

**"Act Now, Not Tomorrow." Understanding &  
Addressing Perceived Safety Risks on Public Transit  
in Metro Vancouver**

**by  
Isaac Brownlee**

Bachelor of Arts (Sociology), University of Calgary, 2020

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Public Policy

in the  
School of Public Policy  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Isaac Brownlee 2024  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
Spring 2024

Copyright in this work is held by the author. Please ensure that any reproduction or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

## Declaration of Committee

**Name:** Isaac Brownlee

**Degree:** Master of Public Policy

**Title:** "Act Now, Not Tomorrow." Understanding & Addressing Perceived Safety Risks on Public Transit in Metro Vancouver

**Committee:**

**Yushu Zhu**

Supervisor

Assistant Professor, Urban Studies and Public Policy

**Genevieve LeBaron**

Committee Member

Professor, Public Policy

## Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016

## **Abstract**

This study examines the public's perceived risk of violent crime on public transit in Metro Vancouver. Despite stable transit violent crime rates, there is growing distrust in the veracity of safety on TransLink services, challenging urban mobility and public safety objectives. Using qualitative interviews to understand the intersectional factors affecting perceived safety, this project investigates what contributes to this disparity between perceived and actual safety, exploring individual's experiences, the presence of transit officials, and the social context's impact on commuter choices.

Key factors influence safety perceptions, including individual experiences on transit, the time and location of transit use, overlapping social issues, and the visibility of TransLink personnel. Fear of victimization is unevenly distributed, and significantly affects and is associated with marginalized groups. Through multi-criteria analysis, and academic and government officials interview insights, I propose transit safety policies that enhance environmental design and address social issues.

**Keywords:** transit policy; criminology; violent crime; public policy; transit safety; public transportation

## **Dedication**

To Katelyn – thanks for tolerating me while I wrote a ton of drafts, conducted interviews, and stressed while finishing synthesizing this research. I love you very much, here is to you!

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my Capstone supervisor, Dr. Yushu Zhu, for her invaluable support, guidance, direction and help throughout the duration of this project. My thanks also go to my colleagues in the 2022-2024 Simon Fraser University School of Public Policy cohort for their insights, comments, and camaraderie. I am also deeply grateful to my family and my friends, for their unwavering encouragement, willingness to lend a hand, and love. Lastly, I thank the Simon Fraser University School of Public Policy faculty, administration, and staff for their assistance, direction, and genuine devotion to our school, this program, and the amazing work, research, and individual policy leaders it has and will continue to produce. This work has been improved and shaped by a committee of those who see the true importance and significance of this work, along with all those who have written this Capstone alongside me. I am truly thankful.

# Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee .....	ii
Ethics Statement .....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Dedication .....	v
Acknowledgements .....	vi
Table of Contents .....	vii
List of Tables .....	x
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Research Questions .....	2
1.2. Scope and Limitations .....	3
1.3. Background .....	3
<b>Chapter 2. Literature Review .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1. Factors in Perception .....	6
2.1.1. User Perspective and Demographics .....	8
2.1.2. Relevant Criminological Theories .....	9
2.1.3. Key Insights .....	11
2.2. What Has Been Done in Vancouver? .....	11
<b>Chapter 3. Research Methodology .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1. Jurisdictional Scan .....	15
3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews .....	15
3.3. Interview Sampling Strategy .....	16
3.3.1. Purposive Sampling (Judgmental Sampling) .....	16
3.3.2. Snowball Sampling .....	17
3.4. Interview Details .....	17
<b>Chapter 4. Jurisdictional Scan: Approaches to Addressing Transit Violence ...</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1. Different Approaches .....	19
4.1.1. Enhanced Guardianship through Law Enforcement, Security, and Specialized Policing .....	19
4.1.2. Mental Health and Homeless Outreach Initiatives .....	20
4.1.3. Infrastructure and Environmental Design .....	21
4.1.4. Community Engagement and Social Services Integration .....	22
4.1.5. Non-Enforcement Focused Programs .....	23
4.2. General Trends and Observations .....	24
<b>Chapter 5. Interview Results .....</b>	<b>26</b>
5.1. Demographics .....	26
5.2. Traditional and Social Media Impact .....	27
5.3. Time, Space, and Lack of Guardianship .....	29
5.4. TransLink Safety Features .....	30

5.5.	Sensitively Addressing Marginalized Groups .....	30
5.6.	Guardianship .....	32
5.7.	Environmental Design.....	32
<b>Chapter 6.</b>	<b>Policy Criteria and Measures Defined.....</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1.	Objective: Efficiency .....	34
6.1.1.	Criteria 1: Effectiveness .....	34
	Measure .....	34
	Rating/Index.....	34
6.1.2.	Criteria 2: Visibility and Awareness .....	35
	Measure .....	35
	Rating/Index.....	35
6.2.	Objective: Equity and Fairness .....	35
6.2.1.	Criteria 1: Inclusive Equity of Benefit .....	35
	Measure .....	36
	Rating/Index.....	36
6.3.	Objective: Budgetary Cost to Government.....	36
6.3.1.	Criteria 1: Program Cost to TransLink .....	36
	Measure .....	37
	Rating/Index.....	37
6.4.	Objective: Administrative Complexity .....	37
6.4.1.	Criteria 1: Feasibility.....	37
	Measure .....	37
	Rating/Index.....	38
6.5.	Objective: Stakeholder Acceptance .....	38
6.5.1.	Criteria 1: Stakeholder Acceptance .....	38
	Measure .....	38
	Rating/Index.....	39
6.6.	Objective: Public Acceptance .....	39
6.6.1.	Criteria 1: Public Acceptance .....	39
	Measure .....	39
	Rating/Index.....	39
<b>Chapter 7.</b>	<b>Policy Options .....</b>	<b>42</b>
7.1.	Policy Option 1: Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non-Police Emergency Response Team .....	42
7.2.	Policy Option 2: Expanding Visible Capable Non-Police Guardianship .....	43
7.3.	Policy Option 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration .....	43
<b>Chapter 8.</b>	<b>Policy Evaluation .....</b>	<b>45</b>
8.1.	Evaluation Methodology .....	45
8.1.1.	Policy Option 1: Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non-Police Emergency Response Team .....	45
	Effectiveness .....	45
	Visibility and Awareness .....	46
	Inclusive Equity of Benefit .....	46
	Program Costs to TransLink.....	47



	Feasibility .....	47
	Stakeholder Acceptance .....	48
	Public Acceptance .....	49
8.1.2.	Policy Option 2: Expanding Visible Capable Non-Police Guardianship... 50	
	Effectiveness .....	50
	Visibility and Awareness .....	51
	Inclusive Equity of Benefit .....	51
	Program Costs to TransLink .....	52
	Feasibility .....	52
	Stakeholder Acceptance .....	53
	Public Acceptance .....	54
8.1.3.	Policy 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration .....	55
	Effectiveness .....	55
	Visibility and Awareness .....	55
	Inclusive Equity of Benefit .....	56
	Program Costs to TransLink .....	56
	Feasibility .....	57
	Stakeholder Acceptance .....	58
	Public Acceptance .....	58
<b>Chapter 9.</b>	<b>Policy Recommendations .....</b>	<b>60</b>
9.1.	Implementation Considerations .....	63
9.1.1.	Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration .....	63
9.1.2.	Training and Recruitment .....	63
9.1.3.	Role of MVTP Community Safety Officers .....	63
9.1.4.	Phased Implementation and Pilot Projects .....	64
9.1.5.	Funding and Budget Allocation .....	64
9.1.6.	Community Involvement and Communication .....	64
9.1.7.	Strategy for Efficient Dispatch and Response .....	65
9.2.	General Considerations .....	65
<b>Chapter 10.</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>References</b> .....		<b>69</b>
<b>Appendix.</b>	<b>Interview Questionnaire Topics and Example Questions .....</b>	<b>82</b>

## List of Tables

Table 1:	Metro Vancouver Transit Safety Infrastructure, Policies, and Programs .	12
Table 2:	Objectives, Criteria and Measures.....	40
Table 3:	Heatmap Matrix Policy Criteria and Measures Analysis.....	59

# Chapter 1. Introduction

The Metro Vancouver public transit system, operated by TransLink, is an essential component of Vancouver's interurban mobility, facilitating efficient transportation across Vancouver's metropolitan areas. However, public safety on TransLink services has become a significant growing public concern, and despite the lack of any increase in violent transit crime rates in Metro Vancouver, there has been a substantial rise in the public's perceived risk of violent crime victimization on TransLink transportation services, both during and since the COVID-19 pandemic (Vescera, 2023).

This growing discrepancy between the actual and perceived safety on Metro Vancouver's public transit system emerges as a significant policy problem that not only fuels public debate and necessitates urgent policy action, but also underscores the critical role of public transit in urban mobility and societal functioning. Recent high-profile transit incidents, including assaults on commuters in Burnaby, a stabbing in New Westminster, and a murder of a teenager in Surrey, have heightened public anxiety and fear, overshadowing that violent crime rates on public transportation have actually declined in recent years (Devlin, 2023; Hasegawa, 2023; Seyd, 2023). This growing divergence between reality and perception not only undermines public trust in the transit system, potentially leading to decreased ridership and operational revenue, but also jeopardizes broader urban mobility and sustainability goals (Griffin, 2023). If individuals are afraid to use the transit system, some may resort to less sustainable modes of transportation like private vehicles, increasing traffic congestion and pollution. Public transit is crucial for those without private transportation options, and feelings of unsafety can restrict their mobility and access to essential opportunities, worsening social disparities (Loxton et al., 2019; Women Abuse Council of Toronto, 2022).

The challenge of improving public transit safety is involving not just actual safety enhancements but also changing perceptions and rebuilding trust among users (Nino, 2023). This issue involves various stakeholders, including different government levels overseeing transportation, infrastructure, and public safety; law enforcement, the criminal justice system, transit users, advocacy groups, and businesses - each with distinct priorities. Transit-dependent individuals like students, low-income earners, and people with disabilities, face daily impacts from safety issues. Government bodies manage and

provide transit services and public safety, advocacy groups push for urban safety and social justice, and businesses rely on a secure and efficient public transit system for their profitable operations. This multi-faceted situation underscores the importance of collaborative efforts to address both the reality and perception of safety on public transit.

This policy issue is challenging, lying not only in addressing the fear that potentially limits commuters' use of the transit system, threatening sustainability and urban mobility, but also in understanding and addressing the underlying factors that contribute to this risk perception (Kulkarni, 2023a; Vescera, 2023). To bridge the gap between actual and perceived safety levels, we need an interdisciplinary approach; and by exploring innovative policy interventions, we can address concerns, boost user confidence, and enhance real public safety and social outcomes.

## **1.1. Research Questions**

This study is guided by two research questions:

1. What are the underlying factors contributing to the perceived safety risks in Metro Vancouver's transit system?

This question seeks to uncover the multifaceted reasons behind the heightened fear among transit users, despite statistical evidence suggesting a decrease in actual violent crimes on the transit system.

2. How can policymakers best address this perceived risk to enhance transit safety and user confidence?

Exploring actionable strategies and policy interventions may bridge the gap between perception and reality, thereby improving the overall safety and security of the transit environment.

In addressing these questions, the study will analyze the nature and factors contributing to the perceived risk of violent crime in Vancouver's transit system to identify key drivers such as media portrayal, personal experiences, and social dynamics that influence public perception. I will evaluate the efficacy of traditional policy responses in addressing these risks, through an assessment of current safety measures and policies. Finally, I

will recommend policy solutions that not only address the current gaps in safety measures but also anticipate future challenges in urban transit safety.

## **1.2. Scope and Limitations**

This study acknowledging several limitations. It is geographically limited to Metro Vancouver, restricting its broader application to other cities with differing socio-economic and geographic features. Although I seek to include a wide range of stakeholder perspectives, it may not fully represent the experiences and views of less vocal or marginalized communities. The research also faces challenges related to the availability and accuracy of public perception data. Predicting the effectiveness of suggested policy measures is difficult due to the complex and changing nature of safety concerns. Furthermore, the study operates within the existing domains of public policy, urban studies, and criminology, which might not cover all factors affecting safety perceptions. Despite these constraints, the research offers important insights into perceived safety on Metro Vancouver's transit and lays the groundwork for future investigations.

## **1.3. Background**

Policy impacts on transit users and broader society reveals a complex interplay of factors. The media's portrayal of crime, often focusing on sensational attacks on transit, can amplify public fear and distort perceptions of safety risks (McKnight, 2022; Phillips, 2017). This phenomenon, akin to other 'moral panics,' might exaggerate the sense of danger among the public, even when actual crime rates have not significantly increased (Manning et al., 2022; Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023a; Wood, 2023). Vancouver City Manager Paul Mochrie noted in 2021 that the media's favour for fear-based reporting exacerbates negative perceptions of crime (Mochrie, 2021). Despite stable or declining crime rates, this crime perception has grown, especially since 2021, and Vancouver received considerable media attention for transit violence in 2023 alone (Vescera, 2023).

Despite recent incidents, violent crime rates on Vancouver's public transportation have generally been declining. In 2022, "crimes against persons" reported to Metro Vancouver Transit Police (MVTP) rose by 15%, including a 24% increase in assaults over 2021 (Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023a). However, this increase occurred

alongside a 46% post-pandemic ridership surge, leading to a 33% drop in the rate of crimes against persons per 100,000 boardings from 2021 to 2022. Additionally, while there were 1,576 "crimes against persons" (i.e. crimes against individuals, like assault; instead of property crimes, such as theft) reported in 2022, this number is lower than the peak of 2,056 crimes in 2016 (0.53 crimes per 100,000 passengers), and this rate fell from 2016 until 2019 (0.47 in 2017, 0.46 in 2018, and 0.37 in 2019) and represents a fluctuation from the previous two years (1,376 in 2021 (0.61), 1,456 in 2020 (0.66)) (McSheffrey, 2023; Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023a). Crime volumes decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, but only increased between 2021 and 2022 as a correlate of increased passenger ridership during that same period. (McSheffrey, 2023). This trend of decreasing crime rates is consistent with broader national and global patterns observed since the early 2000s (Statista, 2023). While Vancouver's overall violent crime rate has remained relatively stable since 2019, the rate in 2022 was level with 2013 and 2014 levels, and significantly lower (15-33% less) than the rates between 2002 and 2012 (Vancouver Police Department, 2021a, 2021b, 2024)

The historical context of this policy issue reveals that concerns over safety in public transit are not new but have intensified in recent times, with a 50% increase in concerns since 2019 (McElhanney et al., 2020; TransLink, 2020). While only 25% of Canadians feel fully unsafe on transit, women were most likely to worry about their safety, as 65% of women said they feel less safe or somewhat less safe, compared to 50% of men. Meanwhile, more than 66% of Vancouver's transit users feel unsafe while transiting (Ipsos, 2023; Kergin, 2023). This is substantially greater than the average in B.C., where 50% of commuters said they felt unsafe on transit (Yun, 2023). This is also a marked increase in feelings of risk over the past decade as only 26% of people said they felt unsafe on TransLink services in 2012 (Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2014). Overall in Canada, noting the recent violent incidents, 35% of people felt less safe, and 23% felt somewhat less safe on transit in 2023, when compared to 2022 (Yun, 2023).

