuity of this analysis.

The Task Force distributed its fifth survey to a list of participants similar to years past. In order to ensure consistency of methodology, the 2023 survey mirrored the survey that was administered in 2022 (see the 2023 survey in Appendix A), with the exception of an additional question that was included in the survey to capture the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey was organized into the following four sections:

1. Demographics (EEO data)
2. Work policies and programs that may be conducive to women in the workplace
3. Identified barriers
4. New policies, initiatives, and programs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic

2.3 Group Discussion Findings

The Glass Ceiling Task Force held an event on March 8, 2023, to explore how employers can better support and advance WOC in the workplace within the transportation industry. The event was comprised of facilitated group discussions with participants in both the private and public sectors to further examine the challenges that WOC face with breaking the glass ceiling in the workplace. The discussions also sought to evaluate how WTS and the broader transportation industry can continue to create more inclusive environments and address the systemic barriers that are preventing WOC from advancing in their careers.

The purpose of this event was to collect insight, challenges, and lessons learned from professionals across the Bay Area, many of whom have been involved with WTS over the years. The discussion was structured around the following three key questions:

1. What challenges do WOC face in advancing their careers within the transportation industry?
2. What programs/initiatives/opportunities are currently available to advance WOC in the workplace (either in your own organization or another organization)?
3. What actions can employers take to advance WOC in the workplace towards a more equitable and diverse future?

Findings from the group discussions are incorporated into Section 5 of this report and were used to inform 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. In addition, the Task Force also reviewed literature related to the impacts to women resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.1 Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, 54 million women left the workforce and almost 90% of women exited the workforce entirely. These losses impact gender parity, career progression, and female representation in leadership. Forty-seven percent of women participate in the global labor force, as compared with 72% of men (Hougaard et al., 2022). A recent study conducted by the Potential Project, a global leadership organizational development and research firm, found that job engagement and job performance scores are highest when women lead (Hougaard et al., 2022).

While women bore the brunt of job losses early in the pandemic, they are also returning to the workforce faster than their male counterparts. Women's labor force participation rates have increased by 3.4%, as opposed to a 2.1% increase for men (Bhattarai and Melgar, 2023). The percentage of women reentering the workforce increased significantly after fall 2021, when schools were back in session. Factors contributing to this return include rising costs, more flexible and accommodating work arrangements, and the easing of pandemic-related disruptions (e.g., school and daycare closures). Some women also reported benefitting from a tight labor market.

The pandemic was particularly harsh on working mothers—who had to balance competing priorities. A lack of childcare and elder care is also leading women to reorganize their lives and forgo jobs altogether, but women have also made a surprising return to the labor market (DePillis, 2022). Mothers who are college graduates with babies or toddlers are significantly more likely to work for pay than they were before the pandemic (Miller, 2022). Researchers attribute this trend to the women's attachment to the labor market—women's careers have become central to their identities—and to the value of flexibility that has resulted from the pandemic. In addition, self-employment has surged among mothers, which suggests that women are leaning into more flexible work to balance care responsibilities with their need to earn money (DePillis, 2022). Women also reported putting in fewer hours to juggle increased workloads.

3.1.1 Disproportionate Impacts to Women of Color

Women of color are disproportionately affected by economic and societal factors that have impacted their pay and earnings potential. Not only were they more likely to be laid off during the pandemic, but they were also more likely than their white peers to have been made redundant (Cox, 2023).

Black and Latina women and women with lower levels of education and income still face challenges to returning and staying in the workforce. While the pandemic provided some temporary relief in the form of paid sick leave or more affordable childcare, there are still systemic hurdles that are resulting in disparities in terms of who can go back to work and who is getting the best opportunities (Bhattarai and Melgar, 2023). Research indicates that when companies offer benefits such as the option to work flexibly, family leave, and help with childcare, women—and especially, WOC—and men of color benefit and are significantly more likely to succeed in climbing to management jobs. However, these benefits are also susceptible to falling to the wayside when economic headwinds pick up (Cox, 2023).

The availability and price of childcare still impacts the ability of women to return to work, particularly for mothers without a college degree. During the pandemic, women shouldered the majority of childcare

responsibilities and also disproportionately held the jobs that were lost during lockdown, including child and eldercare and waitressing (Miller, 2022). Black women without college degrees were impacted the most—they were overrepresented in service and caregiving jobs, and more likely to contract or care for someone with the COVID-19 virus (Miller, 2022).

3.2 What Women Want

The 2022 Women in the Workplace report, developed by McKinsey & Company, focused on how the pandemic changed what women want from their companies. The study found that women leaders are leaving their companies in unprecedented numbers in favor of better working conditions. The three primary reasons for leaving include the following (McKinsey & Company, 2022):

- **Barriers to advancement** – Many women face microaggressions that undermine their authority and signal challenges to advancement. Women also cite that personal characteristics, such as gender or being a parent, have contributed to being passed over or being denied for a raise, promotion, or other advancement opportunity.
- **Lack of recognition and being overworked** – Women leaders, as compared to their male counterparts, are more likely to support the well-being of their employees and foster diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, this work is seldom formally rewarded or recognized, which could make it more difficult for women to advance. This work can also add strain to existing workloads women leaders are far more likely to burn out.
- **Demand for better work culture** – Women are demanding more opportunity, flexibility, and better culture (i.e., commitment to employee well-being and diversity, equity, and inclusion) and these factors have only become more meaningful over the last two years.

Some women are choosing to leave the workforce altogether—in the past year, 29% of women have thought about reducing their work hours, taking a less demanding job, or leaving the workforce altogether, although far fewer have followed through (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

In addition, the study found that the “broken rung” (i.e., the first step up to manager) remains the biggest obstacle women face on the path to senior leadership. The study cites that “for every 100 men promoted from entry level to manager, only 87 women are promoted, and only 82 WOC are promoted” (McKinsey & Company, 2022). As a result, men significantly outnumber women at the manager level, and there are too few women to promote into senior leadership positions (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

3.3 The New Normal

A lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is a shift towards remote and hybrid working. However, working remotely diminishes the opportunity for feedback from managers, colleagues, and clients for more junior staff, which may impact the opportunity for career advancement. Working remotely also leads to a decline in mentorship and training; opportunities for apprenticeship and learning are difficult to replicate in a virtual environment (Goldberg and Casselman, 2023).

Despite some of the negative impacts, the option to work remotely remains especially important to women. According to the 2022 Women in the Workplace report, “When women work remotely at least some of the time, they experience fewer microaggressions and higher levels of psychological safety. The decrease in microaggressions is especially pronounced for WOC, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities—groups who typically face more demeaning and othering behavior” (McKinsey & Company, 2022). In addition, women who are caregivers can find it challenging to balance a leadership role with their caregiving responsibilities and remote and hybrid work has made this easier and more acceptable.

Future Forum conducted a Pulse survey on the employee experience—including productivity, sense of belonging, and preferred working.¹ The study found that employees with flexibility show higher scores for productivity, connection, and company culture. Remote and hybrid workers also reported more connection to their direct manager and their company’s values, and flexible remote work policies were identified as the number one factor that has improved company culture over the past two years (Future Forum, 2022).

“The career penalty for remote work may be greatest for women, young people and people of color, who often lack the professional networks that being in the office can help provide. But numerous surveys find that those same groups of workers are also the ones who value flexible arrangements the most, and who are the least likely to return to the office voluntarily.” (Goldberg, 2023).

