

“BUDDY CARS”

A Public Safety Proposal to Mitigate
Sexual Harassment & Assault on BART

**TRANSIT SECURITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**



STATUS QUO

Sexual Harassment & Assault on Public Transit Systems

Key Take-Aways

- 1 Community members frequently experience sexual harassment on public transit systems
- 2 Negative experiences are higher with women and transgender individuals
- 3 Sexual harassment isn't usually reported but inhibits use of transit systems



BY THE NUMBERS

Violence Against the Trans Community is Increasing



Physical Violence

- Trans and non-binary respondents experienced 7X the rate of physical violence in California
- Black + Latina trans women reported higher prevalence of battery with a weapon

Sexual Harassment + Assault

- Trans and non-binary respondents experienced 5X the rate of sexual harassment and assault
- Trans women who identify as white or other report higher prevalence of sexual assault

Incidents Go Unreported

- Trans women whose identity was questioned were less likely to report a hate crime to police

(California Violence Experiences Survey, 2023)

(Transphobic Hate Crimes Among Transgender Women in the SF Bay Area, 2021)

BY THE NUMBERS

Perceptions of Safety in Traffic Environments Regarding Sexual Harassment: A Systemic Review



The Experience is Universal

- High frequency of harassment, widespread underreporting and adverse affects on women's safety.
- Harassment changes how women travel
 - Avoidance strategies deterred some passengers from traveling at particular times, by routes and in travel settings that are considered particularly unsafe, or that caused them to completely avoid using public transportation.
- Consistent exposure to transport harassment impacts women's health outside of transit systems
 - Women experience symptoms of poor mental health
 - There is a significant association between sexual harassment and depression
 - Harassment elicits feelings of anger, invasion, humiliation, distress and disempowerment
- Transit harassment further exacerbates gender gaps and disparities

(Invasion of privacy or structural violence? Harassment against women in public transport environments: A systematic review, 2024)

BY THE NUMBERS

Women + Gender Diverse People's Experiences of Sexual Violence on Public Transport



In-Depth Interviews Found:

- Women and gender diverse people experienced significant rates of sexual violence and harassment on public transportation.
- The “everyday” experiences across their lives impacted how they traveled and their confidence in doing so.
- The significant impact of sexual violence and harassment on public transport should be addressed through targeting public transport as a key site for primary prevention of sexual violence and harassment.

(“You’re just constantly on alert”: Women and Gender-Diverse People’s Experiences of Sexual Violence on Public Transport, 2023)

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE RISE IN SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Section in development



WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE?

Individual Level

Section in Development

Societal Level

Section in Development



WHAT ARE OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS DOING ABOUT THIS?

Many major cities have explored cars specifically for women, elders, the differently abled and care givers.

Let's discuss their methodologies, challenges, and successes.



Japan



India



Brazil



Mexico



Malaysia



Columbia

WHAT ARE BUDDY CARS?

Branded train cars that encourage solo travelers, minors, and those at increased risk for sexual harassment and gender based violence to seek out safety in numbers and alert BART staff to safety concerns.



Platform + Car Branding

- Posters in Cars
- Boarding Zone
- Info on Buddy Cars
- “Buddy System”
- Build on + collaborate with past campaigns

Share Safety Info + Tools

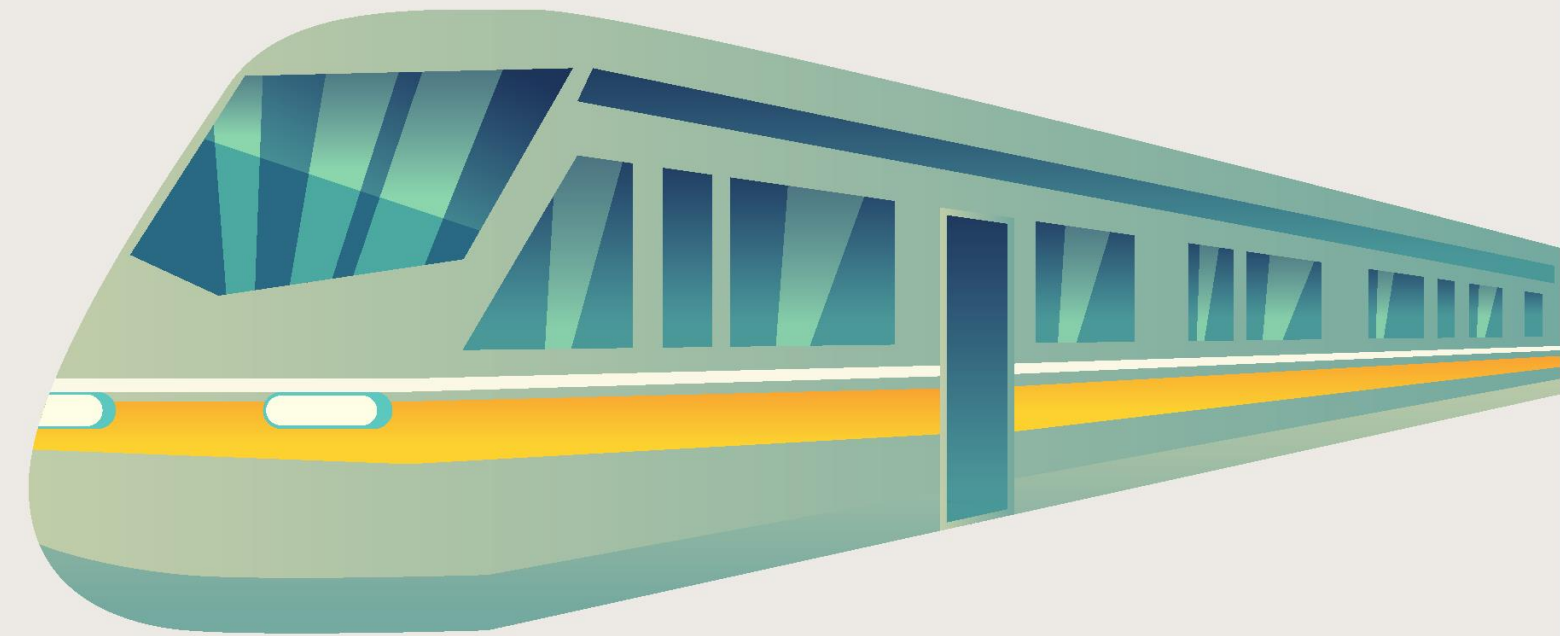
- Encourage Reporting + Asking for BART Support
- Survey Promotion
- Accessible Intervention Strategies for Public
- Encourage support for riders who need assistance

Streamlined Response

- Riders know where they are, even when crowded
- Conductors have eyes on the situation
- Easier to position staff for a response

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Building a “Buddy System”



QUESTIONS?