In 2019, TransLink experienced a record-breaking year with 453 million total boardings, marking a 3.6% increase from the previous year (CBC News, 2020). However, the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 significantly impacted ridership, with a decrease by 52%, translating to only 219 million boardings (Chan, 2021). As conditions improved, 2022 saw a substantial recovery with ridership bouncing back to 80% of pre-pandemic levels, a 48% increase over 2021, positioning TransLink as a leader in

ridership recovery amongst Canadian public transit agencies (Kulkarni, 2023b). The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) & Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) recently highlighted concerns that fear of violence could undermine the recovery and growth of public transit ridership post-pandemic (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023; Nino, 2023; Richardson, 2023). In response, ATU called for the establishment of a national task force in April 2023 to tackle the escalating issue of transit violence (Draaisma, 2023). CUTA then released 27 safety recommendations, which focus on improving customer and staff safety, addressing substance use in transit areas, enhancing housing support, collaborating with mental health professionals, and increasing the number of peace officers, special constables, and police officers on transit (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023)

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

This literature review encompasses a range of interdisciplinary sources, including environmental design, community engagement, and criminological theories, augmented by a jurisdictional scan of transit systems globally and insights from over 50 years of transit crime and safety literature (Ceccato et al., 2022).

### 2.1. Factors in Perception

The study of safety and security within transit environments with particular focus on the perceptions of risk associated with violent crime has been extensively explored by transit crime scholars Andrew Newton and Vania Ceccato. Their pivotal work, highlighted in the book chapter “Theoretical Perspectives of Safety and Security in Transit Environments” from *Safety and Security in Transit Environments: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, comprehensively reviews the literature, and highlights themes affecting both actual and perceived safety on public transit (Newton & Ceccato, 2015). Newton and Ceccato acknowledge the limitations of traditional criminological and security theories in directly applying to transit systems, and advocate for a tailored conceptual framework that specifically addresses the subtleties of public transport systems.

A main insight from their research and the broader literature is the nuanced role of police presence. Increased policing can foster a sense of security, reduce crime perception, and deter crime, especially when efforts are focused on specific times, areas, and types of crime (Dau et al., 2023). However, these results are more pronounced when visible policing targets small geographic locations (like transit hubs) where crime is concentrated (College of Policing, 2021). These impacts vary across community groups, particularly affecting marginalized groups who may feel further alienated or unsafe due to past negative encounters with law enforcement (Bharoocha, 2023.; Marchesan & Talbot, 2023; Nicholson & McQuillan, 2023). The literature and recent studies also advocate for a targeted, evidence-based approach to police deployment in transit environments. Such strategies should deter crime but also build trust with the communities they serve, especially in those who have been historically marginalized (Transit Center, 2021). The literature thus highlights the importance of



considering the diverse experiences and perceptions of transit users when implementing public safety measures.

Traditional and social media outlets increasingly have the power to amplify transit safety concerns, often portraying a skewed perspective that is misaligned with true crime rates (Itoi, 2023; Kania & Walsh, 1993). Media portrayal of violent crime, characterized by sensationalism and selective reporting, often exacerbates fears, and misrepresents actual risks to transit users (Birkbeck, 2014). The effect of such representations is twofold: one, increased awareness about genuine safety concerns; two, inflating the sense of public risk by portraying crime as more pervasive than what is recorded, potentially deterring transit use and negatively impacting perceptions of public spaces (Kim, 2018). The rise of social media has introduced a new dimension to this dynamic, where the spread of information—and misinformation—occurs rapidly and with little control (Meserole, 2018). The virality of certain stories, regardless of their accuracy and despite an individual's personal experiences, can significantly heighten the public perceptions of risk as they are often presented without the counterbalance of contextual understanding or statistical evidence (Alrasheed et al., 2022; Vijaykumar et al., 2015).

Broader social contexts, racism, classism, and visible poverty, significantly influence how people perceive crime in transit environments. When social standing, racial and class perceptions intersects, it often distorts the criminal justice system response (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1997). As a result, punitive policies, like incarceration or aggressive police responses, are often disproportionately applied to those who are racialized, marginalized, or low socioeconomic status. This is exacerbated in areas marked by visible poverty, often associated with higher crime rates, but this correlation does not always translate to actual increases in crime or accurate crime rates (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1997; Sharkey et al., 2017). The complex relationship between poverty and crime becomes unambiguous in the context of homelessness within transit stations. Transit systems often serve as makeshift shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness, presenting unique safety challenges that can lead to feelings of unsafety and conflicts if left unaddressed (Nino, 2023; The Homeless Hub, 2020). Further, the overarching social fabric, defined by norms, values, and the cultural construction of what is permissible and what is criminal plays a central role in how people perceived their own risk in the transit system. This social construction is influenced by historical, cultural, legal and social factors, alongside personal experiences and socio-emotional concerns,

underscores the nuanced, complex reality of how crime risk is perceived and operationalized (Ambrey et al., 2014; Hartnagel, 1979; Lee et al., 2020; Manning et al., 2022).

### **2.1.1. User Perspective and Demographics**

The perception of safety and fear of crime on public transit is deeply influenced by personal vulnerability and environmental cues and varies significantly by demographic group. Perceived safety risks are one of the most influential factors in women's transit decisions, and fear of experiencing harassment impacts how, when, and which type of transit women use (International Transit Forum, 2018). The physical design of transit stations, especially bus stops, can heighten the anxiety among women because of their desolate locations, absence of appropriate lighting, and the lack of formal and informal surveillance (Women Abuse Council of Toronto, 2022). Research suggests women have distinct safety and security needs, are often fearful of certain transit environments and frequently adjust their behaviour and travel patterns to avoid them, including avoiding certain routes or stops or transiting at certain times of day (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2014). This is especially true for certain groups of women who feel more vulnerable to victimization and harassment than others (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2009). For women, the risk of physical aggression, sexual harassment, and unwelcome behaviour heightens their fear and anxiety when using transit, affecting their mobility, and reinforcing societal inequalities (Ceccato, 2017). This gender-specific vulnerability necessitates incorporating safety measures that ensure their freedom and right to mobility without worrying that a 'wrong choice' of mode, transit setting, or time of travel might have consequences for their safety (Loukaitou-Sideris, 2014).

Racialized individuals, particularly Black and Indigenous people, have notably lower confidence in police services due to experiences of discrimination, societal biases, and racism in the criminal justice system (Cotter, 2022). This lack of confidence, double that of non-Indigenous and non-visible minority groups, highlights the importance of developing inclusive safety strategies within transit systems to address their concerns. Similarly, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals experience a higher risk of violent crime victimization than their heterosexual peers, impacting their willingness to use public transit, especially at night (Ceccato & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2022; Galvan, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2018). Additionally, older adults (65+) report greater fear of crime, even though they are

significantly less likely to be victimized than younger Canadians (Conroy & Sutton, 2022).

The literature reveals that encounters with transit crime often leads to changes in travel behavior, causing tangible impacts on daily life (Heinen, 2023). The perception of transit crime risk is usually shaped by the actual and perceived levels of crime in these settings, with discrepancies between perceived and actual crime rates significantly influencing individuals' feelings of safety (Ambrey et al., 2014; Newton, 2014). Most individuals perceive their local crime rate as far greater than the real rate, and this gap between perceived and real crime is widening as real crime rates fall faster than how crime is perceived (Ambrey et al., 2014; Manning & Fleming, 2017). This gap undermines the how feeling safe on transit is a fundamental need of all travelers and underscores the importance of addressing safety issues perceptions to ensure the freedom of movement for all individuals (Ceccato, 2017; Ceccato et al., 2022).

Studies illustrate the significance and efficacy of community involvement in implementing safety measures, suggesting individuals with diverse perceptions and intersectional experiences should actively shape their transit experience in accordance with their diverse needs (Transit Center, 2021). A 2022 literature review emphasized adopting an intersectional approach of transit safety policy interventions that recognizes the complex interplay of various factors that influence both real and perceived safety (Ceccato et al., 2022). Tailoring safety measures to address the unique safety concerns of women, racialized individuals, LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, and older adults is essential for creating a welcoming and secure transit environment that encourages independence, mobility, and active participation in urban life.

### **2.1.2. Relevant Criminological Theories**

Crime pattern theory views transit settings as ecosystems with three main components: nodes (active spaces like stations), paths (travel routes), and edges (boundaries of the transit environment) (Newton, 2014). Potential offenders and victims intersect in 'nodes', designating transit stations as places of criminogenic (or crime-creating) activity (Irvin-Erickson & La Vigne, 2015; Newton, 2014). This theory emphasizes time geography, which considers how offenders utilize transit mobility for their benefit (e.g. they can escape by train after committing an offence), and examines

the socio-economic surroundings of transit systems, suggesting one must understand the broader context in which transit systems operate to better understand the frequency of crime in these settings (Ceccato et al., 2022). Transit nodes are viewed both as crime attractors and generators, highlighting the dual role transit environments play in attracting offenders with their visibility and accessibility, creating well-known, inadvertent opportunities for crime, and creating challenges to security and safety due to the turnover and fluctuation of individuals and transit vehicles present at stations (Irvin-Erickson & La Vigne, 2015; Wortley & Tilley, 2014).

Congruently, the routine activities theory proposes conditions under which transit crime is most likely to occur—when a motivated offender finds a suitable target without the deterrence of a capable guardian (Newton, 2014; Newton & Ceccato, 2015). As transit is dynamically populated, the fluctuating and inconsistent presence of ‘guardians’ like police and security, alongside the sheer volume of passengers (often suitable crime targets), amplifies crime opportunities as these three aspects converge in time and space in transit environments (Irvin-Erickson & La Vigne, 2015; Newton & Ceccato, 2015). This approach argues that visible ‘capable guardianship’ may prevent criminal behaviour.

The spatial and temporal aspects of transit crime reveal the nuance of how distinct factors contribute to crime rates. The activity (or busyness) level, accessibility of stations, and their connectivity to urban centres are significant predictors of crime, with certain station characteristics—such as distance from a city’s centre or socio-economic status of the surroundings—significantly correlating with crime outcomes like robbery (Irvin-Erickson & La Vigne, 2015). Temporal patterns show crime rates fluctuate by times of day, suggesting that stations assume different nodal and place-based crime-generating and crime-attracting characteristics that vary by crime type and time (Ceccato & Uittenbogaard, 2013). Viewing temporality differently, other researchers emphasize the entire transit journey in crime, including the time spent walking to and waiting in transit stations, not just the time transiting (Ceccato et al., 2022).

The design elements and management of transit environments, through the lens of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), emerge as a pivotal method of mitigating crime and enhancing safety perceptions. CPTED design principles include natural surveillance, achieved by strategic lighting and layout designs, natural

access control via barriers, territorial reinforcement to delineate public and private spaces, activity support (e.g. surveillance by fellow passengers), and diligent maintenance by place managers (e.g. individuals like TransLink employees) responsible for overseeing and maintaining the safety and proper use of specific locations (Zahm, 2007b)). Researchers postulate that integrating these design elements create transit environments that are both safe and perceived as such. ASU's Center for Problem-Oriented Policing's work on CPTED emphasizes the value of engaging area residents, employees, and users in the environmental analysis and planning process of CPTED-focused infrastructure changes (Zahm, 2007a).

### **2.1.3. Key Insights**

In summary, the policy problem surrounding safety on Metro Vancouver's transit system is characterized by complex historical, social, and legal factors, compounded by public perception and media influence. The literature highlights the importance of considering the entire transit journey when addressing safety and crime perceptions, the need for a comprehensive approach that includes not only policing but also social supports and mental health services, and addresses issues like homelessness, media influence, and social context (Ceccato, 2017; Newton & Ceccato, 2015).

## **2.2. What Has Been Done in Vancouver?**

Policy development, including the legal and regulatory framework has evolved over time, and involves key stakeholders like Public Safety Canada, the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, TransLink, and Metro Vancouver Transit Police (MVTP), established in 2005 – a unique force in Canada dedicated to transit safety with standard policing powers (Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023b). The policy objectives of these managing organizations have centred on enhancing public safety, bolstering public confidence in transit systems, promoting increased ridership, and supporting urbanization and social mobility (B.C. Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General & Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2023; Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023a; Public Safety Canada, 2023; TransLink, 2022). The primary means by which they have done this, through the MVTP and TransLink, is the following:

**Table 1: Metro Vancouver Transit Safety Infrastructure, Policies, and Programs**

Type	Description
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Designated Waiting Areas	All SkyTrain platforms feature well-lit areas with benches, emergency phones, and CCTV monitoring.
Emergency Cabinets	Located on SkyTrain platforms, each cabinet features emergency phones, fire extinguishers, and train stop buttons.
GPS Trackers	TransLink provides real-time transit info via mobile services, an interactive system map, and a Bus Tracker using GPS data for live bus locations.
Live Radio & PA Systems	TransLink services are equipped with live radio and Public Address systems.
Security Cameras (CCTV)	CCTV cameras at TransLink stations facilitate swift emergency response and incident recording.
Speakerphones	Phones near the doors in each SkyTrain car enable passengers to request urgent assistance from SkyTrain operators.
Yellow Strip Silent Alarm	Alarms on every SkyTrain car window, when pressed, alert SkyTrain control.
<b>Policies</b>	
Public Safety Plan – MVTP 2022-2026 Strategic Plan	MVTP's policing strategy looks to enhance public safety, reduces risk perception, and addresses ongoing issues.
Request a Stop	Passengers can request nightly stops between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., with drivers finding safe drop-off spots.
Rules and Regulations	A comprehensive set of rules and regulations are posted on every transit vehicle to remind passengers of the safety and security rules on transit.
SkyTrain Expansion Program Station Access and Safety Project	A TransLink initiative that looks to ensure safety and access at and around stations.
2022 Transport 2050: 10 Year Priorities Report	The report prioritizes transit safety improvements, including seating and lighting, with TransLink proposing enhancements through civilian security, community safety officers, and MVTP and security measures to ensure a safe, secure, and welcoming public transit environment.
<b>Programs</b>	
Emergency Contact	Passengers can contact Transit Police by calling 604.515.8300 or texting 87.77.77 for non-emergencies.
Metro Vancouver Transit Police (MVTP)	The only dedicated transit police service in Canada, mandated to ensure the safety of customers and employees across the transit network. The MVTP respond to 911 calls for service on transit services, in conjunction with other police departments that have jurisdiction in the region, including the RCMP, Vancouver, Surrey, and North Vancouver Police.
Transit Alerts Program	A TransLink program where passengers can sign up to receive personalized alerts for their favourite routes and stations.
TransLink Transit Security	Provides high-visibility mobile, foot, and bike patrols throughout Metro Vancouver's transit system, enforcing the Transit Tariff, transit rules, regulations, and bylaws.

Sources: Alerts | TransLink, 2021.; How Do We Keep People Safe on Metro Vancouver Transit?, 2024.; Safety and Security, 2024.; Transit Security | TransLink, 2024.; TransLink Rules and Regulations, n.d.; Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2023; TransLink, 2022

However, the implementation of these policies faces challenges, including delayed response times, understaffing due to the transit network size (with 184 MVTP officers mandated to protect 1,800 square kilometres, 1000 buses and 85 SkyTrains at any given time), and public safety efforts primarily targeting marginalized populations (Grant, 2022; McSheffrey, 2023). In the 2022 Transport 2050: 10 Year Priorities Report, TransLink identified:

Social equity is a key strategic lens to bring to these 10-Year Priorities – ensuring that disadvantaged communities see greater benefit from these investments. Discussions in focus groups with disadvantaged communities identified specific gaps in their transit experience around safety, security and comfort while accessing stops and stations, waiting for transit to arrive, and riding aboard transit. These gaps require urgent attention to reduce barriers and make transit more accessible for everyone. (TransLink, 2022)

The current policy landscape is dynamic, as TransLink plans to address these communities' public safety concerns through bus stop improvements, transit exchange upgrades, station upgrades to lighting, seating, and accessibility, and station area and transit corridor planning (TransLink, 2022, 2024c). Premier David Eby recently pledged to deploy new teams of prosecutors, police, and probation officers in twelve B.C. cities in efforts to combat known violent offenders (CBC News, 2023). Additionally, in April 2023, when questioned in B.C. Legislature by BC United leader Kevin Falcon about the need to improve safety on transit, Premier David Eby responded with several measures, explaining some were newly in place:

[TransLink is] bringing on 24 Community Safety Officers to increase security on our transit system. The RCMP and transit police are stepping up their presence and patrols on the transit system. (Sajan, 2023).