3.4 Diversity and Inclusion

3.4.1 Representation in the Transportation Workforce

According to a study published in 2022 by the Mineta Transportation Institute, women still only account of a fraction of the transportation workforce, and African American and Hispanic workers are even less represented than women in many senior-position transportation jobs. Of the 18 transit agencies that participated in the study, the least diverse job categories included executive- and senior-level jobs. Only one of the 18 participant agencies provided diversity and inclusion training to its staff. The lack of diversity at the executive and senior leadership levels is often an indicator of challenges at lower levels of seniority, including the failure to train replacements or offer professional development opportunities (Mohebbi et al., 2022). A transit workforce that includes community members from all backgrounds not only promotes diversity and inclusivity but also helps transit agencies deepen the understanding of the communities that they serve.

Ana Rivas’ Career Journey at SamTrans

Ana Rivas, Director of Bus Transportation, started her career with SamTrans in 1996 as a Bus Operator. She was 23 years old, and a mother of two infants. While it was initially intimidating to drive a 60-foot bus, she was up to the challenge. In her eight-year career as a bus operator, she was never late to work, never had a preventable accident, and always volunteered for special projects. At times, she would even have to meet her babysitter in the parking lot to exchange the kids and car seats before a shift to make it on time, but she still managed to earn Operator of the Month multiple times.

Her supervisors quickly saw her potential and encouraged her to consider moving up in the organization. Her first promotion was in 2005 to Bus Contract Inspector, and she had prepared for the interview by conducting enough research to fill an entire notebook. Attending community college at night, Ana continued to find mentors who pushed her to advance within the Agency. She returned to Operations in 2009 as an Assistant Superintendent, and though it was challenging in a male-dominated environment, she persevered. She recently earned a Graduate Degree in Transportation Management from San Jose State Mineta Institute and attended WTS and American Public Transportation Association leadership programs, where she was able to connect with other women and share stories about empowerment and leadership.

¹ Future Forum surveyed 10,766 workers in the United States, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, and the United Kingdom from August 3 to 21, 2022.

3.4.2 Barriers to Advancement

Women are underrepresented in leadership roles despite making up nearly half the United States labor force. The Society for Human Resource Management surveyed HR professionals, individual contributors and managers and found that as women attempt to move up at work, they encounter barriers including less tangible support from managers, reduced access to promotions, and disillusion about equal opportunities, particularly WOC (SHRM, 2022). While men are more likely to feel included and taken seriously as leaders, women, and particularly WOC, do not experience the same support as they enter leadership roles (SHRM, 2022).

In addition, Black women leaders are more likely than women leaders of other races and ethnicities to receive signals that it will be harder for them to advance and are more likely to have colleagues question their competence and to be subjected to demeaning behavior (McKinsey & Company, 2022). One in three Black women leaders say that they have been denied or passed over for opportunities because of personal characteristics, including their race and gender (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Women of color face layered barriers to advancement—they are penalized because of their race and then penalized again because of their gender (IBM, 2021). A diversity study conducted by the IBM Institute for Business Value found that race and ethnicity account for much more discrimination experienced by women than gender alone. Thirty-four percent of all women say they have personally experienced race-based bias, while 28% say they have experienced gender-based bias. However, the percentages increase significantly for WOC; 86% of Hispanic women have experienced discrimination because of their ethnicity and 70% because of their gender.

3.4.3 Distinct Experiences of Women of Color in the Workplace

The 2022 Women in the Workplace report identified the following distinct experiences of WOC (McKinsey & Company, 2022)²:

- **Latinas and Black women** are less likely than women of other races and ethnicities to say their manager shows interest in their career development and also reported feeling less psychological safety.
- **Asian and Black women** are less likely to have strong allies on their team and are less likely than white woman to say senior colleagues have taken important sponsorship actions on their behalf.
- **Women with disabilities** often have their competence challenged and undermined.
- **LGBTQ+ women and women with disabilities** are more likely to experience demeaning and “othering” microaggressions.
- **Latinas and Asian women** are more likely than women of other races and ethnicities to have colleagues comment on their culture or nationality.

3.5 Representation of Women in Management and Leadership

Women continue to be underrepresented in management roles. Based on an analysis of 2019 Census Bureau data, an estimated 42% of managers were women, which is less than the 48% of women in the workforce (GAO, 2022a). This percentage has only increased 2% since the analysis was last conducted in 2010 with 2007 data. Female managers were more likely to be younger, more educated, and unmarried, and less likely to be white than male managers (GAO, 2021).

² The survey included 333 participating organizations employing more than 12 million people and comprised more than 40,000 employees. In addition, McKinsey & Company conducted interviews with women of diverse identities, including women of color, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities.

In 2021, IBM conducted a study comprised of 2,600 surveys of executives, middle managers, and professional men and women to examine leadership ranks across 10 industries and 9 geographic regions. The study found that the number of women in senior leadership roles has barely changed over the past two years and the number of women in the pipeline to fill executive roles has decreased. The study acknowledges the significant negative impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on women’s careers, and as a result, broad-based programs and conventional approaches fail to address the gender gap and the underlying mindsets that contribute to the gap. Organizations that see gender parity as a strategic asset are more successful than organizations that pursue incremental change. ‘First Movers,’ a subgroup of organizations that are successfully advancing equity, have leveraged gender and racial inclusion as a force multiplier – driving above-average financial growth and innovation, along with customer and employee satisfaction (IBM, 2021).

There are a range of factors that can impact women’s career advancement in the workplace. Firms invest less in developing female employees when regulations mandate paid parental leave and childcare. Another study found that, due to potentially subconscious gender stereotypes, female candidates who used less feminine language in their cover letters were less likely to be hired. While pay gaps and challenges to increase salaries still exist (see Section 3.6), other kinds of negotiations, including workloads, work-life balance, and role definition, can also have a substantial impact on career trajectories (Dukach, 2022). In addition, women also experience stressors that disproportionately impact them in the workplace, including status-leveling burden (i.e., the pressure for women in high-status positions to present themselves as equal to their male counterparts), increased stress related to deadlines (a study found that women are less likely than men to ask for deadline extensions, even when they are explicitly adjustable), and increased stress from taking on menial or administrative tasks that are well outside their job descriptions (Dukach, 2022).

3.6 The Pay Gap

According to published Census Bureau data from 2021, women comprised 44% of the workforce but only 41% of managers (GAO, 2022a). Women earned 82 cents for every dollar than a man earned, and Hispanic or Latina women earned 58 cents and Black women earned 63 cents for every dollar that a White man earned (GAO, 2022b). While the pay gap varied by level of education, it was greatest for women with less than a high school diploma and smallest for women with a bachelor’s degree (GAO, 2022b). According to the United Nations, the global gap is 77 cents to the dollar, primarily driven by women being underrepresented in decision-making roles, doing more unpaid work than their male counterparts, and being overrepresented in lower skilled and lower income work (Cox, 2023).

The pay gap also varies by sector. Women who were self-employed in their own incorporated business earned an estimated 69 cents for every dollar earned by men (GAO, 2022b). Women working in private, for-profit companies earned an estimated 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, while women working in government agencies and non-profit organizations earned an estimated 85 cents for every dollar earned by men. Employers can take action by further examining and understanding the extent of these conditions. However, in addition to addressing pay gaps, employers also need to foster an ecosystem—including networks and benefits—that will enable women to thrive and succeed.