The introduction of 24 additional Community Safety Officers equipped with specialized training in mental health awareness, crisis de-escalation, and community policing represents a measure to improve security (Ali, 2023). MVTP also redeployed officers who usually work on the community engagement team and other specialty teams to front-line patrols and MVTP stated they were collaborating with other regional police departments and the RCMP to coordinate additional patrols on buses and trains, and at busy transit hubs. (Ali, 2023; Lazaruk, 2023). Despite these changes and redeployments, Unifor, a union that represents thousands of B.C. public transit workers asked Transportation Minister Rob Fleming for more police resources (Matassa-Fung, 2023). Both Eby and B.C. Public Safety Minister Mike Farnworth stated their readiness

to provide additional resources as needed, but Farnsworth stressed the existing safety measures on transit available, as laid out above (McSheffrey, 2023; Sajan, 2023). Farnsworth said violent crime on transit systems is an issue many provinces across the country are grappling with, and in response, B.C., in conjunction with Public Safety Canada expanded reverse onus (effective January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024) for granting bail to prolific or dangerous offenders, where the accused person must convince the court that they should be released, rather than detained, while awaiting their trial, which previously only applied to serious cases involving murder, attempted murder, and other Criminal Code firearms violations (Department of Justice Canada, 2023; Sajan, 2023).

The efficacy and appropriateness of police-centred responses in addressing safety perceptions on Metro Vancouver's transit system has been met with criticism. Critics, highlighting the broader issue of addressing the root causes of public safety concerns, argue that earlier interventions, particularly in housing and drug use, could offer more effective solutions to the growing fear among transit users (Kulkarni, 2023a). Elenore Sturko, B.C. United's mental-health and addictions critic, in April 2023 argued for integrating mental-health outreach teams within MVTP, providing support for emergency co-response police and social worker teams, often referred to as a "Dual Dispatch" models in other jurisdictions (Lazaruk, 2023).

This context reveals a pronounced research gap in understanding the unique challenges faced by Metro Vancouver's transit system. While general principles of transit safety and crime prevention are well-established (Newton & Ceccato, 2015), there is an urgent need for research that accounts for Metro Vancouver's specific issues. As fear escalates amidst Vancouver's broader social challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis, the toxic drug epidemic, visible homelessness, and mental health issues, so is amplified the perceived risk of victimization. While recent policy efforts have begun to recognize the importance of these factors, their effectiveness remains a subject of debate, and appropriately addressing these challenges demands an intersectional approach and the development of innovative safety policies that draw on context-specific research, local insights, and integrated global knowledge.



## **Chapter 3. Research Methodology**

This study adopts qualitative methods, including a jurisdictional scan and semi-structured interviews.

### **3.1. Jurisdictional Scan**

Recent transit violence in Toronto and Calgary, particularly since 2021, illustrates that Vancouver's safety challenges are both unique to its social and physical context in the Lower Mainland, but are also part of a broader trend of increasing public concern over safety on transit systems (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023; The Canadian Press, 2023; Yun, 2023). This situation underscores the value of conducting a comparative analysis by identifying other jurisdictions facing similar issues in population density, urban dynamics, and transit infrastructure, to draw policy inspiration that could be effectively adapted for Metro Vancouver. This provided the rationale and general methodological approach to the jurisdictional scan conducted.

By conducting this targeted scan of cities like Philadelphia with its SEPTA system and New York's MTA 2022 Subway Safety Plan—both recognized for their metropolitan significance, and struggles with transit violence—insights into a variety of strategies being implemented to combat these safety concerns were provided (Government of New York, 2022; Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), 2023). The jurisdictions selected share socio-economic challenges, such as high living costs and drug-related crises, highlighting the widespread nature of transit safety issues and the intersectional factors contributing to them in Canada and the U.S. (Griffin, 2023). The findings of this jurisdictional scan were then grouped by the theme and type of response being implemented in each jurisdiction.

### **3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews**

This methodology was chosen for its capacity to delve into the intricacies of individual's perceptions of safety within Metro Vancouver's transit environment. It provided the flexibility needed to pursue follow-up questions or themes that arose from participant responses, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of perceptions. The

selection and development of this methodology was based on the detailed literature review, which supplied essential background information that informed the interview questions drafting.

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather direct accounts of how safe transit users feel and expert opinions on crime prevention and safety strategies. This method allowed for a deep dive into the factors that affect people's sense of safety and security when using transit, combining real-life experiences with theoretical concepts. This resulted in a detailed understanding that could not be achieved by just analyzing secondary data, as these findings were based on the daily experiences of those who use Metro Vancouver's transit system. Following Rubin & Rubin's guidelines, the interviews were designed to encourage open and honest conversations by building rapport with participants and a trusting environment, where individuals felt comfortable sharing their experiences and views (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Active listening was key, capturing not just the responses but also the nuances of tone, emotion, and body language. This approach greatly improved the quality of the data collected and its analysis.

### **3.3. Interview Sampling Strategy**

The study employed a mixed sampling approach, combining purposive non-probability and snowball techniques to gather a wide and more representative variety of viewpoints. The selection of these individuals was deliberate, guided by the need to obtain insights from their varied perspectives on the research questions. Each participant was chosen based on their unique experiences and areas of expertise, and all were believed to significantly be able to contribute to understanding safety perceptions on the TransLink system.

#### **3.3.1. Purposive Sampling (Judgmental Sampling)**

Purposive sampling was the non-probability sampling method used in this qualitative research project to initially select the specific group(s) of individuals who held expertise, experience or authoritative positions on transit public safety, risk perception lived experience, urban mobility, or relevant policymaking in Metro Vancouver. The rationale of employing purposive sampling was to ensure that data collected was precise and accurate, and came from highly-credible and informed sources, crucial for

conducting a robust analysis aligned with the research objectives. These participants were identified through public contact information and networks. The groups sampled were the following:

- I. **Academics:** Selected based on academic background, topic expertise, research, and experience related to transit safety, urban mobility, and related policy domains and initiatives.
- II. **Government Organization Representatives:** Selected based on employment responsibilities, institutional knowledge, and experience working government programming and initiatives concerning public safety on transit, urban mobility, and policing.
- III. **Transit Users:** Selected based on their frequent usage of the TransLink system within the past year, further delineated by users over 18 years of age.

### **3.3.2. Snowball Sampling**

Additional participants were identified through the snowball sampling method, where existing participants recruited among their acquaintances. Snowball sampling was useful in accessing additional, diverse perspectives by leveraging the networks of the initial participants to connect with other recommended potential individuals with relevant knowledge or experience, thus enriching the comprehensiveness of the data collected. Combining sampling methods aimed to enhance the robustness and validity of the findings by balancing the insights obtained from both methods to best inform the research's resulting analysis and policy recommendations.

### **3.4. Interview Details**

The rationale behind this purposive selection was to ensure that each interview would yield valuable data directly pertinent to the study's objectives. The academics were chosen due to their extensive research in urban policy and criminology, offering a theoretical perspective that complemented the practical insights of transit users. Academics, along with government representatives were also positioned to best understand the Vancouver's current public safety context and provide potential policy

solutions, and alternative frameworks that address perceived violent crime risks. These expert interviews, alongside insights from transit user interviews focusing on key factors like fear, worry, and perceived risk of victimization, informed the selection of jurisdictions to review for potential policy solutions. This integrated approach both guided the identification of alternative policy options and helped broaden awareness of other relevant jurisdictional cases, offering additional perspectives on improving perceived public safety. Similarly, the transit users provided a user-level view of safety perceptions that reflected diverse experiences and views in understanding on what drives fear or perceived risk of victimization. This scope aimed to involve people from diverse backgrounds, positionalities, and lived experiences to ensure that any resulting proposed policy options addressed as many individuals' experiences and perception of safety as possible.

The project consisted of twelve semi-structured interviews: five with academics, four with transit users, and three with government representatives of public safety departments. These formal interviews of 20-25 questions reviewed several topics, including general transit usage, personal safety experiences of transit users, perceptions of safety and risk, evaluating current safety measure efficacy, and suggestions for improvements of safety perception. These interviews were deemed to be of minimal risk and were conducted with the prior written or verbal informed consent of the participant, in accordance with SFU University Research Ethics Board Study Protocol #30002085. The interviews, conducted over Microsoft Teams between November 2023 and January 2024, were digitally recorded and transcribed, then reviewed, edited, and securely stored in the SFU Microsoft 365 OneDrive. 'Jottings' were also taken to note key insights and themes, with the interviewee's consent. Wherever a quote is provided that is not specifically cited or attributed, it is derived these original interview transcripts. Quotes have been minimally edited to remove verbal fillers and for grammar to ensure enhanced coherence.

## **Chapter 4. Jurisdictional Scan: Approaches to Addressing Transit Violence**

The diverse approaches taken by these cities reflect the complexity of transit violence, necessitating policies that enhance the actual and public perception of safety in transit systems. Strategies range from increased policing and community engagement initiatives to structural modifications of the transit environment, offering a rich array of potentially adaptable solutions for Metro Vancouver's specific safety needs (Ceccato et al., 2022; Transit Center, 2021).

### **4.1. Different Approaches**

#### **4.1.1. Enhanced Guardianship through Law Enforcement, Security, and Specialized Policing**

Several cities have increased their focus on oversight and guardianship, incorporating safety programs alongside traditional police presence. In Toronto, over 50 TTC security guards with advanced training in mental health first aid and crisis intervention were recently added, accompanied by the enhanced police presence of 80 additional Toronto Police Service officers for system-wide high-visibility patrolling (Jackson, 2023). The TTC also updated its schedules to ensure an increased employee presence in crime 'hotspots' and during peak travel times (Toronto Transit Commission, 2023b). Moreover, the TTC planned to hire up to 50 Special Constables focused on de-escalation and mental health in 2023 (Toronto Transit Commission, 2023a).

Similarly, Seattle's Sound Transit recently nearly doubled its unarmed guard patrols to reduce response times, redeploying them to stations with higher crimes rates (Lindblom, 2023). Seattle also introduced the Community Assisted Response and Engagement (CARE) team of civilian mental health responders in 2023, who are dispatched simultaneously with police to relevant calls (Barnett, 2023).

Calgary has notably increased its security presence, tripling their security guards (from 8 to 24) and expanding police and community peace officer's overnight patrols from 4 to 7 nights a week (Dryden, 2023). Calgary also spent \$5.9 million CAD in emergency funding for a 25% increase in Transit community peace officers, to provide

more strategic, less intensive policing (City of Calgary Intergovernmental & Corporate Strategy, 2024; The City of Calgary, 2023)

#### **4.1.2. Mental Health and Homeless Outreach Initiatives**

Cities in North America are taking compassionate and innovative steps to address mental health and homelessness within their transit systems. These efforts involve deploying specialized teams, increasing psychiatric, shelter, and housing resources, and prioritizing engagement and support over traditional enforcement to ensure user safety and comfort. New York City's Subway Safety Plan includes Joint Response Teams comprising personnel from the Department of Health, the Department of Homeless Services, the NYPD, and community groups (NBC New York, 2022). These teams provide comprehensive care and support to homeless individuals in the subway system, included expanding psychiatric and shelter beds and help from mental health professionals (Government of New York, 2022). This initiative aligns with the NYC Housing First model, which prioritizes moving people into permanent housing with necessary support, proven to be a cost-effective solution for homelessness (City & State NY, 2022; Hutchinson, 2023).

Portland's TriMet has established a Safety Response Team, highlighting a similar vision of integrating social service specialists' collaboration with police officers at high-volume stations (Mass Transit, 2022). Other TriMet initiatives include piloting non-police response resources, like mobile transit crisis intervention teams, to address mental and behavioural health issues (Mass Transit, 2020). Additionally, Seattle's Community Safety and Communications Center (CSCC) plan to hire six mental health responders and a clinical supervisor to respond to welfare checks and 'person down' calls (Nerbovig, 2023). Seattle's CARE program also assists in the provision of outreach services by adding civilian mental health professionals into the 911 emergency response (Housen, 2023).

Toronto's Community Crisis Service (TCCS) engages directly with homeless individuals through Community Safety Ambassadors, who liaise with Toronto's Streets to Homes workers to provide targeted outreach services by creating trusting relationships and finding permanent housing, as part of Toronto's broader push for community safety (City of Toronto, 2023b). Toronto's Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (M-DOT) program

also provides case workers and health care professionals to individuals requiring more complex and longer-term supports who shelter in transit stations (City of Toronto, 2023a).

Similarly, LA Metro Ambassadors conduct homelessness outreach, focusing on providing support and services to the homeless population within the transit system, aligning with broader city efforts to address homelessness through compassionate engagement and support (Radin, 2023). This approach reflects Philadelphia's recently introduced SAVE program, which pairs police and social workers to provision support services to vulnerable individuals on the transit system, a co-response approach emphasizing engagement, relationship-building, and transition into care (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), 2023).

#### **4.1.3. Infrastructure and Environmental Design**

Cities also focus on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to enhance transit safety. Calgary recently committed to CPTED by upgrading the CTrain system with downtown platform lighting improvements for visibility and aiding clear CCTV capture, PA announcements about surveillance, increased cleaning of stations, and rapid vandalism response (The City of Calgary, 2023). These measures align with strategic environmental changes, including removing benches to minimize loitering.

Toronto and Seattle reveal a shared focus on infrastructural safety enhancements. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) has installing improved camera systems within stations and on vehicles as part of a broader strategy to ensure safe and secure operations (Jackson, 2023). Similarly, Seattle has prioritized lighting for visibility and fencing upgrades at high-crime stations to secure vulnerable areas (Lindblom, 2023).

LA Metro recently completed the significant Venice Boulevard Safety and Mobility Project to reimagine one of LA's busiest transit hubs to enhance public safety by augmenting lighting, security cameras, and improving the metro, bus, and bike infrastructure (LA Metro Media Relations, 2023).

#### **4.1.4. Community Engagement and Social Services Integration**

This scan highlights the importance of integrating social services into security measures to reduce unnecessary police contact and direct individuals to appropriate support services. Portland’s TriMet launched their Safety Response Team in September 2021, who are trained in crisis response and management, engages with riders to discourage inappropriate behaviour, assist those in need on or near the transit system, and provides social service outreach and provides referrals to health care, housing, mental health, and addiction services (Mass Transit, 2022). TriMet also dissolved six police positions, redirecting funding to community-based public safety programming (Mass Transit, 2020).

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) also recently initiated two innovative programs aimed at enhancing transit safety through community engagement and social services integration: the SCOPE and SAVE programs (Griffin, 2023). The SCOPE program targets the well-being of both SEPTA employees and riders by ensuring a clean and safe transportation environment. SCOPE looks to connect vulnerable individuals within the transit environment to vital community-based social services (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), 2023). These services (like those of TriMet above) target the individual’s reintegration into society. SCOPE aims to maintain cleanliness and safety and foster a sense of ownership and partnership among employees, riders, and the broader community, by leveraging police, social, and health resources.

Leading into the next section, the SAVE program — which features teams consisting of police and social workers who operate within the transit system to offer support services to vulnerable populations — complements SCOPE by emphasizing engagement and relationship-building over conventional enforcement tactics (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), 2023). SAVE creates a more welcoming and secure environment for transit users by focusing on providing care and assistance rather than strict enforcement (Griffin, 2023).



#### **4.1.5. Non-Enforcement Focused Programs**

As seen with the SAVE program, cities are increasingly adopting non-enforcement focused programs as part of their strategies to enhance transit safety, emphasizing assistance, education, and community-based responses to crises over strict law enforcement measures.

Portland's TriMet recently moved police officers away from fare enforcement roles, now focusing on de-escalation and conflict minimization (Desue Jr., 2021). Similarly, Seattle's Sound Transit Fare Ambassador Corps shifted recently toward assistance and education rather than fare enforcement (Kroman, 2023). LA Metro's Ambassador Pilot Program aligns with this shift, with Ambassadors trained in conflict de-escalation and public safety awareness, assisting passengers while providing visible 'guardianship' (Radin, 2023).

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)'s Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) & Muni transit stations emphasize non-police oversight with unarmed ambassadors recruited from the BART Police Department's Community Service Officers, focusing on quality-of-life crimes, and receiving additional de-escalation and anti-bias training (Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), 2020). The city has expanded this program to include Safety Ambassadors, Welcome Ambassadors, service attendants, and retired police officers through San Francisco police's community ambassador program, providing less-intensive system security and improved community engagement (Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), 2020; Jordan, 2019; Truong, 2022).

Toronto's Community Crisis Service (TCCS) introduced a health-focused, prevention-oriented response to non-emergency crises and wellness checks for individuals aged 16 and above by offering a 24/7 non-police mobile crisis response team as an alternative to traditional police enforcement (City of Toronto, 2023b). Like the TCCS, The Crisis Assistance Helping out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) program in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon, established in 1989, is an exemplar of this alternative to on-scene police response for public safety, dispatching teams of crisis workers and medics to handle non-emergency calls involving people in behavioral health crises (Vera Institute of Justice, 2020). These teams deliver person-centered interventions, referring individuals to behavioral health supports and services, thereby reducing unnecessary

police contact and allowing police to focus on crime-related matters (Vera Institute of Justice, 2020; White Bird Clinic, 2024).

## 4.2. General Trends and Observations

Across these cities, there is noticeable recent reappraisal of transit safety approaches. A common theme is a move towards alternative ways of enhancing safety on transit while minimizing escalatory interactions between armed law enforcement and civilians. Integrating social services to address underlying issues such as homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse that often intersect with transit violence, alongside security measures like unarmed personnel and a focus on community engagement and structural improvements are key strategies employed to create safer transit environments. Many of these approaches as novel, developing, and their long-term efficacy is not yet well established. However, early returns on community engagement, social service transition into care, mental health and housing supports are positive and appear to address Vancouver’s many issues (Griffin, 2023; Stanford Law School, 2023; Toronto Transit Commission, 2023b; Vera Institute of Justice, 2020). The efficacy of dual response models, police-centric responses, or additional security or CPTED design ethics alone appear to be less effective, but this remains fluid and evolving (College of Policing, 2021; Cotter, 2022; Grant, 2022; Transit Center, 2021).

As summarized by the SEPTA’s SCOPE program plan:

“SEPTA itself [is] downstream in this situation and is ... aware of its limitations as a transportation agency in addressing this complex societal problem. A key challenge and objective of the SCOPE program... is to continue encouraging multiple governmental and nongovernmental organizations to do their part to find lasting solutions.” (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), 2023)

This perspective also reflects how TransLink (as a transit agency like SEPTA) will have difficulties addressing complex societal problems that interact in transit alone. As stated by ATU president John Di Nino,

“Ultimately ... this isn’t a transit issue—it’s connected to much deeper social stresses. The transit-violence epidemic is an offshoot of other problems that have gone unaddressed ... [T]hese assaults have been committed by vulnerable or troubled people—people with mental-health issues, people on the edges of society. And as housing affordability has

rapidly worsened throughout the pandemic, there are more and more people in this kind of distress on our streets and taking shelter in our transit systems—people who have nowhere else to go.” (Nino, 2023)

This encapsulates the need for broader policy responses, while also restricting the scope of what may be a reasonable response through TransLink’s limited powers.

## Chapter 5. Interview Results

Transit crime, as defined by one of the academics interviewed, is envisioned as a “wicked problem” — a highly interdependent and intersectional undertaking that is nearly impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are difficult to recognize. Resultant policy solutions, therefore, attempt to address a complex interplay of factors influencing safety perceptions and the numerous issues that intersect in transit spaces.

The interview results have been grouped by the research questions they directly relate and respond to:

*Question 1. What are the underlying factors contributing to the perceived violent crime crisis in Metro Vancouver's transit system?*

### 5.1. Demographics

Interview results suggest transit is perceived as less risky if one is male-identifying; and perceived crime risks are correlated and concentrated among certain demographic groups, particularly those who are female, racialized, or belong to diverse gender and sexuality groups. One female racialized participant spoke of substituting transit with Uber rides or avoiding transit at all because of this sense of vulnerability.

Being a woman, that's one big element, regardless of other identifiers. I know that I am definitely more cautious than some of my guy friends or my brothers. They just don't really have that same level of concern or fear.

She went on to say:

Being a visible woman of colour, that's another thing that I'm unsure about sometimes. I don't wear a headscarf myself, but I have friends that do; my mom as well. When I'm with those people, I'm on high alert because I know that I can blend in on my own. But for my friends, it's almost like, I don't wanna say a 'target', but they're very visible, right?

Said a male transit user:

I don't see this affecting guys as much. My friend groups still go out and do what they do, their only concern is when the SkyTrain stops running.

When it comes to females though, I think it is certain areas, especially if they're alone. But if they do go out, they usually go out in groups and they usually like to have guys with them.

And they [make sure to have] have alternate ways of transportation, like Ubers.

This substitution of Ubers reflects the broader concerns of demographics who are mindful of this victimization possibility, where these groups feel more fearful, and media representations of crime are influential on their personal feelings of safety. Most of the transit users I interviewed explained how they would often call a taxi, order an Uber, or ask for a ride from a friend, spouse, or parent instead of using TransLink services, primarily 'substituting' when there were concerns of victimization based on the location, the area, or the time of day of the transit service. Demographics (based on self-identified ethnicity, racial group, etc.) also correlated with greater fear of crime in those sampled.

The same racialized, female transit user stated:

My mom is very sketched out by transit. She's very nervous whenever I'm taking it at certain times. If had to take it in the daytime, she wouldn't have an issue. But if I'm out late, she's very on edge because she's afraid.

Older individuals are often more fearful, both of crime and of transit crime more generally, and this is likely amplifying as Canada's population ages (Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), 2024; Conroy & Sutton, 2022).

## **5.2. Traditional and Social Media Impact**

Safety concerns are often exacerbated by negative media reporting, however, not everyone interviewed was equally aware of such crime reporting. The majority of those interviewed had mostly personally experienced, witnessed, or heard media stories related to violence on Vancouver transit, but the effects this had on the individual's perceived safety was discrepant. One academic interviewed stated that violence on Toronto's TTC services set the national media narrative about the 'transit violence' wave, alongside the violence on Calgary's CTrains, and Vancouver's TransLink services. An academic interviewed identified how much of the media attention on transit violence was restricted to mid-2021 to late-2022, and ever since, coverage has dropped precipitously. While media attention is fickle, this academic noted that underlying fear and issues

persist, especially with the fears surrounding the coexisting 'random stranger violence' epidemic identified by the Vancouver Police Department. As mentioned by the professor, an independent report released in 2022 found the occurrence of a 'random stranger violence epidemic' was unfounded, yet still exacerbates fears and drives media engagement and profitability, irrespective of its accuracy (Butler & LePard, 2022). "If it bleeds, it leads", as one professor said, and highlighted the difficulty of restoring faith in public services after damage has been done to the collective 'psyche' of Vancouverites perception of risk of violence from strangers. Sensational media coverage, which often speaks in terms like "spikes over last year", is often inaccurate and exacerbates fears, with one criminology professor stating that "crime rates go up and down like the stock market", and that comparing crime trends both over time and against other jurisdictions is both more difficult to sensationalize and is a better matter of comparison. Another professor interviewed noted that increased media focus on 'transit crime' expanded police resources in Edmonton, resulting in disproportionate ticketing of Indigenous people for non-criminal activities like loitering, causing negative effects for racialized groups (Riebe, 2023).

There are obvious challenges with how transit safety messaging is being disseminated by social and traditional media. One transit user suggested that TransLink is contending with the algorithms and vast reach of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, TikTok and Snapchat, which can promote content that is violent or harmful because it can generate financially lucrative engagement and virality. Paradoxically, numerous academics and transit users identified the potential for TransLink to better leverage these platforms for effective and consistent communication that explains onboard safety measures, counteracts narratives of transit violence that dominate media coverage, and engage those who otherwise might be fearful or hesitant to use transit.

One transit user stated:

Society's ability to think critically about data they are given is very poor... It's like some video of some fight on a SkyTrain rips through social media and then like, "Oh no, transit is dangerous. I can never use that again.

One suggestion from a transit user was to utilize advertisements and press releases to counter negative publicity by integrating safety messages directly into people's social media feeds. Recognizing that few commuters actively follow TransLink on platforms like

X (Twitter), the importance of proactive engagement was emphasized. "You have push and engage to fight back against the negative," another user noted, advocating for ad campaigns that meet users where they are. Said one another transit user interviewee, "There are many more good days than bad ones on transit", emphasizing TransLink's efforts may help change public opinion narratives.

### **5.3. Time, Space, and Lack of Guardianship**

Many of the transit users stated they avoided transiting in certain areas, forms of transit, stations, or times of day (primarily at nighttime) due to fear. Interestingly, there was no specific station or neighbourhood that these fears coalesced around, with the Downtown Eastside, Surrey, Waterfront, and Main Street being mentioned by some. One academic and several transit users noted that the apparent randomness and dispersion of violence in the network makes it challenging to protect oneself from harm and generates fear.

One transit user, when describing a violent incident on a bus he witnessed, noted:

Everybody else is kind of paralyzed, and it's a good thing that it went down so quickly, because I don't know what would have happened if it went on any longer. I was thinking about jumping in after the guy stepped forward, but the dude running out happened so quickly afterwards.

The bystander effect, right? Who knows?

Maybe I would have been frozen in fear too. Maybe I would have just watched and that's a terrifying realization.

I guess that this type of random, sudden violence can happen anywhere just randomly and maybe we all just sit there and watch. That's really messed up.

This incident speaks to how randomness of violence and the lack of capable 'guardianship' from someone who could intervene generates anxiety.

*Question 2: How can policymakers best address this perceived risk to enhance transit safety and user confidence?*

## **5.4. TransLink Safety Features**

All transit users interviewed stated that they had little explicit awareness of safety features available on public transit in Vancouver. When asked, the interviewees could only recall one or two of the safety features available on transit, such as the safety text-line or silent alarm. However, when presented with TransLink's comprehensive list of current public safety measures, they perceived them as relatively ineffective, noting concerns around the timeliness of responses and a lack of awareness or utilization. One user doubted the effectiveness of alarms in preventing crimes, and another raised concerns about the timeliness of emergency responses, such as on a SkyTrain, when seconds matter, noting that help might not arrive until the next station which could be too late. These gaps in the suitability of the safety response exhibit how much of transit user's fears are in the unpredictability and quick onset of violent incidents, and the system's capacity to provide a swift, consistent, and proportionate response. Despite acknowledging Vancouver's transit safety as superior to other places they have visited, users and academics alike cited Japan, Istanbul, and London as examples where they perceived transit safety to be more effectively managed.

## **5.5. Sensitively Addressing Marginalized Groups**

One law professor interviewed identified key groups are often marginalized in discussions around 'risk and 'criminality' in Vancouver transit settings. This professor stated that a heightened risk perception and fear of crime are often linked to the visible presence of these groups, which include:

1. The homeless or unhoused.
2. Those who struggle with substance use disorders.
3. Marginalized people through racism (Indigenous/racialized groups)
4. Those who suffer from mental health issues.
5. Those who are experiencing poverty or unemployment.
6. Those who have disabilities (including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Traumatic Brain Injuries)

Said that academic:



We know most people are very uncomfortable seeing folks who are visibly unhoused, people who have an unkept physical appearance, who may get on transit and smell because they haven't had access to a shower or basic hygiene because of their lack of housing.

Maybe they're in and out of shelters and are not able to have the support to maintain basics of human dignity, and the concern is that with these issues of homelessness and also mental health issues where people may, you know, be either talking to themselves or literally walking down the street, swearing and cursing and yelling.

That's something that you can see in and around transit systems in Vancouver, sorts of things which are different than what a typical person would do on transit, stand out and they get flagged by some people as a sign that you're unsafe, when in fact you may just be uncomfortable sitting next to someone or seeing someone on transit who is basically homeless.

Transit users and academics alike widely criticized how 'problematic' people are often treated like something that needs to be addressed by law enforcement to minimize any risk of violent harm. Numerous transit users also expressed dissatisfaction with what they called 'anti-human design' implemented in certain stations, such as the 'mosquito alarm', a high-pitched device installed by TransLink in Summer 2023 at Main Street-Science World SkyTrain station to discourage loitering (Gangdev, 2023).

Said one transit user about the alarm:

I guess they were trying to target loitering probably, and I think that it's just very anti- human.

That is really messed up when you think about it, right? Even though they might be people of lower socio-economic status, it feels weird to say that, as if they're like below me or something. They're not.

But different socio-economic background or something, they are still people. They are still members of the public. And that's what public transit is for, right?

And trying to disperse them seems wrong.

Interview participants overwhelmingly condemned primarily punitive safety approaches, such as enforcing loitering and trespassing laws, and favoured a 'humanistic' public safety approach that recognize marginalized and struggling individual's innate dignity. Two criminology academics highlighted how addressing visible issues of "social disorder" requires targeted policies and measures that primarily focus on remedying social problems and would be best operationalized through no-barrier social support

programs (e.g. 24/7 non-police response teams like CAHOOTS, addressing individuals need for housing and healthcare by transitioning into social care as required).

As one academic stated:

Part of the answer is to have a greater presence of people who are trained to meet people where they're at in public spaces, with these complex needs, and be able to provide them with support and services, rather than a punitive response which only makes things worse and can escalate situations very, very quickly.

## **5.6. Guardianship**

The randomness of attacks, how quickly the violence can happen, and the potential lack of an individual who is willing and trained to intervene outlined the common rationale presented by users when explaining why they favoured expanding 'guardianship' positions on TransLink services. Enhanced 'guardianship' was strongly supported by the transit users as a method to alleviating some of this perceived risk and worry, and often came up as a potential policy response even without prompting. Those interviewed viewed the presence of a uniformed employee as a physical symbol of safety and surveillance, even if they were not a security, police, or public safety-oriented individual. All groups sampled recognized the operational challenges and costs associated with fully staffing every TransLink service, but all groups supported the expansion of more visible, trained, and uniformed representatives on more services, in more places, at more times to help alleviate fears and address emerging and ongoing safety concerns.

## **5.7. Environmental Design**

Transit users praised new SkyTrain stations that integrated Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) philosophy in their built environments and expressed a greater sense of ease when using these stations. Stations perceived as badly designed, poorly lit, or inadequately supervised were associated with strong feelings of insecurity. One transit user observed that some stations and modes of transit feel isolated and separate, which they found safer compared to other TransLink modes, specifically mentioning the physical separation of SeaBus or West Coast Express terminals compared to regular roadside bus stops, acknowledging the safety-enhancing

effects of physical separation, barriers, and environmental design. Many transit users expressed that their sense of safety strongly depended on the specific transit station's surrounding infrastructure, visibility and design elements like barriers and open spaces.