4 Employer Survey Findings

For comparative analysis across years, the survey questions and findings are organized in the same manner as the 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2021 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 return to the workplace/in-office work policies and the policies, initiatives, and programs organizations that were put into effect as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Bay Area stay-at-home orders and that are still in place.

Our 2023 findings (capturing data from 2022) are presented in more detail below.³

4.1 Demographics

Table 4-1 presents the distribution of the size of respondents’ workforce in Bay Area offices in 2022 (for the 32 survey respondents), as compared to those reported in 2014, 2012, 2010, and 2020. For 2022, the participation of organizations across the three size categories are similar to 2012. For 2022, 53% of respondents represented public agencies, while 47% of respondents represented private organizations. In 2020, 65% of respondents represented public organizations, while 35% of respondents represented private organizations.

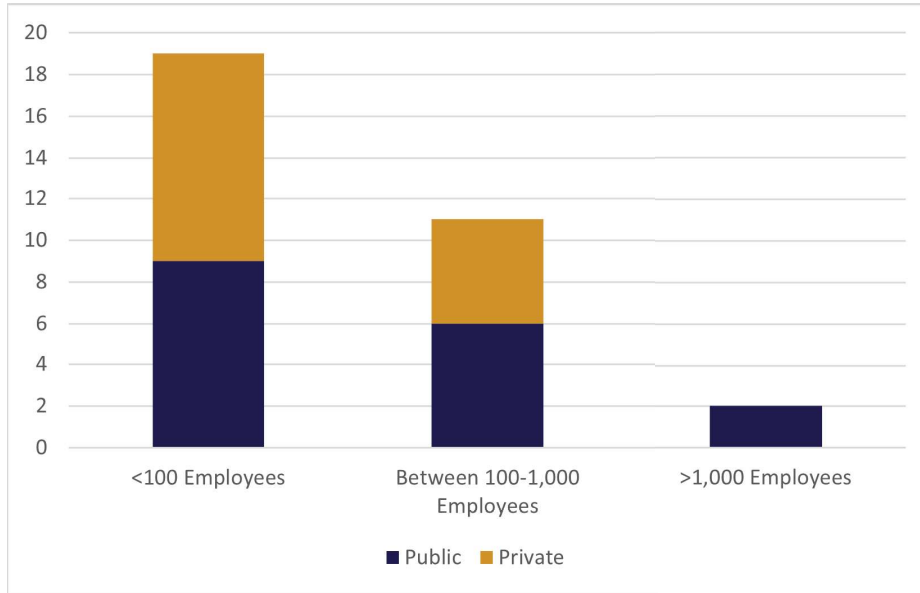
Table 4-1: Reported Number of Employees Working in Bay Area Offices in 2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022

Reported Bay Area Workforce	2010	2012	2014	2020	2022
<100 employees	45%	60%	58%	55%	59%
100 to 1,000 employees	38%	33%	24%	32%	34%
>1,000 employees	17%	7%	18%	13%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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 to 1,000 employees), while public organizations were distributed between all three size categories (and are the only organizations in the large-size category [>1,000 employees]).

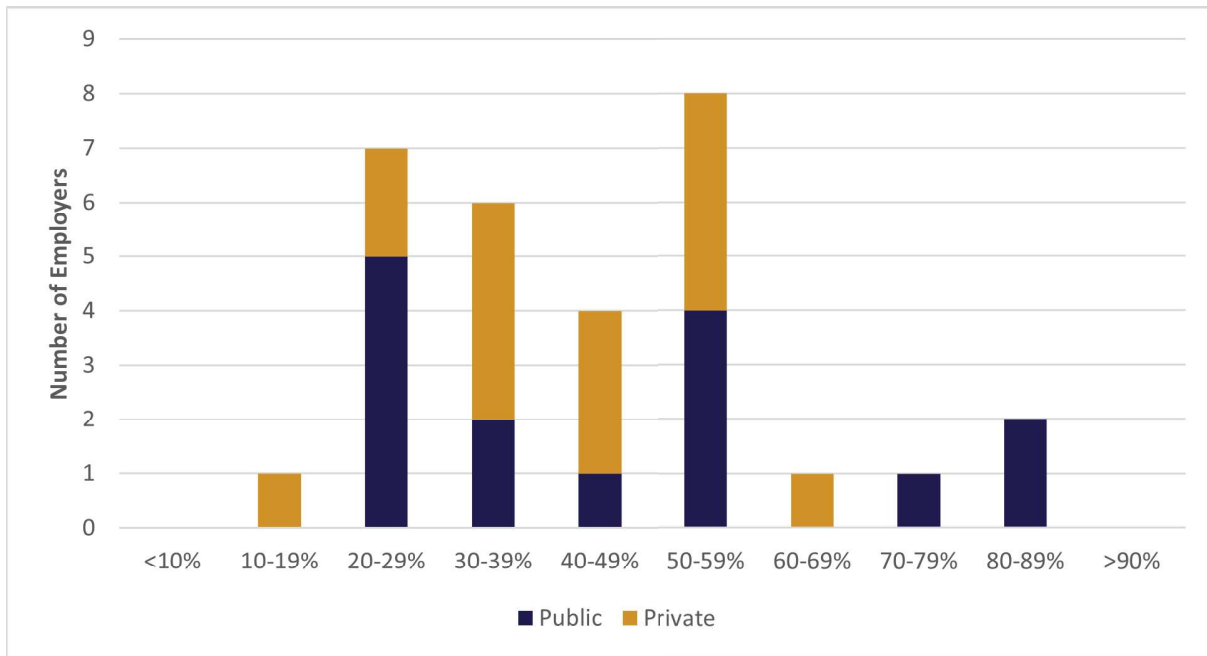
³ While the survey was conducted in March of 2023, respondents were asked to report on 2022 data.

Figure 4-1: Number of Employees in Bay Area Offices (2022)