One criminologist proposed that the way to best implement CPTED is through flexible policies targeting the design or modification of transit spaces. For instance, place managers (like TransLink transit planners) can apply CPTED by engineering the built environment at bus shelters, SkyTrain stations, and SeaBus terminals, potentially preventing significantly more crime than any individual MVTP officer. The same criminologist, further corroborated by two government representatives, stressed that TransLink, as statutory authority responsible for Metro Vancouver's transit spaces, has the greatest responsibility to address safety and the necessary tools and expertise to use CPTED. The criminologist suggested that TransLink should aim to eliminate crime opportunities by 'reverse engineering' through early intervention in transit system design, reducing the need for policing or other 'reactive' safety measures.

## **Chapter 6. Policy Criteria and Measures Defined**

To evaluate policy options for improving safety and equity in the transit system, a Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) approach will be used. This method enables a thorough evaluation of each policy option against specific criteria, based on the jurisdictional scan and data from this study. Each criterion and corresponding measure will relate to a governmental or societal objective. The following criteria have been deemed central to appropriate policy evaluation.

### **6.1. Objective: Efficiency**

#### **6.1.1. Criteria 1: Effectiveness**

This criterion assesses how well the policy meets its main goals: reducing Metro Vancouver transit users' perceived safety risks, delivering an appropriate and responsive emergency service, and increasing user's satisfaction with the proposed policies' enhancements to the safety measures in the transit environment. This criterion measures the policy's effectiveness in addressing both tangible and perceived aspects of transit safety.

#### ***Measure***

Effectiveness is measured on a scale from low to high, based on estimated improvements like decreased perceived safety risks among users, improved (and suitable) responses to public safety incidents (like 911 calls, silent alarms, mental health calls), and noticeable improvements in safety measures satisfaction within transit environments. The measure considers the policy's impact on operational changes that directly affect users' perceptions and experiences of safety.

#### ***Rating/Index***

The rating system favors higher scores, of which indicators would be the significant reduction in perceived safety risks, the appropriateness and responsiveness of the corresponding response to each emergent public safety issue, and a rise in user satisfaction.

## **6.1.2. Criteria 2: Visibility and Awareness**

This criterion assesses how well-known the policy is and how recognizable its impacts are among transit users. It focuses on the visible changes resulting from policy implementation, aiming to ensure that the public can see and know the direct effects of the policy on improving transit safety and user experience. High visibility is key for the policy's success, as it boosts public confidence and compliance. If a policy is not highly visible and is mainly bureaucratic or procedural with limited public awareness, it is unlikely that such a change would significantly shift the public's perception of ongoing safety concerns.

### ***Measure***

This criterion is quantified as low, moderate, or high, reflecting the level of public awareness regarding the policy and its outcomes. A high measure of visibility implies a broad understanding, familiarity, and recognizability of the policy's impacts, signaling effective communication and engagement efforts.

### ***Rating/Index***

The effectiveness of Visibility & Awareness is rated on a scale where higher is better. Key indicators include the percentage of the public aware of the policy and its subsequent impacts. A high rating in this criterion suggests that a substantial portion of the population is informed about the policy, understands its goals, and can recognize its benefits in their daily transit use.

## **6.2. Objective: Equity and Fairness**

### **6.2.1. Criteria 1: Inclusive Equity of Benefit**

This criterion assesses the policy's overall impact on all demographic groups, with a special emphasis on vulnerable communities. It looks at the fair distribution of policy benefits and burdens, ensuring that inequalities are addressed and protections for vulnerable populations are prioritized, especially considering the potential for policing to affect marginalized groups. Additionally, this criterion evaluates the clarity and effectiveness of policy communication strategies to ensure the policy's objectives, mechanisms, and benefits are clearly equitable to the public and stakeholders,

particularly marginalized groups. By combining considerations of social impact and inclusivity and the need for enforcement and safety, this criterion ensures that policies are fair those they aim to serve, extending benefits to the most vulnerable without targeting them.

### ***Measure***

The evaluation ranges from low to high, reflecting the fair distribution of benefits. Measures include the extent to which benefits reach vulnerable individuals, the policy's success in addressing existing disparities, and the effectiveness of each approach across diverse demographic groups.

### ***Rating/Index***

Ratings favour higher values, indicating a far-reaching and equitable policy. Metrics such as the estimated percentage of vulnerable populations targeted or served, the number of vulnerable groups explicitly considered in policy planning, and the level of policy service or enforcement employed across different population segments serve as benchmarks for assessing success.

## **6.3. Objective: Budgetary Cost to Government**

### **6.3.1. Criteria 1: Program Cost to TransLink**

This criterion assesses the fiscal impacts of the policy on TransLink, the statutory authority, and operator of Metro Vancouver's transit system. While there are other relevant stakeholders (such as the Mayor's Transit Council which plans TransLink priorities and appoints members of TransLink's board of directors; or the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure which provides funding for transit initiatives), TransLink is the authority and the primary office for Metro Vancouver's transit system (TransLink, 2024b). TransLink is also in charge of implementation and budgeting for Vancouver's transit needs, so they are the primarily organization who budgeting for transit programming costs is relevant to (like the parallel agency BC Transit who is responsible for the rest of B.C) (BC Transit, 2024). This criterion focuses on the costs of starting, maintaining, and potential savings or profits. It evaluates the efficiency of using financial resources to achieve the policy's goals, considering the initial investment for policy

implementation, ongoing operational costs, and the financial benefits or returns the policy may generate over time. This, through financial analysis, aims to measure the policy's cost-effectiveness in improving public safety within the transit system.

### ***Measure***

The assessment considers high, moderate, or low cost of policy implementation, emphasizing the relationship between the financial expenditures TransLink and the policy outcomes.

### ***Rating/Index***

A lower score is preferable, indicating a cost-effective approach to achieving the policy objectives. This could be represented through approximate expenditure dollar values, the return on investment – e.g., how many benefits are realized compared to what is spent – or comparing costs and benefits of the current and proposed policies.

## **6.4. Objective: Administrative Complexity**

### **6.4.1. Criteria 1: Feasibility**

This criterion assesses the practical elements needed for successful policy implementation by evaluating the availability of necessary resources, the readiness of organizations to adopt the policy, and identifying logistical or operational barriers. The analysis also considers the political landscape, the cooperation between various municipal, governmental, and organizational entities, and the need for additional resources or services. This criterion also considers the capacity constraints and feasibility of each policy proposed based on the geographical, spatial, and temporary restrictions or difficulties imposed by a transit network as large as TransLink's.

### ***Measure***

Feasibility is measured by the availability of resources, organizational readiness, and the extent of operational challenges. This is quantified through indicators including the number of involved organizations, legal and regulatory considerations, coordination efforts among agencies, staffing and employees required, and procurement needs.

## ***Rating/Index***

A higher rating indicates better conditions for policy implementation. The assessment uses a scale to evaluate feasibility, ranging from low (indicating significant challenges and limited resources) to high (indicating ample resources and organizational readiness).

## **6.5. Objective: Stakeholder Acceptance**

### **6.5.1. Criteria 1: Stakeholder Acceptance**

This criterion assesses the level of support for the policy among key stakeholders outside of TransLink itself. This criterion looks to evaluate how a proposed policy will be supported by the alignment and collaborative support with identified stakeholders relevant to any policy's effective implementation, including Metro Vancouver's statutory authorities and their employees (like TransLink's Board of Directors, MVTP, and TransLink security employees), municipalities (like Metro Vancouver, the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, Greater Vancouver Gateway Council), and government entities (like the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General). These stakeholders all share a responsibility for planning and funding transit and its public safety. This criterion recognizes that having stakeholder buy-in will be crucial for the successful policy support, design, funding, implementation, and sustainability.

### ***Measure***

Stakeholder acceptance levels—low, moderate, high—are quantified by measuring the acceptance or perspectives of governmental organizations related to public safety, transit, and criminal justice, statutory authorities, municipalities, and other government entity stakeholders through structured engagement processes. This level of acceptance will be assessed by the literature or evidence (such as news reports, press releases, etc.).



### ***Rating/Index***

A higher percentage of stakeholder acceptability or positive perspective indicates stronger alignment and support for the policy, enhancing its feasibility and potential for successful implementation.

## **6.6. Objective: Public Acceptance**

### **6.6.1. Criteria 1: Public Acceptance**

This criterion assesses whether these policies would create other additional benefits or concerns aside from improvements to perceived safety. This would be evaluated by the degree to which the public supports and understands the intent and impacts of the proposed policy, particularly among transit users and key demographic or community groups such as women or racialized individuals. This criterion emphasizes the importance of policy legitimacy and alignment with the community's preferences and needs. A policy that excels in this criterion would aim to achieve its safety objectives through an appropriate balance of the improvements to the transit experience that outweigh other concerns, unintended consequences, or issues that may be caused by the policy, and is openly supported and valued by the broader Vancouver transit population.

### ***Measure***

This criterion is measured by the percentage of public support and/or favourability of the policy proposal, considering the policy's visibility, understandability, and the extent to which its balance of benefits and issues are supported by transit users and the broader community. This will be assessed on the literature or evidence (such as news reports, interviews, etc.).

### ***Rating/Index***

Higher percentages are better, indicating stronger public support, a deeper public recognition and acceptance or valuation of the policy's benefits over its concerns. Ratings are determined by evaluating the public's engagement and support of the policy's objectives and benefits proposed.

**Table 2: Objectives, Criteria and Measures**

<b>Societal &amp; Government Objectives</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Rating/Index</b>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>	Reduction in perceived safety risk, more appropriate and respondent emergency service delivery, enhanced user satisfaction	Low, moderate, high policy effectiveness	Higher is better (reduction in perceived safety risk, perceived appropriate emergency response, user satisfaction)
	<b>Visibility and Awareness</b>	Public awareness of the policy, visibility, recognizability of policy impacts	Low, moderate, high visibility, awareness	Higher is better (improved public awareness and visibility of policy/subsequent impacts)
<b>Equity &amp; Fairness</b>	<b>Inclusive Equity of Benefit</b>	Distribution of benefits and burdens across groups, addressing inequalities, protections for vulnerable/marginalized populations	Low, moderate, high benefits and burdens distribution	Higher is better (attention to vulnerable peoples targeted/served, vulnerable groups adequately identified, addressed, and served in policy)
<b>Budgetary Cost to Government</b>	<b>Program Cost to TransLink</b>	Initial investment, operational costs, potential cost savings or returns, cost efficiency/benefits compared to spending	High, moderate, low cost of policy implementation	Lower is better (approximate expenditure dollar values; cost efficiency, savings, or comparison between historic/current policies in force)
<b>Administrative Complexity</b>	<b>Feasibility</b>	Capacity and capability to enact required policy changes, resource requirements, geographical/spatial/temporal considerations, political popularity, organizational readiness, operational and logistical challenges between municipalities, organizations, governments, and Nations	Low, moderate, high policy implementation feasibility	Higher is better (resources and organizational readiness fewer number of organizations involved, high political popularity and organizational readiness, etc.)

Societal & Government Objectives	Criteria	Definition	Measure	Rating/Index
Stakeholder Acceptance	Stakeholder Acceptance	Level of stakeholder acceptance and/or favourability of policy proposal	Low, moderate, high stakeholder acceptance	Higher is better (acceptability/positive perspective by governmental organizations related to public safety, transit, and criminal justice, statutory authorities, municipalities, and other government entity stakeholders)
Public Acceptance	Public Acceptance	Level of public support and/or favourability of policy proposal	Low, moderate, high public acceptance	Higher is better (public support of proposed/enacted policy measure, more benefits than concerns)

## **Chapter 7. Policy Options**

### **7.1. Policy Option 1: Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non-Police Emergency Response Team**

This model seeks to balance visible police response with professional social care. It acknowledges that while marginalized individuals (including those with mental health or housing needs) do not cause all transit violence, they do contribute significantly to violence and individuals' risk perception on transit. The approach recognizes the government's responsibility to assist those struggling, but also to ensure transit safety.

Based on the Seattle CARE model, this policy would deploy social workers and/or medical personnel (EMTs, medical aids, etc.) alongside police officers (primarily MVTP, but also partner police organizations when needed), in response to 911 calls involving mental health or social issues. After ensuring public safety MVTP officers can respond to other calls while social responders provide services, addressing both immediate needs and long-term solutions for individuals facing social challenges.

As part of this program design, this policy would deliberately remove police response from specific emergencies. If there is a 911 service call, an equal, parallel response would be possible based on the specifics of the call, reason for concern, and public risk. Like the CAHOOTS model, 911 dispatch would deploy a non-police emergency response team to handle crises with a reduced risk of escalation, thereby also reducing the visibility of police presence. These response teams would handle requests typically handled by police and EMS with its integrated health care model, connecting the affected party with a crisis intervention social worker skilled in counseling and de-escalation techniques, and medical personnel (EMTs, medical aids, etc.). In rare occasions when required, the Emergency Response Team would be able to contact MVTP. This hybrid service would be capable of handling non-criminal, non-emergency police and medical calls, and other service requests that are clearly not criminal or medical.

## **7.2. Policy Option 2: Expanding Visible Capable Non-Police Guardianship**

This policy advocates for a substantial increase in the presence of uniformed TransLink officers, security personnel, and community safety ambassadors across the Metro Vancouver transit system, aiming to enhance both the perceived and actual safety of transit users. The policy calls for TransLink staff to wear easily identifiable uniforms, grounded in the understanding that a visible security presence can provide psychological and practical safety benefits, and increasing the number of available ambassadors, security personnel, and staff trained in non-escalatory public safety tactics.

Guided by TransLink's 2050 plan, which sets a minimum standard of service, this policy mandates that at least one visible TransLink employee be present on every SkyTrain platform and train, every SeaBus sailing, every West Coast Express departure, and aboard every RapidBus service. Additionally, a dedicated team of 2-3 staff members would be assigned to each bus route, supported by roving TransLink employees who patrol prioritized stations and routes based on crime statistics and peak times.

The policy also plans for the strategic redistribution of staff to maximize coverage and reinforce the feeling of safety among passengers. A key requirement is that each major transit hub hosts 1-2 safety-focused staff members during operational hours to address public safety issues and improve the overall sense of security across the network. This staffing is above and beyond the roles of other TransLink employees, like bus drivers or technicians, ensuring a thorough safety network that caters to both the perceived and real security needs of the transit system.

## **7.3. Policy Option 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration**

This policy involves TransLink committing to incorporating strict Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards into all new and existing transit stations to improve safety perception. It is based on adopting internal and internationally recognized CPTED standards, such as ISO 22341:2021, and uses examples of successful implementations worldwide to make transit environments safer and more secure (American Public Transit Association Transit Infrastructure Security Work Group, 2010; BC Transit, 2010; Federal Transit Administration Office of Research

Demonstration and Innovation & Federal Transit Administration Office of Program Management, 2004; International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 2024; TransLink, 2012). The goal is to proactively integrate crime prevention measures into the structure of transit settings, thereby increasing both the actual and perceived safety for users during their travel.

Implementing this policy involves key actions to prioritize CPTED in TransLink's projects. First, CPTED principles will become a central focus for all future infrastructure work, including new stations, hubs, and interchanges. A dedicated oversight committee within TransLink will review these developments to ensure they meet CPTED standards, with the authority to adjust and approve designs accordingly. Additionally, TransLink will review existing infrastructure to check its adherence to CPTED principles. This will involve developing a plan and timeline for upgrading current facilities to comply with CPTED standards and strategizing on how to integrate CPTED into future redevelopment efforts. This approach also emphasizes the role of consistent, regular maintenance and oversight by place managers to enhance safety.

This policy prioritizes involving the public in redesigning transit areas to meet community needs and improve safety perceptions. Drawing on strategies from the ASU's Center for Problem-Oriented Policing and the International CPTED Association, it would engage residents, employees, and users in planning, using their feedback to develop effective safety measures and create a shared sense of ownership and responsibility for transit safety (The International CPTED Association, 2024; Zahm, 2007a). Through ongoing evaluation of design changes, TransLink can make data and community-informed decisions to prioritize or suspend future improvements, ensuring that safety enhancements are responsive to evolving needs.

## **Chapter 8. Policy Evaluation**

### **8.1. Evaluation Methodology**

Through the Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) framework, policy options will be evaluated systematically and transparently. This ensures that policy recommendations are based on a thorough understanding of each option's impact on various factors. This approach not only strengthens the policy evaluation process but also ensures that policies are fair, feasible, and aligned with the goal of safety in the transit system.

#### **8.1.1. Policy Option 1: Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non-Police Emergency Response Team**

##### ***Effectiveness***

This policy is rated positively for its effectiveness, as it offers a nuanced and proportionate approach to public safety issues by incorporating social supports into the response model. This strategy is expected to be more effective in addressing a broad spectrum of public safety concerns, including mental health crises and social disturbances, than traditional police-only responses. The integration of specialized social services personnel in incident responses not only addresses immediate situations but also aims to prevent future incidents by connecting individuals to ongoing support services like shelters, housing, and social case management. This approach should also allow police resources to be redirected towards more severe public safety threats, which should lead to higher user satisfaction, especially when perceiving the efficacy of emergency responses to each specific public safety issue. Catering the emergency response to these individuals, while also providing a tiered approach based on the type of emergent public safety issue into the 911 dispatch system should effectively enhance the policy's ability to reduce safety risk and enhance transit user satisfaction with the policy response.

Additionally, the policy's emphasis on reactive (911 dispatch-based response) rather than any proactive or preventive measures may limit its capacity to tackle larger safety threats or quickly emerging issues, such as armed individuals, mass casualty

events, or quick escalations of violence.

**Rating: Positive (High policy effectiveness)**

### ***Visibility and Awareness***

The visibility and awareness of this policy receives a neutral rating, reflecting its strengths and potential areas for improvement. Positively, the policy is highly visible in areas identified as disorderly or prone to safety concerns, providing a noticeable presence in critical transit 'nodes'. Its focus on 'publicly disordered' areas signals a proactive stance towards mitigating safety issues where they are most acute. Moreover, the policy adopts a very visible and progressive, community-centered approach to crisis management, targeting interventions that directly impact risk perception by providing a conspicuous team of responders that should enhance visible safety-oriented changes to the transit environment.

However, the policy's effectiveness may vary by different transit routes or stations, leading to inconsistent and reduced experiences of visibility of such a 'dual dispatch' team for users. Additionally, the shift towards reduced deployment and visibility of traditional police might provoke concerns among some stakeholders and transit users. They might view this change as a decrease in the overall security presence, potentially affecting their sense of safety within the transit system. This likely would vary amongst the general population, as it is assumed many would support a tiered, tailored response and would not be especially sensitive to the presence of police that is customary in the current emergency response model.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate visibility, awareness)**

### ***Inclusive Equity of Benefit***

The policy is rated positively for its inclusivity and focus on equity by meeting the needs of diverse and marginalized communities through integrating social workers and medical personnel into emergency response teams. This approach is designed to reduce biases and prevent escalations in police interactions with marginalized groups, moving towards lived-experience, trauma-informed, and culturally relevant solutions. It strategically withdraws police from non-criminal and non-emergency situations, which could be more effectively addressed by other trained professionals, thus directly tackling



systemic biases. It also provides vulnerable individuals with the care they need, offering outcomes-based benefits to these marginalized and vulnerable individuals, while also benefitting the perceived safety of the broader population by providing a catered emergency response program.

Yet, it is important to monitor for potential biases in when and how dispatch decisions are made or who responds at which emergency scenes. This also suggests there will be challenges when ensuring the equal implementation and access to this program across different communities and areas. The policy's success hinges on its availability to all to guarantee that its benefits are equitably distributed among all transit users.

**Rating: Positive (High benefits and burdens distribution)**

### ***Program Costs to TransLink***

Cost considerations for this policy encompass initial and ongoing expenses for training, hiring, coordination, staffing, and necessary equipment. Despite these investments, the policy is positively rated for its expected long-term savings by addressing root causes of transit safety incidents. As this policy would be reliant on MVTP assistance and would integrate existing knowledgeable health and social program experts (many of whom are already public sector workers), the costs of this policy would be likely minimal, and would primarily just require a cost-effective rerouting of existing funding. Analyzing comparative models like CAHOOTS demonstrates this cost-effectiveness, showing a reduced need for deployment of police and EMS since 1989. Additionally, by averting escalations into more serious incidents, the policy ensures overall spending savings compared to traditional, existing criminal justice responses, diverting spending from policing salaries, court fees, and incarceration costs.

**Rating: Positive (Low cost of policy implementation)**

### ***Feasibility***

The feasibility of this policy is positive, but presents both strengths and challenges. It integrates seamlessly with existing emergency dispatch systems, requiring only the creation of one additional emergency response body, minimizing administrative complexity, resource requirements, and the organizations involved. Leveraging the

expertise of professionals already within social services and healthcare sectors, like social workers and nurses, eliminates the need for new positions and capitalizes on existing skills, and also suggests that existing organizations can work together to use their collective resources, competencies, and experience, suggesting high organizational readiness if directed by TransLink and MVTP to establish such a team.

However, implementing this policy demands significant interagency coordination and comprehensive training for effective collaboration. This extends to efforts to maintain collaborative effectiveness and necessitates infrastructural adjustments to facilitate team deployment alongside existing services. The feasibility of this model is also contingent upon the rapid onboarding of social workers and medical personnel with qualifications, training, and availability. The labour shortage in British Columbia's medical sector could restrict the ability to deliver timely and effective responses for all incidents, but this is currently being addressed by expanded funding for additional medical schools and training programs in B.C.(B.C. Ministry of Health, 2023).

While there are challenges in resource allocation, organizational preparedness, and operational integration and staffing, the policy's alignment with current emergency response practices and utilization of existing professional expertise ensures its feasibility.

**Rating: Positive (High policy implementation feasibility)**

### ***Stakeholder Acceptance***

Stakeholder acceptance of this policy is positively rated, as it aims to transfer the responsibility for mental health calls and wellness checks from the police to specialized teams, a change likely to garner support from the Government of B.C. more broadly, public safety government organizations (like Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General), and those who provision mental health and social service programs, all who have signified their willingness to reevaluate the appropriate manner of handling violent behavioural emergencies like these (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023; Lazaruk, 2023; McSheffrey, 2023; Sajan, 2023). It signifies a move away from militarized police responses toward more nuanced, compassionate public safety approaches, which is favoured even by B.C.'s opposition party BC United (Lazaruk, 2023). Integrating specialized teams to address mental health and social crises is seen to reduce potential

biases and escalation during police interactions, particularly in marginalized communities. This aligns with calls for more culturally sensitive emergency responses and aims to ameliorate systemic biases and provide more equitable treatment across communities.

However, stakeholder acceptance may face challenges due to the reduction of the traditional police mandate, which could be met with skepticism from stakeholders like police and transit employee unions (like CUTA), or more traditionalist police departments, who favour a police-first approach delivery model to emergencies (Draaisma, 2023). There also does remain concerns about the present capacity of the social service sector, given ongoing concerns related to some support services, primarily the lack of bedspace for those with highly specific needs, and medical hiring and staffing concerns in B.C. (CBC News, 2024; The Federation of Community Social Service of BC, 2020). Additionally, there could be confusion about the roles and responsibilities of these new emergency response teams compared to existing EMS/EMT services.

Despite these challenges, the policy's emphasis on specialized, non-police responses to non-criminal emergencies is expected to free up police resources for more critical threats to public safety. By focusing on preventative measures and addressing root causes, the policy promises to reduce the escalation of serious incidents. This aligns with the interests of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including mental and physical healthcare professionals, emergency medical services, and social service providers advocating for a shift away from traditional, militarized emergency responses to provide adequate care to those who are in need (Kulkarni, 2023a).

**Rating: Positive (High stakeholder acceptance)**

### ***Public Acceptance***

Analyzing the public acceptance of the proposed policy reveals a nuanced perspective, rated as neutral. Positively, the policy's compassionate, service-oriented approach is expected to resonate well with communities advocating for alternative, non-police interventions in crisis situations (Vera Institute of Justice, 2020). This policy's staggered, de-escalatory strategy is likely to appeal to those seeking a more measured response to public safety concerns within transit environments and would help remove

the possibility of escalatory interactions between the police/security and marginalized individuals, another benefit that could be realized with this approach.

Negatively, challenges remain in convincing the broader public of the policy's effectiveness and its tangible benefits due to its novel nature. The policy's reactive nature—relying on public calls and dispatch for activation—may also not fully address the root causes underlying criminal behaviour, broader social issues, or the occurrence of crimes not perpetrated by those who are targeted by social services. Additionally, there would likely remain a degree of skepticism regarding any non-emergency social service team's capacity to handle severe emergencies effectively, and that they may require police backup if an emergency is suitably dangerous.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate public acceptance)**

### **8.1.2. Policy Option 2: Expanding Visible Capable Non-Police Guardianship**

#### ***Effectiveness***

This approach bears potential benefits in terms of effectiveness, rated as neutral. Bolstering the visible presence of security staff serves as a powerful deterrent against criminal activities, leveraging the psychological impact of 'guardianship' to pre-emptively address safety concerns. Additionally, the expanded cadre of security personnel ensures an immediate response capability, potentially shortening reaction times to incidents and providing a responsive team in emergency situations, thereby enhancing the overall perceived safety environment.

Negatively, deterrence and response efficiency largely depend on the training, skills, and capabilities of the newly appointed 'guardians'. Without rigorous and continuous training programs, the added personnel may not effectively handle complex safety situations or may lack the nuanced approach needed in sensitive scenarios. Additionally, security personnel lack both the ability to address underlying social issues and target issue individuals with appropriate medical, housing, or addiction care, nor can they arrest or have police powers, hampering their ability to provide either service or police-based responses, undercutting the appropriateness and user satisfaction of such 'guardianship'. Furthermore, the various jurisdictions and powers associated with

different roles within the transit safety framework could complicate the chain of command and clarity of responsibility, potentially leading to inefficiencies or delays in critical situations, negatively impacting user satisfaction and the perceived adequacy of emergency response.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate policy effectiveness)**

### ***Visibility and Awareness***

This policy's visibility and awareness aspect is rated as positive. The constant presence of uniformed security personnel and non-police 'guardians' will act as a highly visible, tangible reminder of TransLink's commitment to safety and security among transit users. This sustained deployment not only creates a familiar environment for regular commuters but also improves levels of public awareness about the proactive measures TransLink has implemented to safeguard public transit spaces and deter potential criminal activities. Having uniformed officers available to assist will also address the public's awareness of the transit safety programs available, which were viewed by users as currently inadequately responsive nor well-known.

However, this approach carries the risk of contributing to a counterproductive atmosphere of heightened alertness and fear. The omnipresence of security personnel might inadvertently signal to transit users that the crime risks are high, potentially increasing anxiety rather than alleviating it. Moreover, emphasizing visible security measures might evoke concerns of institutional surveillance by TransLink, raising questions about a commuters' expectations of privacy and personal freedom.

**Rating: Positive (High visibility, awareness)**

### ***Inclusive Equity of Benefit***

The policy, rated as neutral ensures a more equitable distribution of 'guardians' across the transit system, aiming to provide consistent and comprehensive safety measures throughout, especially for those who are fearful of transit or have differentially negative experiences of transit (including women, racialized individuals, older individuals, etc.). By not increasing the justice-oriented presence of police, those who are marginalized or vulnerable are also less likely to be targeted and would be afforded more protections than police-centred policy responses.

However, the heightened presence of security personnel could lead to concerns of over-policing, excessive surveillance, or similarly targeting marginalized individuals often visible in transit spaces (like the unhoused). This concern raises the possibility of unintended profiling or targeting of marginalized groups. It underscores the importance of training security personnel carefully to prevent worsening existing inequalities or causing discomfort among transit users, especially those from marginalized communities.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate benefits and burdens distribution)**

### ***Program Costs to TransLink***

While this policy promises visible results, including an enhanced, secure, and comfortable transit environment and a decrease in perceived risk among transit users, its overall rating is negative due to the substantial financial burden it imposes. Extraordinarily high operational costs, such as expenses related to expanded hiring, comprehensive training programs, staffing salaries, and equipment procurement, present a major challenge. Implementing this policy would necessitate substantial ongoing investment from both provincial and municipal sources, raising concerns about the sustainability of funding such an expansive initiative.

Moreover, policy implementation would require a considerable expansion of government positions and complex coordination efforts. This expansion would increase administrative costs compared to current security practices and would require a higher level of management and coordination to ensure the effective deployment and operation of the expanded security presence. While the potential benefits of enhanced public safety and reduced risk perception are significant, the extraordinary operational costs and sustained financial commitment from provincial and municipal authorities when compared to current security practices impose considerable challenges.

**Rating: Negative (High cost of policy implementation)**

### ***Feasibility***

This approach addresses the need for safety across various locations, ensuring that all transit users, regardless of the routes or stations they frequent, benefit from enhanced security measures. This policy, however, is rated neutral due to its

advantages and challenges in terms of feasibility. Positively, it leverages existing organization readiness by expanding upon existing security structures and personnel, providing a clear path for implementation by building on current staffing and operational processes. This provides a clear method for expanding staffing and enhancing visibility by uniformed presence, which could be carried out through established recruitment and procurement processes. This approach would also be moderately easy to implement due to the small number of organizations involved in the policy implementation (e.g. just hiring more contracted security guards), and the relatively few additional resources that would need to be sourced (e.g. no need for gun licenses, lengthy police or medical training, etc.).

However, the policy faces significant challenges to its practicality. It would require large investments from various stakeholders to make it a plausible policy approach. The need for staff to fully cover the large TransLink network would require a substantive hiring and administrative work and lengthy training processes. Furthermore, current labour market conditions, characterized by shortages, could complicate efforts to recruit the necessary personnel, especially with the increased personal risk associated with public-facing security roles. Therefore, while the policy is grounded in existing processes, it would require significant investments, and potentially innovative solutions to labour market challenges to ensure its successful and sustainable implementation.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate policy implementation feasibility)**

### ***Stakeholder Acceptance***

For stakeholder acceptance, this policy option is rated neutral, due to varying assumed reactions from stakeholders. This policy should enjoy support from those advocating for heightened security measures, including MVTP, TransLink security, and government agencies (like the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General) who favour a visible and active approach to enhancing public safety, grounded in the belief that a greater presence of security personnel can deter potential criminal activities and improve the overall safety of the transit environment (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023; Sajan, 2023; TransLink, 2024d, 2024e).

This may face resistance from TransLink's oversight bodies (like the Mayor's Council), who would likely identify that certain demographics that have concerns over

excessive security and surveillance, potentially resulting in unintended profiling or targeting effects, and undermining 'social equity' as a core policy objective of TransLink's *10-Year Priorities* (TransLink, 2022). Other agencies, such as the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, or TransLink's budgetary offices may question the high costs needed to implement this policy. MVTP may also question the decision to expand funding security and non-police 'guardians' on the transit system, but not necessarily increasing funding for MVTP as they also are also tasked to cover the transit system with inadequate staffing and resources (McSheffrey, 2023).