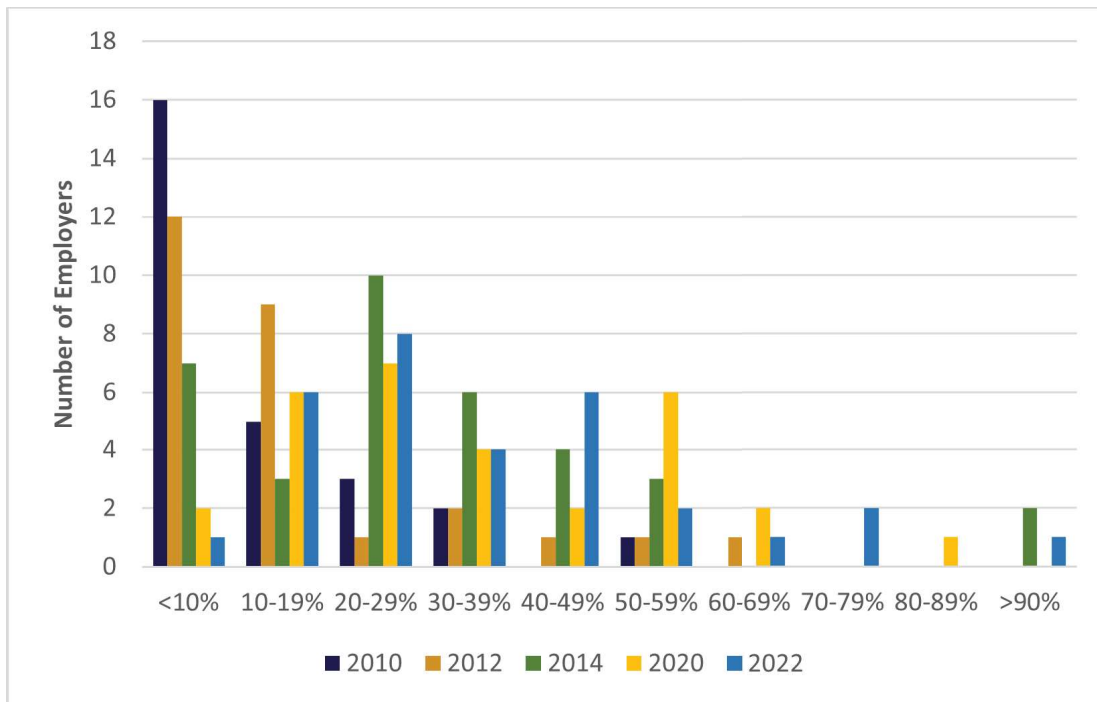
Respondents provided employment data that was disaggregated by gender. In 2022, over half of Bay Area employers surveyed had labor forces that consisted of either 20% to 29% female employees or 50% to 59% female employees (**Figure 4-2**). The private sector’s largest concentration was in the 20% to 59% range, and the largest public sector concentration was in the 20% to 59% range as well. In 2020, the largest category of all female employees was 20% to 29%, as was the case in 2014.

Figure 4-2: Percentage of Female Employees in the Bay Area (2022)



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% to 29% of female employees in managerial positions. The highest concentration reported in 2020 was also 20% to 29%, as compared to <10% in 2010 and 2012. The next highest categories in 2022 were 10% to 19% and 40% to 49% (which were both tied with six employers each). As compared to prior years, there are increases in the number of employers who have 40% to 49%. There was a decline in the lowest concentration of female managers (<10%) in 2022, as compared to the prior years of data collection.

Figure 4-3: Percentage of Female Bay Area Employees in Managerial Positions (2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022)



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 the following:

- 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?

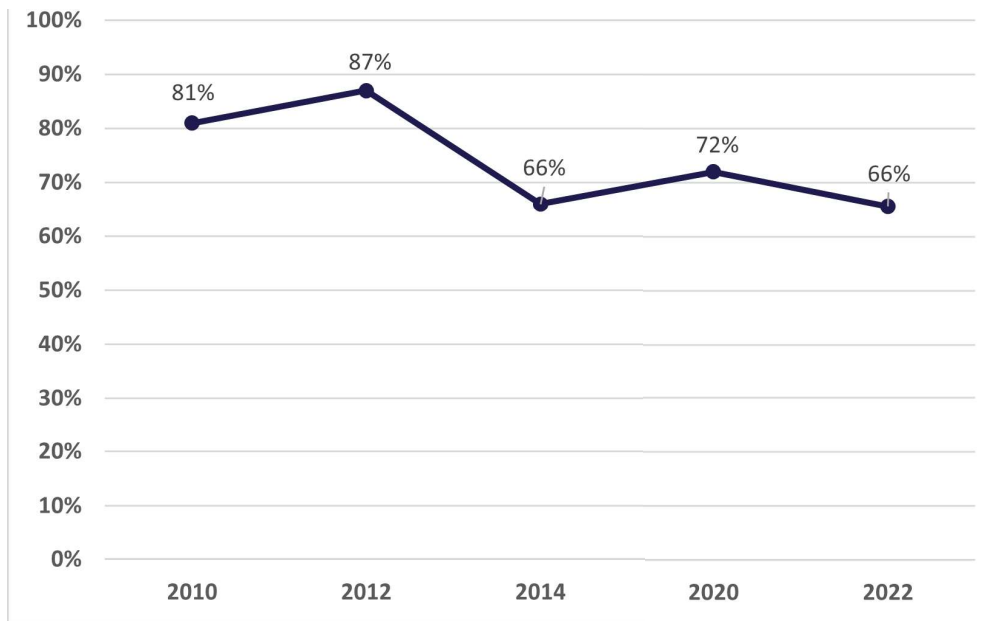
4.2.1 Job Flexibility Policies

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 2022, 22.0% of the female labor force in the United States worked part-time, compared to 11.6% of men (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). 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 decreased from 72% in 2020 to 66% in 2022, but this percentage is still lower than 2010 and 2012 (**Figure 4-4**).

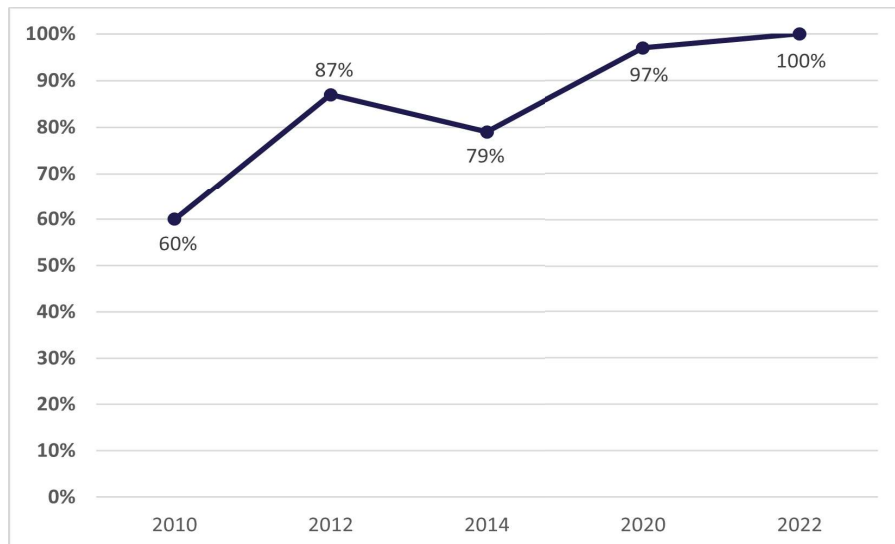
Figure 4-4: Organizations with Part-time Employees (2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022)



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 (Da Silva and Virick, 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 (Da Silva and Virick, 2010).