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate stakeholder acceptance)**

### ***Public Acceptance***

This policy is rated neutral. The policy aims to increase the saturation of public safety-oriented individual in transit areas, which should directly address public concerns about improving response times and providing additional public-safety oriented individuals throughout the transit network, potentially improving feelings of capable 'guardianship' and natural surveillance throughout the transit network. As stated in the interviews with transit users, the very presence of security personnel can enhance commuters overall transit experience, and likely would be viewed as a moderate, measured, and appropriate increase in staffing to respond to heightened safety concerns.

However, this policy's emphasis on surveillance and expansion of security personnel in public spaces raises valid concerns. While it aims to enhance safety, some may find it unwelcome or uncomfortable, fearing over-policing and intrusive surveillance (Cotter, 2022). Additionally, concerns about privacy, freedom of movement, and the potential for an excessive response to the minimal incidences of transit violence incidents may occur. These apprehensions could reduce public support for the policy, as the policy may be perceived as an overreaction when contrasted with the actual risk of violent transit crime.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate public acceptance)**



### **8.1.3. Policy 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration**

#### ***Effectiveness***

While this policy aims to improve safety and security within the TransLink system by enhancing lighting, installing barriers, and employing other design principles. Through these changes, TransLink seeks to enhance visibility and natural surveillance, deterring potential criminal activity and improving users' perception of safety. Additionally, creating 'defensible' spaces aligns with the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), reinforcing social norms and positively influence passenger movement patterns.

However, assessing the policy's impact presents challenges. Moreover, gauging the direct 'crime preventing' effectiveness may be complicated by the need for standardized evaluation methods across diverse station environments. It is difficult to directly link specific changes in crime rates to its implementation due to various influencing factors and the unique design features of each transit station. Despite these challenges, the policy is rated positively as CPTED in the Vancouver and international contexts has been shown to effectively address environmental aspects contributing to crime and fear in transit, and proactively enhances safety and security, as demonstrated by existing TransLink and other jurisdictional successes.

**Rating: Positive (High policy effectiveness)**

#### ***Visibility and Awareness***

Among all the proposed policies, this modification would be the most tangible and noticeable, as it would permanently alter the transit environment for all transit users in Vancouver. This positively rated design alteration would boost public trust in transit safety, mainly because the changes could be clearly seen and recognized, both consciously and subconsciously altering people's transit safety perceptions through refined environmental design.

**Rating: Positive (High visibility, awareness)**

## ***Inclusive Equity of Benefit***

This policy aims to create transit environments that are inclusive and accessible to all, thereby uniformly enhancing safety across different stations and areas. By incorporating CPTED principles into both new and existing transit infrastructures, the policy strives to create spaces that are safe, welcoming, and cater to the diverse needs of the Metro Vancouver transit community. CPTED design philosophy also would improve the experience of transit for women, racialized individuals, and others by enhancing the built environment to address their concerns.

Implementing this policy comes with its own set of challenges, including the significant risk that the designs might not fully address the needs of all user groups who rely on transit, potentially resulting in environments that overlook those with specific vulnerabilities or fear predispositions, such as those who have disabilities, mobility concerns, or are primarily concerned about the capacity for troubled or violent individuals to inflict violence, rather than how the existing station design can be conducive to the occurrence of crime (as mentioned in crime pattern theory). Also, if the retrofitting of existing stations favours certain areas over others, benefits would be unequally distributed, contradicting the policy's objective of equitable safety enhancements. Moreover, by increasing barriers and focusing on crime prevention in space design, the policy might unintentionally exclude and prevent service to certain vulnerable or marginalized groups, while also detracting from the open, inclusive nature that characterizes public transit spaces. Lastly, this policy does not explicitly focus on improving transit access, safety, or inequalities for any particular groups, and focuses primarily just on the environmental factors that may enhance safety perceptions. Thus, this policy is essentially oblivious to the differential experiences of transit certain groups experience. Therefore, this policy is negatively rated.

**Rating: Negative (Low benefits and burdens distribution)**

## ***Program Costs to TransLink***

Positively, CPTED expansion offers long-term cost benefits by potentially lowering crime rates and related maintenance and MVTP policing costs through strategic design and environmental adjustments. These savings are reflected not only in reduced

repair and maintenance needs but also in potentially decreased security and policing expenses over time.

Conversely, this policy demands significant initial investments and ongoing expenditures for the redesign and upgrade of existing stations to comply with CPTED standards. Such expenditures, which would likely reach hundreds of millions of dollars, would likely outpace existing expenditure on transit safety in Vancouver by a large margin. Such changes would involve costs for both physically altering transit spaces and creating and implementing new design guidelines. The upkeep of the station environmental elements influenced by CPTED, which are essential to the policy's success, will also require ongoing financial backing. In addition, thoroughly auditing existing infrastructure to pinpoint priority areas for upgrades adds another layer of financial obligation. This process of assessing and upgrading transit facilities to conform with CPTED principles, while vital for policy effectiveness, calls for even more financial resources. Thus, this policy is rated negatively.

**Rating: Negative (High cost of policy implementation)**

### ***Feasibility***

This policy takes advantage of ongoing developments in transit infrastructure by seamlessly integrating international CPTED principles into existing processes, and aligns with designs of new TransLink stations, reinforcing current principles for a smoother rollout. The policy's politically neutral position enables it to gain wide-ranging support, bypassing contentious issues and benefiting from broad approval. It also potentially aligns with existing TransLink transit urban planning, upgrades, and design initiatives, with the possibility of a phased rollout based on needs for budgetary flexibility and gradual assimilation. However, it faces challenges such as the need for substantial initial and continuous investment for design reviews, audits, and upgrades. The policy's success hinges on the organizational readiness of the availability of CPTED expertise within TransLink and/or the necessity to hire additional consultants for specialized design knowledge and thorough review processes, which may escalate project costs and complexity. Upgrading existing stations to comply with new CPTED standards poses significant logistical, structural, and financial hurdles, and implementation may cause extensive transit service disruptions. Thus, this policy is rated as neutral.

**Rating: Neutral (Moderate policy implementation feasibility)**

### ***Stakeholder Acceptance***

This policy (positively rated) is likely to receive widespread support from public safety government organizations and policing agencies for its proactive approach that looks to limit crime before it happens, as well as support from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transit and the Mayor's Council (both as main planning and administrative bodies for transit in Vancouver), due to its relative ease of implementation based on existing domestic and international standards (TransLink, 2012; TransLink Infrastructure Planning, 2011). It also opens opportunities for community participation and consultations in the design process, which could help TransLink tailor station design (including signage, barriers, etc.) to the community, demographic, and population needs prior to implementation. Adoption of this policy may face opposition from Metro Vancouver municipal, provincial, and federal stakeholders (such as Infrastructure Canada) who might be concerned about providing additional policy funding given the high costs and complexities that might complicate implementation, especially considering the size of TransLink's infrastructure network (Infrastructure Canada, 2022).

**Rating: Positive (High stakeholder acceptance)**

### ***Public Acceptance***

This policy receives as positive rating as CPTED principles are positively perceived due to their clear commitment to enhancing the benefits of safe, clean, and well-thought-out modern transit infrastructure, which were highly favoured by the public transit users surveyed. Therefore, there is a high likelihood of public support – backed by the criminology literature – due to its visible safety enhancements to transit environment, and successful international and domestic examples of implementing CPTED principles on a large scale (APTA Transit Infrastructure Security Work Group, 2010; Casteel & Peek-Asa, 2000). This is mainly because CPTED is well-established and already meets public expectations for safe and well-designed public spaces (TransLink Infrastructure Planning, 2011). However, there are some minimal ongoing concerns about the impact of design changes on transit efficiency, including whether they make transit less inviting, more daunting, or impose additional barriers to access to a public space (as mentioned by the transit user who discussed the alarm at the SkyTrain station, which is an extreme

form of CPTED), CPTED may also exacerbate accessibility issues, particularly for those with mobility issues.

Rating: **Positive** (High public acceptance)

**Table 3: Heatmap Matrix Policy Criteria and Measures Analysis**

Criteria	<b>Policy Option 1:</b> Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non- Police Emergency Response Team	<b>Policy Option 2:</b> Expanding Visible Capable Non-Police Guardianship	<b>Policy Option 3:</b> Comprehensive CPTED Integration
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Green	Yellow	Green
<b>Visibility and Awareness</b>	Yellow	Green	Green
<b>Inclusive Equity of Benefit</b>	Green	Yellow	Red
<b>Program Cost to TransLink</b>	Green	Red	Red
<b>Feasibility</b>	Green	Yellow	Yellow
<b>Stakeholder Acceptance</b>	Green	Yellow	Green
<b>Public Acceptance</b>	Yellow	Yellow	Green
<b>Total Sentiment Totals &amp; Percentages</b>	<b>Positive: 5 (~71%)</b>	<b>Positive: 1 (~14%)</b>	<b>Positive: 4 (~57%)</b>
	<b>Neutral: 2 (~29%)</b>	<b>Neutral: 5 (~71%)</b>	<b>Neutral: 1 (~14%)</b>
	<b>Negative: 0 (0%)</b>	<b>Negative: 1 (~14%)</b>	<b>Negative: 2 (~29%)</b>

**Matrix Legend:** Green - Positive Rating Yellow - Neutral Rating Red - Negative Rating

## Chapter 9. Policy Recommendations

Revisiting the third research objective of this project: “Propose evidence-backed policy recommendations informed by data and insights from diverse stakeholders, including transit users, academic experts, and government representatives,” and basing this decision on this multi-criteria policy evaluation and subsequent scoring, the interview process, and the data and secondary source thematic analysis conducted in this Capstone project, the following policy recommendation bundle is suggested to best address the perceived risk of victimization on public transit:

The primary recommendation is: **Policy Option 1: Police/Social Services Emergency Co-Response (Dual Dispatch) and Non-Police Emergency Response Team.**

This policy is recommended due to its direct approach in addressing both criminal and non-criminal crises on transit and its potential to de-escalate potentially volatile situations. Inspired by the CAHOOTS model in Eugene and Springbank, Oregon, and similar initiatives, this policy aims to provide specialized crisis intervention services through a team composed of mental health professionals and social workers, alongside, or in place of, police officers. This approach is instrumental in addressing non-criminal crises and de-escalating situations, while also addressing social issues such as mental health and homelessness more humanely and effectively. By removing the responsibility for police to handle certain activities (e.g., mental health checks, engaging with homeless individuals in transit spaces), the escalatory issues associated with police responses are minimized. These options, along with outreach for social support services, alleviate many of the issues highlighted in the literature and in the interviews, including the need for humane interactions that are proportionate and addressing the underlying issues (and individuals) who contribute to this sense of risk of violence.

This model is beneficial for several reasons:

- I. **Specialized, Proportionate Crisis Intervention:** This policy leverages the expertise of social workers and mental health professionals to ensure that individuals experiencing a crisis receive appropriate care and intervention, which regular police officers may not be equipped to provide.

- II. **De-escalation and Humane Interaction:** The non-police emergency response team can address situations more humanely, focusing on specialized crisis intervention. By offering a less intimidating presence than police, this approach supports de-escalation and assistance rather than enforcement. This is likely to reduce instances of conflict and the potential for escalation, making transit spaces safer and more welcoming.
- III. **Addressing Root Causes:** The dual dispatch model acknowledges the complex social issues underlying many incidents on transit, such as mental health and homelessness. By addressing these root causes, the policy not only resolves immediate crises but also contributes to long-term solutions that reduce the overall incidence of safety concerns on transit.
- IV. **Flexibility:** This policy is flexible as it allows the non-emergency team to be deployed both in the 'dual dispatch' model and independently. This keeps the scope of the model smaller and reduces costs by integrating the programs together within the 911 dispatch system.
- V. **Alignment with Recommendations:** This policy aligns with recommendations from the CUTA 2023 call to action, where it was recommended that transit agencies explore partnerships with mental health service providers and position outreach workers within the transit system to assist transit staff (Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), 2023).

This primary policy is to be supplemented by a staggered implementation of: **Policy Option 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration.**

This bundled approach, which would focus first on the infrastructure and stations in need of upgrading first, is advantageous as it first tackles a broad spectrum of issues and enhances safety in both the immediate and built environments. Complementing the direct intervention approach of **Policy Option 1, Policy Option 3: Comprehensive CPTED Integration** would help ensure that transit infrastructure inherently discourages criminal activity through thoughtful environmental design and enhances the sense of security for all users.

The effectiveness of CPTED lies in its proactive approach to crime prevention, which includes:

- I. **Natural Surveillance and Visibility:** Enhancing lighting and sightlines within transit stations ensures that potential perpetrators are easily observable, which acts as a deterrent to criminal activity. This also makes transit users feel safer, as they are more visible to staff and other passengers.
- II. **Territorial Reinforcement:** By clearly defining public, private, and semi-private spaces through strategic design, CPTED principles help reinforce social norms and expectations, encouraging responsible behavior and deterring unauthorized access and activities.
- III. **Access Control and Environmental Design:** The thoughtful arrangement of physical elements, such as barriers can guide user movement and prevent crime opportunities by controlling access to certain areas and facilitating the efficient management of crowds.

The rationale for the approach of integrating CPTED in a fulsome manner is less controversial than that of establishing an entire new non-emergency team and is based on existing design protocols used by TransLink in previous station designs. However, CPTED alone does not address the fear and risk perception around vulnerable individuals, nor does it address their and transit users needs, but rather provides a proactive method of prevention for all crimes in transit. Additionally, implementing CPTED principles in a targeted, staggered manner is more cost-effective, and would not require the wholesale disruption of transit services in order for stations to be audited and updated. Thus, these two policies, when integrated, collectively aim to create 'defensible' spaces, lessen the burden on police forces for non-criminal activities, and offer more humane interactions with those marginalized and suffering from social ills, addressing the concerns highlighted in both literature and interviews conducted during this research. This approach ensures a comprehensive and effective response to the perceived risk of victimization on public transit.



## **9.1. Implementation Considerations**

The implementation of the recommended policies, which involve shifting from traditional police services to a non-police emergency response team, enhancing visible ‘guardianship’, and incorporating CPTED principles into transit stations, presents a range of challenges. To address the challenges associated with these policies, several key considerations are necessary:

### **9.1.1. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration**

This policy calls for the formation of robust and formalized partnerships with local health and social service agencies, like Vancouver Coastal Health and Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society. These partnerships are essential for assembling and integrating a skilled team of professionals prepared to support MVTP officers in responding to incidents. A collaborative framework that supports the collaboration between stakeholder police services, community organizations, mental health professionals, and transit authorities will be crucial for the seamless integration of new response teams.

### **9.1.2. Training and Recruitment**

Comprehensive training for all team members is fundamental to the success of this initiative. This training will cover joint response protocols, mental health first aid, de-escalation techniques, and a thorough understanding of local social services available. A necessary robust recruitment and training strategy must address staffing challenges, focusing not only on filling current vacancies but also on anticipating future needs through innovative recruitment approaches and partnerships.

### **9.1.3. Role of MVTP Community Safety Officers**

It will be also important to differentiate this policy bundle (specifically Policy Option 1) from the existing practices in Vancouver. As mentioned, MVTP have recently expanded their Community Safety Officer (CSO) program, who are tasked with helping address the social and policing issues found in and around the TransLink system, including low risks calls for assistance, enforcing transit rules, and fare enforcement,

amongst other duties (Metro Vancouver Transit Police, 2024). CSOs are designated Peace Officers and are members of the MVTP. These CSOs do not provide referrals, nor transition to care, nor are they part of a 'dual dispatch' model, and essentially act as standard police officers who enforce the rules and regulations of TransLink, and do not provide the same 'humane' type of response outlined in this policy bundle. The CSO approach, as evidenced above, does not effectively address the issues and fears of risk like the suggested approach of the distinct policy bundle proposed, which designates a separate team of specialized, trained individuals who are not peace officers, and operate separately when deployed for issues that do not require police presence. Thus, the status quo approach of CSOs would not be suitable in place of this policy, but there might be an opportunity for further training, expansion, and/or integration of MVTP CSOs to provide the police assistance in an implemented 'dual dispatch' model, as proposed.