In 2022, the number of Bay Area employers surveyed that have telecommuters was 100%, which is the highest percentage since the initial survey was conducted in 2010 (**Figure 4-5**). This is likely due to the shift to hybrid working as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4-5: Organizations with Telecommuters (2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022)

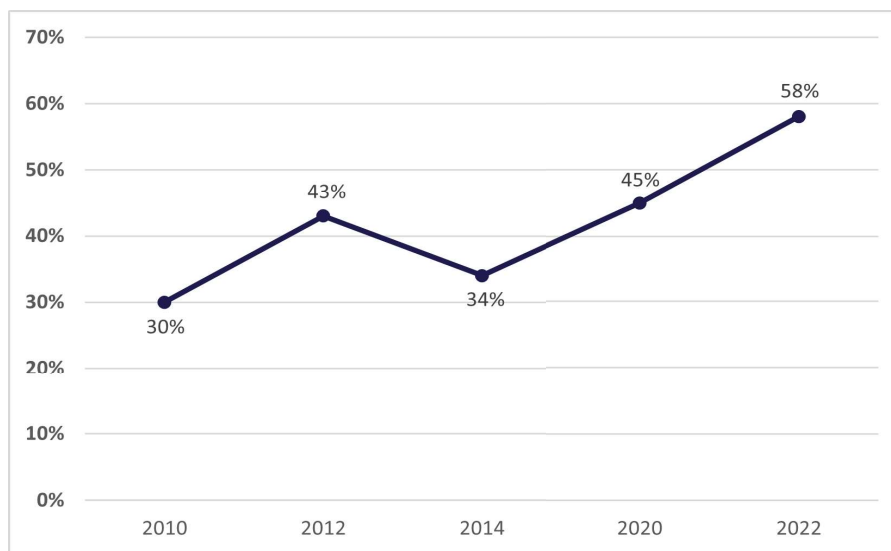


4.2.2 Employee Development

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 et al., 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.”⁴

The percentage of Bay Area employers surveyed who offer mentoring programs increased 13% since the survey was last conducted in 2020, as illustrated in **Figure 4-6**.

Figure 4-6: Organizations with an Official Mentoring Program (2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022)



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 70% as compared to 75% in 2020, although this decline may be attributed to the smaller sample size of respondents received for this year’s survey.

⁴ “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.

Alameda County Transportation Commission’s Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) is committed to elevating and enhancing racial and socioeconomic equity and diversity awareness in its work force and within the transportation work it delivers. With an “inside-out” and people centric approach, Alameda CTC created a Culture and Engagement Committee (CEC) aimed at fostering opportunities, cultural understanding, belonging, and inclusion for its professional workforce to enhance the overall organization’s external transportation decision making, policies development, and investment recommendations for the people and communities it serves. The CEC consists of cross departmental staff from all genders, position levels, and cultural backgrounds.

The CEC supports the integration of cultural awareness, workforce engagement, equity initiatives, and diversity training opportunities into the agency’s philosophical approach to transportation planning and project delivery across Alameda County. The CEC’s workplan includes coordinating social engagement and fostering cultural awareness, support for professional development, and advising on policies and practices to ensure inclusivity and diversity is considered. The CEC is committed to creating a workplace that is culturally rich and empowers staff to reach their personal and professional potential with diversity and belonging reflected at all levels of the organization.

Additionally, Alameda CTC launched an external facing equity platform called the Race and Equity Action Plan to further equity and inclusion awareness throughout its work core functions, including contracting and recruitments, planning, funding and project delivery. Alameda CTC’s equity platforms and CEC work provides the roadmap to build greater belonging and inclusivity across the agency and allows the countywide transportation work to achieve its diversity, engagement, and inclusivity goals.

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 61% of all survey respondents reported “yes,” which is slightly more than those reported in 2020 (52%) and 2014 (57%).

ESA's Approach to Succession Planning

Ongoing succession planning is a critical part of ESA's culture. At the regional, firmwide, and executive levels, our leadership is assessed through annual performance reviews on their actions in developing future leaders for existing positions and creating new opportunities to expand upon the existing organizational structure. Our regional leaders meet with their business group directors and leadership teams in strategy planning sessions held bi-annually preceding the review periods (mid year and year-end) to help define the business paths for the different regions/groups that would impact succession decisions. Compensation and incentives are linked to leaders' abilities to assess their team members at mid-year and year end performance reviews and recalibrate possible successors based on their assessment of candidates' interests, motivations, and performance.

Beyond searching for successors, our senior leadership is tasked with developing new pathways that create future leadership opportunities and career tracks that don't exist today, expanding our organizational structure both vertically as well as horizontally. Successful transitions for our senior leaders are reflected in continued growth that meets or exceeds our annual budgets and maintains the culture that retains ESA's employee owners long into their careers and into retirement.

4.3 Identified Barriers

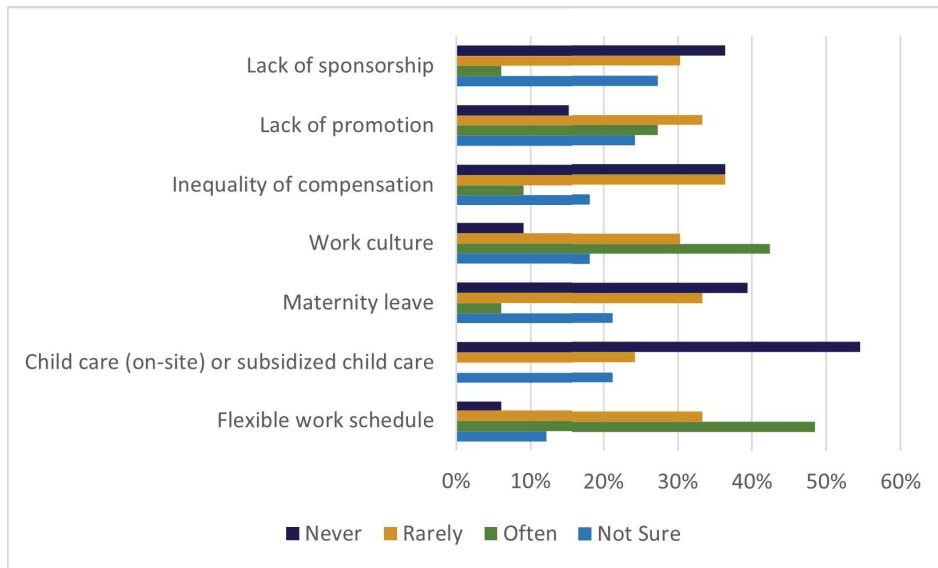
The survey also included a section on the potential barriers to the recruitment, retention, or advancement of women in the workplace. The intent of this section was to identify root causes of the barriers that women face and to inform a solutions- and action-oriented dialogue within the Bay Area transportation 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 the following:

- 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 flexible work schedule (48%), work culture (42%), and lack of promotion (27%) (**Figure 4-7**). In 2020, the issue that was most often raised was work culture (31%) followed by a flexible work schedule (28%) and lack of promotion (28%).

Figure 4-7: Frequency of Issues/Barriers Raised During Recruitment and Exit Interview Process (2022)



4.4 Return to the Workplace/In-Office Work Policies

In 2023, the Task Force included a new section in the survey to understand employer’s return to the workplace/in-office work policies and the policies, initiatives, and programs that employers implemented to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic that are still in place.

When asked about organizations’ return to the workplace/in-office work policy, the majority of responses included a hybrid telework policy, although with some nuances. Some organizations require employees to be in the office for a certain number of days and then allow employees to telework for a certain number of days. In other instances, the ability to have a hybrid work schedule requires approval by a supervisor (based on the needs of the team and/or the business) or is dictated based on the position and the nature of the work. Staff that are geographically displaced from an office location maintain a primarily remote work environment.

The policies, initiatives, and programs that employers implemented to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic that are still in place include hybrid work policies, policies related to mask wearing and vaccinations (with some modifications), and adoption of unlimited paid time off (PTO) for mid-level professionals and above. Some organizations conveyed that while flexible work policies were always in place, they are more frequently utilized now than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. One organization cited that an extension of COVID Supplemental Paid Sick Leave via an Assembly Bill through December 31, 2022, provided up to 40 additional sick leave hours to eligible employees to care for themselves or family members who were unable to work/telework because they were sick/quarantining due to the COVID-19 virus. However, this has not been extended into 2023.

5 Group Discussion Findings

The Glass Ceiling Task Force held an event on March 8, 2023, to explore how employers can better support and advance WOC in the workplace within the transportation industry.

The event was comprised of facilitated group discussions with participants in both the private and public sectors to further examine the challenges that WOC face with breaking the glass ceiling in the workplace. The discussions also sought to evaluate how WTS and the broader transportation industry can continue to create more inclusive environments and address the systemic barriers that are preventing WOC from advancing in their careers.

Table 5-1 summarizes key findings from the March 8, 2023, event.

Figure 5-1: Summary of Findings

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of representation for women and WOC overall in the transit and transportation industry. • Women and WOC are getting frustrated and quitting due to being undervalued and not meshing with transportation, architecture and engineering and science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related workplace culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden the outreach and new membership initiatives to focus on bringing into WTS more diverse members that are integral part of the industry, such as transit operators. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule more effective leadership training and mentoring activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Racism and Discrimination: policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society or organization and that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a direct result, WOC grapples with unintentional/unconscious individual bias, microaggressions, internalized thinking, and flawed hierarchies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to broaden the definition and parameters of the Women Business Enterprise certification and agency definitions to include women-led contracts, not just women-led firms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a hiring perspective, the current talent pool is limited and not very diverse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The limited talent pool applies across the board to interns, junior hires, engineers, project managers, engineering leads, organization heads, CEOs, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a “blind” resume and application process for hiring (also for selecting candidates and winners of WTS scholarships). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blind = removing all clues to age, race/ethnicity and gender • Develop partnerships between private firms/public organizations and Transportation YOU to build the talent pipeline.

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women, and especially WOC, are experiencing shifting burdens and additional family responsibilities. • These burdens are exacerbated by the new dynamic of on-site work scheduling. • Women recognize that they cannot be their authentic selves at work. This is demotivating and demoralizing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide flexible hours and greater support for women with families. • Partner with private firms/public agencies to host an unconscious bias and allyship event.

To dive deeper into these group discussions, the Task Force held an intimate session with executives from both the private and public sector in June 2023. The insights gained from this discussion are featured throughout the report. Participants found this discussion and opportunity for knowledge sharing between public and private sectors to be particularly illuminating. They welcomed the opportunity to continue the discussions facilitated by WTS.

6 Lessons Learned and Recommendations Moving Forward

The WTS San Francisco Bay Area chapter now has five important datasets for the years 2010, 2012, 2014, 2020, and 2022 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.

Based on the literature review, employer survey, and the findings from the 2022 group discussion findings, the Task force recommends exploring the following recommendations:

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. Each study should also be tailored to the most current and topical challenges of the period that is being studied.
2. Track progress and outcomes of WTS career development programs. The WTS San Francisco Bay Area chapter should consider tracking the progress and outcomes of its mentoring, leadership, and scholarship programs, and should seek to measure the impact of those programs on supporting and advancing women's careers through interviews, virtual surveys, etc. This would help 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. WTS should also consider offering 'refresher' courses for its key programs (e.g., mentoring and leadership program) as an extension of the initial program to provide opportunities for continual improvement.
3. Identify programs and career development opportunities to help advance WOC in the workplace. The research and data in this report reinforces many of the same challenges from the last report. Primarily, WOC face additional challenges and pressures than their white counterparts. The Task Force recommends exploring the following actions to evaluate how WTS can continue to create a more inclusive environment in the industry and address the systemic barriers that are preventing WOC from being able to advance in their careers:
 - a. Provide more access to mentoring and sponsorship resources and opportunities.
 - b. Track metrics on diversity of hiring, promotions, raises, and layoffs, and share the progress against identified metrics.
 - c. Conduct microaggression and bias training.
 - d. Provide more opportunities to talk about outside factors that are impacting staff's emotional well-being.
 - e. Create opportunities for WOC to foster camaraderie and shared community with each other within WTS (e.g., facilitate small group meetups).

- f. Hold at least one program during the years that the benchmarking report is not released to address the recommendations in this report and continue the momentum of the Task Force effort.
 - i. A potential program is a discussion about hybrid working and how it impacts men and women differently.
4. Develop and convene a steering committee (representing private and public sector leaders) to meet quarterly and discuss ways that employers can better support women in the workplace. The remit of the steering committee would be to identify challenges and barriers and develop targeted actions that can be implemented to help provide more equitable opportunities for women and increase representation of women in leadership positions. This steering committee can be an extension of the executive panel that convened to build on discussions from March 8, 2023, event (see Section 5 for more details).
 5. Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies. Since the inception of this effort by the WTS San Francisco Bay Area chapter in 2010, many other chapters across the country have also initiated similar efforts. The WTS San Francisco Bay Area and WTS Washington DC chapters' 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 San Francisco Bay Area will also share its lessons learned with other chapters and interested organizations through presentations at future conferences and panel events. In addition, a national effort that attempts to review trends and data across all chapters throughout the country could also be a valuable effort that could spur chapters to conduct their own studies.

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

Figure 6-1: Recommendations from Past Reports

Past Recommendations	Year(s) Recommended	Status
Promote internal capacity building by offering study templates and lessons learned from other WTS chapters who want to do similar studies.	2012	New York City, Washington DC, and Puget Sound WTS Chapters have launched similar efforts. WTS International now has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 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 San Francisco Bay Area chapter annual trainings (whole program dedicated to this)

Past Recommendations	Year(s) Recommended	Status
Promote women, local, small, and disadvantaged business enterprises.	2014	Many agencies have performed disparity studies and enhanced their Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Small Business Enterprise/LGBTQ+ goals.
Support internal capacity building of other WTS chapters who wish to conduct similar studies.	2014/2016/2021	Initiated efforts to develop a toolkit to document the Glass Ceiling Task Force benchmarking report development process.
Promote self-educated leadership development (reading leadership books).	2014	N/A
Encourage organizations to institute programs and educational tools in place to eliminate second generation bias.	2016	N/A
Track progress and outcomes of WTS career development programs.	2021	Progress and outcomes are informally tracked.
Further examine the challenges that WOC face in the workplace and in breaking the glass ceiling, and facilitate programs on this topic.	2021	Conducted program in March 2023— “Dismantling Barriers for Women of Color in the Workplace.”
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.	2021	Conducted leadership discussion from representatives from public and private sectors in June 2023.
Facilitate a discussion panel with organizations in the Bay Area to review recommendations from McKinsey & Company (McKinsey, 2020) and Lean In’s (Lean In, 2020) 2020 reports.	2021	N/A
Broaden and improve awareness and distribution of the chapter's Career Wall, including adding a section for executive/ management positions.	2021	N/A

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Appendix B: Literature Review Summary

This section summarizes the literature that was reviewed as part of this report.

Bhattarai, A., and Melgar, L. 2023. “Women Lost More Jobs Early in the Pandemic. They’re Also Returning Faster.” Washington Post, 12 February 2023. Available at:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/02/12/women-workforce-jobs-flexibility-remote/>.

More women are returning to the workforce as a result of rising costs and more flexible work arrangements—including remote options and part-time work. The presence of women in the workforce increased once children went back to school, post-COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, women benefitted from a tight labor market and were offered more positions. The percent of women aged 25 to 54 in the labor force has steadily risen from 39% in 1953 to 77% in 2023, while this percent has steadily decreased for men.

Cox, J. 2023. “The Perfect Storm Keeping Women of Color Behind at Work.” BBC, 1 March 2023.

Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20230228-the-perfect-storm-keeping-women-of-color-behind-at-work>.

While the pandemic has setback many workers, it has impacted women of color (WOC) disproportionately and has hurt their growth potential. Women of color have always earned less and have had worse representation in management roles across the corporate world, and the past three years have only made it more challenging. In addition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs are being threatened due to the economic uncertainty and benefits, such as “work-life” supports (flexible work, family leave, and child care help) are also at risk, which would further stall advancement opportunities for WOC.

The pay gap between men and women still exists—and leveling pay is only one aspect of addressing the systemic challenge. Employers need to create ecosystems and support structures, including network and benefits, that can cultivate conditions in which women can thrive.

DePillis, L., J. Smialek, and B. Casselman. 2023 “Jobs Aplenty but a Shortage of Care Keeps Many Women from Benefitting.” New York Times, 22 June 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/07/business/economy/women-labor-caregiving.html>.

During the pandemic, care workers left the industry in numbers, which only compounded the country’s long-running caregiving shortage, for both children and older adults. The share of women participating in the labor market is still depressed relative to 2019, but it has recovered roughly as much as the share for men has. While mothers still work less than other women, the gap has narrowed to about the same level that it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Stanford’s RAPID survey, February 2022 data found that 39% of women with children younger than 5 had quit their jobs or reduced their hours since the pandemic began, and more than 90% of women said they did this on their own accord. The lack of childcare and elder care options has caused some women to limit their hours or sideline them altogether, hurting their career prospects.

Dukach, D. 2022. “Research Roundup: How Women Experience the Workplace Today.” Harvard Business Review, 29 March 2022. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2022/03/research-roundup-how-women-experience-the-workplace-today>.

Women experience unique challenges and opportunities in the workplace that their male counterparts do not. These unique challenges often hinder their productivity and status in their organizational hierarchy. The article

summarizes key findings based on a review of the broad body of research aimed at understanding the unique challenges that women face at work. After a woman makes it to the top, firms use less gender-stereotyped language. However, women in top management teams also earn less and female leaders face more retaliation for moral objections. Women are also more likely to be promoted into positions in which they are unlikely to succeed. When examining what holds female candidates and employees back from advancement, the research points to less investment in women when regulations mandate more parental leave, potential stereotypes that may impact hiring when female candidates use less feminine language, and the gender disparities that persist during career negotiations. Finally, women also experience hidden stresses as compared to their male counterparts—they are more likely to experience a “status-leveling burden” to present themselves equal to their male counterparts, are less likely to ask for a deadline extension, and are more likely to take on menial tasks.

Future Forum. 2022. “Executives Feel the Strain of Leading in the ‘New Normal.’” Future Forum Pulse. October 2022. Available at: <https://futureforum.com/research/pulse-report-fall-2022-executives-feel-strain-leading-in-new-normal/>.

Future Forum conducted a survey of 10,766 full-time workers in the United States, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, and the United Kingdom from August 3 to 21 in 2022. All respondents had desk-based jobs in a range of positions, including executive management, senior management, middle management, junior management, senior staff, and skilled office worker.

Key findings from the report included the following:

- “The pandemic accelerated many workplace dynamics that were already well underway, including heightened connectivity, shifting workforce demographics, and growing demand for equity.”
- Executives are reporting record-low experience and sentiment scores as leaders struggle to navigate shifting work models. “Executives now report 20% worse work-life balance and 40% more work-related stress and anxiety.”
- Burnout is on the rise, particularly among key groups. “Burnout rose to 40% this quarter globally with the most significant increase in the United States, where 43% of desk workers report feeling burned out.” “There is a notable gender gap...with female workers showing 32% more burnout than their male counterparts.” Younger workers (18- to 29-year-olds) are more likely to experience burnout.
- Employees with flexibility show higher scores for productivity, connection, and company culture. “Flexible remote work policies were cited as the number one factor that has improved company culture over the past two years.”

Goldberg, E., and B. Casselman. 2023 “What Young Workers Miss Without the ‘Power of Proximity’” New York Times, 24 April 2023. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/24/business/remote-work-feedback.html>.

Based on one study of software engineers at a Fortune 500 technology company, working remotely was found to diminish opportunities for feedback from bosses, colleagues, and clients, thereby impacting options for improving performance and career advancement. Flexibility comes at a cost—declining mentorship and training and the lack of feedback from senior staff to junior staff hurts women more than men. However, remote work has led to flexibility that many employees have benefitted from, especially working parents and other employees that juggle responsibilities at work and at home. “In a survey from FlexJobs, the remote job search site, 60 percent of women and 52 percent of men said they would consider looking for a new job if they could no longer work remotely; 62 percent of women and 56 percent of men said better work-life balance was a benefit of remote work.”

GAO. 2022b. “Women in the Workforce: The Gender Pay Gap Is Greater for Certain Racial and Ethnic Groups and Varies by Education Level.” 15 December 2022. Available at: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-106041>.

In recent years, women were underrepresented in management positions and the gender pay gap was greater for certain groups. The gender pay gap was greater for full-time female managers (a pay gap of 23 cents on the dollar) and also greater for women in certain sectors (workers who were self-employed in their own incorporated business) and women earned an estimated 69 cents for every dollar earned by men (a pay gap of 31 cents on the dollar). In private, for-profit companies, women earned an estimated 78 cents for every dollar earned by men (a pay gap of 22 cents on the dollar). In government agencies and non-profit organizations, women earned an estimated 85 cents for every dollar earned by men (a pay gap of 15 cents on the dollar).

GAO. 2022a. “Women in Management: Women Remain Underrepresented in Management Positions and Continue to Earn Less Than Male Managers.” 15 March 2022. Available at: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-105796>.

Women make up nearly half of the United States workforce, yet they face disparities in pay and challenges in advancing their careers. An estimated 42% of managers were women, which was less than the percentage of women in the overall workforce (48%). Female managers were more likely to be younger, more educated, and unmarried, and less likely to be White (non-Hispanic) than male managers. Full-time female managers earned 71 cents for every dollar earned by full-time male managers. Pay gap varies for different racial and ethnic groups; pay gap is greater for Black and Hispanic/Latina women than for White and Asian women.

Hougaard, R., J. Carter, and M. Afton. 2022. “When Women Leaders Leave, the Losses Multiply.” Harvard Business Review, 08 March 2022. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2022/03/when-women-leaders-leave-the-losses-multiply#:~:text=Leadership-,When%20Women%20Leaders%20Leave%2C%20the%20Losses%20Multiply,organizations%20for%20years%20to%20come>.

The pandemic led to many women leaving the workforce and these losses have led to a devastating impact to gender parity, career progression, and female representation in leadership positions. This has implications to the broader workforce, since women leaders have more engaged teams, drive better job performance, and save their organization millions of dollars as a result.

Potential Project conducted a multi-year study of leaders and employees from 5,000 companies in nearly 100 countries to understand how leaders are able to do hard things while still maintaining wisdom, the courage to do what needs to be done even when it is difficult, and compassion, the care and empathy shown towards others combined with the intention to support and help. According to the findings, 55% of the women in the study were ranked by their followers as being wise and compassionate compared to only 27% of men. In addition, 56% of men in the study ranked poorly on wisdom and compassion. By a 2:1 margin, followers said that women leaders are able to do hard things in a human way as compared to their male leaders.

In order to create more beneficial outcomes for all employees, organization should promote gender equity, develop compassionate leadership, and create opportunities for intentional peer learning.

IBM. 2021. “Women, Leadership, and Missed Opportunities.” Available at: <https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/3ZNDMAPE>.

IBM conducted a survey in 2021 of 2,600+ executives, middle managers, and professional women and men across 429 organizations. The study found that organizations want to change, but most are moving too slowly—broad-based programs are not as effective as mindset shifts. In addition, most organizations pursue

incremental change, but leaders aim for breakthroughs and view (and leverage) gender parity as an asset.

Other key findings included the following:

- Companies can make big commitments quickly (e.g., Black Lives Matter impacts to diversity commitments occurred quickly) but not for gender equity.
- The number of women in senior leadership roles has barely changed.
- The number of women in the pipeline to fill executive roles has decreased.
- Women in the early and middle stages of their careers are most vulnerable to pandemic-related job displacement—women aged 20 to 34 were most impacted.
- ‘First Movers’ (i.e., organizations that are successfully advancing equity) have leveraged gender and racial inclusion as a force multiplier, driving above-average financial growth and innovation, along with customer and employee satisfaction.

Advancing gender equity will require companies to approach women’s advancement with an innovative mindset. The study recommends the following five steps and supporting actions to help organizations create bolder breakthroughs: 1) pair bold thinking with big commitments; 2) insist on making room; 3) identify specific, crisis-related interventions; 4) use technology to accelerate performance; and 5) create a culture of intention.

Miller, C. 2022. “The Pandemic Has Been Punishing for Working Mothers. But Mostly, They’ve Kept Working.” New York Times, 2022 May 11. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/upshot/pandemic-working-mothers-jobs.html>.

Childcare shortages and the lack of affordable childcare has made it difficult for mothers without college degrees to work. However, one group of mothers—college graduates with babies and toddlers—became significantly more likely to work for pay than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers point to American women’s attachment to the labor market—including their hard-earned careers built over time and their increasing roles as the primary breadwinners for their families. It also speaks to the value of flexibility that has been valuable for working women. Despite this resiliency, the COVID-19 pandemic was very difficult for working mothers—since women often bear most of the childcare responsibilities and women also held jobs that were lost during lockdowns, such as child and elder care or waitressing. Black women without college degrees were hit the hardest—they were overrepresented in service and caregiving jobs and also more likely to contract the COVID-19 virus or care for someone who did.

Mohebbi, M., S. Raghuram, and A. Zandiatashbar. “Pathway to Promote Diversity within Public Transit Workforce.” Mintea Transportation Institute, August 2022. Available at: <https://transweb.sjsu.edu/research/2135-Diversity-Public-Transit-Social-Inclusion-Meaningful-Engagement>.

This study was intended to explore 1) existing knowledge of diversity in the agency’s data availability; 2) current practices promoting diversity; and 3) barriers each agency faces to diversity implementation. This study was intended to fill a gap in existing research—i.e., how a diverse and inclusive workforce can change public views about the transit system.

The following recommendations were identified through a review of relevant literature:

- “Establish and promote career mobility through mentorship opportunities
- Explore an achievable rewards and incentives system, such as monetary bonuses
- Align employee expectations with actual, daily responsibilities through the use of multiple communication strategies

- Invest in enhancing organizational culture
- Develop local outreach programs, including career fairs, to inform interested parties about opportunities with agencies at both the county and city levels”

There are few examples of transit agencies across the country that have demonstrated the importance of achieving demographic diversity so that executive and senior-level employees can effectively communicate with the populations they serve and facilitate career mobility for underrepresented groups of employees within their agencies. Transit agencies have attempted to change the public’s perception of transit job opportunities by expanding recruitment techniques and promoting existing career opportunities within transit agencies at community events. Of the 18 transit agencies that participated in the study, the least diverse job categories included executive- and senior-level jobs. Only one of the 18 participant agencies provided diversity and inclusion training to its staff. The lack of diversity at the executive and senior leadership levels is often an indicator of challenges at lower levels of seniority, including the failure to train replacements or offer professional development opportunities.

McKinsey & Company. 2022. “Women in the Workplace.” 18 October 2022. Available at:

<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/diversity%20and%20inclusion/women%20in%20the%20workplace%202022/women-in-the-workplace-2022.pdf>.

The 2022 Women in the Workplace study focused on how the pandemic has changed what women want from their companies, including the growing importance of opportunity, flexibility, employee well-being, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The study included 333 participating organizations employing more than 12 million people. More than 40,000 employees were surveyed and interviews were conducted with women of diverse identities, including WOC, LGBTQ+ women, and women with disabilities.

The study found that women are leaving their companies in unprecedented numbers—while some women are switching jobs in favor of better working conditions, others are opting to leave the workforce altogether. This has serious implications for companies since women are already significantly underrepresented and companies are struggling to hold onto the relatively few women leaders they have. These dynamics are more pronounced for WOC. Women leaders are more likely to experience belittling microaggressions and are doing more to support employee well-being and foster inclusion (and this work is going mostly unrewarded). It’s increasingly important to women leaders that they work for companies that prioritize flexibility, employee well-being, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Appendix C: WTS Survey Instrument

Respondent Name:

Name of Organization:

Office Location:⁵

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Survey Questions	Comments/Instructions
1. In what city is your Bay Area office located?	Please 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.
2. Is your organization public or private?	
The next five questions will ask for employment data in 2022. Please provide counts for calendar year 2022, not 2023. 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).	
3. How many total employees (full and part-time) worked in this office in 2022 (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 2022?	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 2022?	
6. How many female first to mid-level managers worked in your Bay Area office in 2022?	
7. How many female senior-level managers worked in your Bay Area office in 2022?	
The next few questions focus on your organization's policies and programs. Please answer with a 'yes' or 'no.'	
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 2022?	

⁵ Please 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
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 2022?	
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 2022?	
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 2022?	
12a. Does your organization conduct diversity training?	If "Yes," please move on to #12b. If "No," please move on to #13a.
12b. If the answer to #12a is "yes," is this a new policy adopted in 2022?	
13a. Does your organization have succession planning? Succession planning is defined in this survey as <i>"...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).</i>	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 2022?	
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 2022?	
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 2022?	
15c. Does your organization have a committee or staff person officially overseeing diversity efforts?	
16a. Does your organization conduct an internal employee satisfaction survey?	

Survey Questions	Comments/Instructions
16b. If the answer to #16a is “yes,” how frequently is the employee satisfaction survey conducted?	
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.’	
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?	
The last set of questions are intended to address how the unique circumstances of 2020 have impacted the return to the workplace.	
19. What is your organization’s return to the workplace/in-office policy (e.g., hybrid working policy)?	
20. Which policies (e.g., work from home, flexible work schedules, unlimited PTO, etc.) or initiatives/programs that your organization put in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Bay Area's stay-at-home orders are still in place (in addition to the return-to-work policy described in Q19)? Which policies were removed or modified? If any policies were removed or modified, please explain.	