#### **9.1.4. Phased Implementation and Pilot Projects**

Implementing a phased approach, beginning with pilot projects for the 'dual dispatch' model will allow for the testing of new protocols and the integration of social and medical workers into the response teams, while targeting CPTED upgrades based on need, budget, and immediacy of upgradeability will help enact immediate improvements to risk perception. This strategy will enable adjustments based on real-world feedback and scale up successful practices, aligned with both the immediate and long-term goals of enhancing transit safety and community support.

#### **9.1.5. Funding and Budget Allocation**

Future TransLink budgets should review available federal and provincial grants, pursue public-private partnerships, and dedicate portions of transit infrastructure budgets to these initiatives to support the comprehensive integration of social and medical response teams within the transit system. Efficient budget allocation and identifying funding sources are vital for the implementation and sustainability of this policy.

#### **9.1.6. Community Involvement and Communication**

Incorporating community feedback into the design and implementation phases for CPTED and 'dual dispatch' is essential for tailoring responses to the needs and

concerns of transit users. This engagement fosters a sense of community ownership and responsibility towards transit safety and supports the development of protocols that reflect the community's needs. In addition, ensuring that the policy is effectively communicated to the diverse groups that use transit frequently will be of utmost importance if the policy is to be effectively implemented, as any changes will need to be adequately communicated to help address the underlying issues that cause fear of victimization on transit. Explaining how the novel policy approach targets the underlying causes of fear would certainly be needed to illustrate how comprehensively TransLink researched this issue and is now providing a comprehensive response.

### **9.1.7. Strategy for Efficient Dispatch and Response**

Developing clear protocols for 911 dispatchers to identify situations requiring a dual response or a non-police emergency response is crucial. This ensures the right mix of safety and support services is dispatched to each incident, leveraging the 'dual dispatch' team's expertise without the need for erroneous deployment. This approach optimizes resource use, ensuring context-appropriate responses, and enhances the perceived and actual safety of transit users.

## **9.2. General Considerations**

As part of a comprehensive strategy to address the social determinants of justice, it is essential to consider improvements to key areas like housing, social supports, and healthcare. Such improvements are foundational to promoting human dignity, societal well-being, and reducing incidents of violence and crime in transit areas, potentially reducing the reliance on punitive criminal justice measures.

A critical element for consideration is the expansion of outreach initiatives within transit centers. Drawing inspiration from successful models like those of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and LOFT Community Services, such approaches provide targeted support to individuals grappling with homelessness, addictions, and health issues, directly within the transit environment where they may be seeking shelter or passage (City of Toronto, 2023a, 2023b).

Further, the policy should explore the adoption of a 'Housing First' model, akin to those Toronto's successful HouseLink program, and reflective of the principles seen in New York City's "No Restrictions Social Services" model (Houselink & Mainstay Community Housing, 2024; Hutchinson, 2023). This model emphasizes providing stable housing as a fundamental right and crucial recovery step, alongside offering voluntary, individualized, culturally sensitive, and portable treatment and support services without requiring individuals to meet stipulations like sobriety. This approach is rooted in the belief that secure housing is essential for addressing both individual behavioural and broader social issues.

In response to the notable shortage of supportive housing in Vancouver and the existing 'Housing First' framework, constructing social supportive housing centers near transit hubs warrants consideration. This initiative could enhance access to community support and services, facilitating a smoother transition for those temporarily sheltering in transit areas to more stable and permanent housing solutions. It aligns with recent legislative measures and financial commitments in B.C., such as the initiative by the B.C. Minister of Transport to enable land acquisition near transit hubs for housing and community services, alongside the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions' significant investment in treatment and recovery services (B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, 2022; Mass Transit, 2023; Mental Health and Addictions, 2024).

These considerations should integrate into the broader policy framework as potential strategies for addressing the complex challenges facing transit environments and the communities they serve. Implementing such measures could lead to a holistic improvement in public safety, well-being, and justice within the transit system and beyond.

## Chapter 10. Conclusion

This study reveals that perceptions of safety on transit are shaped by several factors, such as personal experiences, media narratives, societal issues, and the visibility of public safety personnel. It highlights that fear and safety concerns are disproportionately higher among women, racialized individuals, and those from diverse gender and sexual backgrounds. These perceptions are influenced by the time, location, and the specific routes of transit use, as well as by issues like visible homelessness, poverty, and drug addiction within transit environments.

The research indicates that current public safety measures on TransLink services are insufficient and fail to address the complex challenges of modern Vancouver. By looking at strategies employed in other cities, including infrastructure improvements, community-focused initiatives, and inclusive safety measures, this study suggests ways to enhance safety for all transit users.

These findings underscore the importance of developing proactive, multifaceted policies that address the root causes of safety concerns, moving beyond mere reactive measures. The study offers comprehensive insights and evidence-based recommendations for improving both the perception and reality of safety in public transit, advocating for strategies that are inclusive, context-specific, and cater to the diverse needs of transit users.

For policymakers and stakeholders, this research serves as a guide to devising interventions that can increase public confidence in the transit system, thereby supporting urban mobility and sustainability goals. By adopting the recommended approaches, TransLink can strive towards a safer, more welcoming, and efficient transit environment for everyone.

The research reflects ethical considerations and personal biases, emphasizing the need for respectful and empathetic engagement with all participants. My position as a white, cisgender male, that does not commonly experience fear on transit, highlighted the need to recognize and address my own biases. This was essential for conducting the research empathetically and inclusively, ensuring all perspectives were fairly and accurately represented.

Despite challenges in harmonizing diverse viewpoints and distilling extensive data into actionable recommendations, this study paves the way for future research on community-led safety solutions and technological enhancements to transit security. This continuous exploration is essential for refining policies to meet the evolving needs of urban transit systems and their diverse user base.

## References

- Ali, A. (2023, April 13). *Specialty teams redeployed after violent incidents on transit | Urbanized*. <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/transit-police-violence-vancouver>
- Alrasheed, M., Alrasheed, S., & Alqahtani, A. S. (2022). Impact of Social Media Exposure on Risk Perceptions, Mental Health Outcomes, and Preventive Behaviors during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Saudi Arabia. *Saudi Journal of Health Systems Research*, 2(3), 107–113. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000525209>
- Ambrey, C. L., Fleming, C. M., & Manning, M. (2014). Perception or Reality, What Matters Most When it Comes to Crime in Your Neighbourhood? *Social Indicators Research*, 119(2), 877–896. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0521-6>
- American Public Transit Association Transit Infrastructure Security Work Group. (2010). *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) for Transit Facilities*. American Public Transit Association. [https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/Standards\\_Documents/APTA-SS-SIS-RP-007-10.pdf](https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/Standards_Documents/APTA-SS-SIS-RP-007-10.pdf)
- Barnett, E. C. (2023, October 27). *Six-Member Behavioral Health Team Launches to Respond to Non-Emergency Calls, Accompanied by Cops*. PubliCola. <https://publicola.com/2023/10/27/six-member-behavioral-health-team-launches-to-respond-to-non-emergency-calls-accompanied-by-cops/>
- Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). (2020, February 10). *New ambassador program deployed on trains | Bay Area Rapid Transit*. Bart.Gov. <https://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2020/news20200210-0>
- B.C. Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General & Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. (2023). *2023/24—2025/26 Service Plan*. Government of British Columbia. <https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2023/sp/pdf/ministry/pssg.pdf>
- B.C. Ministry of Health. (2023, December 5). *Province expands health-care workforce and increases patient access*. BC Gov News. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HLTH0150-001930>
- B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. (2022, April 5). *Province to increase housing, services near transit hubs*. News.Gov.Bc.Ca. [https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news\\_releases\\_2020-2024/2022TRAN0030-000492.htm](https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2020-2024/2022TRAN0030-000492.htm)
- BC Transit. (2010). *BC Transit Infrastructure Design Guidelines*. <https://www.bctransit.com/documents/1507213417526>
- BC Transit. (2024). *BC Transit—About BC Transit*. BCTransit.Com. <https://www.bctransit.com/about>

- Bharoocha, H. (2023, October 31). *Ride Fearlessly: A Framework for Reimagining Transit Safety*. TransForm. <https://www.transformca.org/safety-on-transit>
- Birkbeck, C. (2014). Media Representations of Crime and Criminal Justice. In Oxford Handbooks Editorial Board (Ed.), *Oxford Handbooks Online: Criminology and Criminal Justice* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935383.013.15>
- Butler, A., & LePard, D. (2022). *A Rapid Investigation into Repeat Offending and Random Stranger Violence in British Columbia* (Investigative Report). B.C. Ministry of Attorney General. [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Prolific\\_Offender\\_Report\\_BCFNJC\\_submission.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Prolific_Offender_Report_BCFNJC_submission.pdf)
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). (2024). *Infographic: Canada's seniors population outlook: Uncharted territory | CIHI*. Cih.ca. <https://www.cihi.ca/en/infographic-canadas-seniors-population-outlook-uncharted-territory>
- Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA). (2023, April 24). *CUTA calls on all levels of government to address violence on transit*. CUTA. <https://cutaactu.ca/cuta-calls-on-all-levels-of-government-to-address-violence-on-transit/>
- Casteel, C., & Peek-Asa, C. (2000). Effectiveness of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) in reducing robberies. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 18(4 Suppl), 99–115. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797\(00\)00146-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797(00)00146-x)
- CBC News. (2020, July 29). TransLink reached record boardings in 2019 before ridership plunged during pandemic, data shows. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/translink-record-boardings-2019-covid-19-impact-1.5667471>
- CBC News. (2023, April 12). *B.C. government to open dedicated enforcement hubs targeting repeat violent offenders*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/government-hubs-for-repeat-offenders-1.6808157>
- CBC News. (2024, February 19). More doctors alone can't fix B.C.'s health-care system: Report. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/more-physicians-health-care-report-bc-1.7118582>
- Ceccato, V. (2017). Women's victimisation and safety in transit environments. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 19(3), 163–167. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41300-017-0024-5>
- Ceccato, V., Gaudalet, N., & Graf, G. (2022). Crime and safety in transit environments: A systematic review of the English and the French literature, 1970–2020. *Public Transport*, 14(1), 105–153. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12469-021-00265-1>



- Ceccato, V., & Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2022). Fear of Sexual Harassment and Its Impact on Safety Perceptions in Transit Environments: A Global Perspective. *VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*, 28(1), 26–48.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801221992874>
- Ceccato, V., & Uittenbogaard, A. C. (2013). Space–Time Dynamics of Crime in Transport Nodes. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 104(1), 131.  
[https://www.academia.edu/22301471/Space\\_Time\\_Dynamics\\_of\\_Crime\\_in\\_Transport\\_Nodes](https://www.academia.edu/22301471/Space_Time_Dynamics_of_Crime_in_Transport_Nodes)
- Chan, K. (2021, May 31). *TransLink recorded a 52% ridership drop in 2020 due to the pandemic*. Daily Hive - Urbanized. <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/translink-2020-ridership-statistics>
- City & State NY. (2022, August 26). *Strategies for solving homelessness in New York City and across the U.S.* City & State NY.  
<https://www.cityandstateny.com/policy/2022/08/strategies-solving-homelessness-new-york-city-and-across-us/376338/>
- City of Calgary Intergovernmental & Corporate Strategy. (2024). *Public transit*.  
<https://www.Calgary.Ca>. <https://www.calgary.ca/content/www/en/home/major-projects/yyc-matters/transit.html>
- City of Toronto. (2023a, March 22). *City of Toronto, TTC strengthen transit system outreach efforts with new partnership providing more health and mental health supports to vulnerable people* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada). City of Toronto; City of Toronto. <https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-ttc-strengthen-transit-system-outreach-efforts-with-new-partnership-providing-more-health-and-mental-health-supports-to-vulnerable-people/>
- City of Toronto. (2023b, March 29). *Toronto Community Crisis Service* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada). City of Toronto; City of Toronto. <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/community-safety-programs/toronto-community-crisis-service/>
- College of Policing. (2021, July 1). *The effectiveness of visible police patrol* [College.police.uk]. <https://www.college.police.uk/research/what-works-policing-reduce-crime/visible-police-patrol>
- Conroy, S., & Sutton, D. (2022, July 7). *Violence against seniors and their perceptions of safety in Canada*. Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00011-eng.htm>
- Cotter, A. (2022, February 16). *Perceptions of and experiences with police and the justice system among the Black and Indigenous populations in Canada*. Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00003-eng.htm>

- Dau, P. M., Vandeviver, C., Dewinter, M., Witlox, F., & Vander Beken, T. (2023). Policing Directions: A Systematic Review on the Effectiveness of Police Presence. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 29(2), 191–225. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-021-09500-8>
- Department of Justice Canada. (2023, May 15). *Amendments to strengthen Canada's bail system*. Justice.Gc.Ca. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/pcscbs-cprslscc/index.html>
- Desue Jr., S. (2021). *ORDINANCE NO. 364 OF THE TRI-COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT OF OREGON (TRIMET) AMENDING CHAPTERS 28 AND 29 OF THE TRIMET CODE TO LIMIT WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT MAY CONDUCT FARE INSPECTIONS, CREATE A NEW OFFENSE REGARDING EMPLOYEE ASSAULTS, ALLOW TRIMET PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS NON-CRIMINAL VIOLATIONS, AND UPDATE TERMINOLOGY (FIRST READING AND PUBLIC HEARING)*. TriMet. <https://trimet.org/meetings/board/pdfs/2021-12-15/Ord%20364%20Board%20memo.pdf>
- Devlin, M. (2023, April 12). *17-year-old dead after being stabbed on a bus in Surrey*. <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/17-year-old-dead-bus-stabbing-surrey>
- Draaisma, M. (2023, January 25). Transit workers union speaks out amid “out of control” violence, calling for national task force. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/amalgamated-transit-union-canada-national-task-force-transit-violence-1.6725074>
- Dryden, J. (2023, April 3). Calgary adding security guards, increasing overnight patrols in bid to boost transit safety. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/calgary-transit-rebecca-haines-saah-safety-disorder-drugs-1.6799771>
- Federal Transit Administration Office of Research Demonstration and Innovation & Federal Transit Administration Office of Program Management. (2004). *Transit Security Design Considerations Final Report November 2004*. Federal Transit Administration. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/ftasesc.pdf>
- Galvan, A. (2020, October 2). *Study finds LGBTQ people much likelier to be crime victims*. PBS NewsHour. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/study-finds-lgbtq-people-much-likelier-to-be-crime-victims>
- Gangdev, S. (2023, July 6). SkyTrain alarm designed to discourage loitering ran only for testing purposes, says TransLink. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/mosquito-alarm-skytrain-vancouver-testing-1.6899420>

- Government of New York. (2022, February 18). *Mayor Adams Releases Subway Safety Plan, Says Safe Subway is Prerequisite for NYC's Recovery*. The Official Website of the City of New York. <http://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/087-22/mayor-adams-releases-subway-safety-plan-says-safe-subway-prerequisite-new-york-city-s>
- Grant, J. (2022, December 10). *Advocate worried over Metro Vancouver Transit Police's new "community safety officers" planned for 2023* | CBC News. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-transit-police-community-safety-program-1.6681750>
- Griffin, T. (2023, April 20). *Some U.S. cities could offer model for easing transit violence in Canada, experts say*. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/transit-violence-vancouver-toronto-usa-cities-model-1.6816741>
- Hartnagel, T. F. (1979). The Perception and Fear of Crime: Implications for Neighborhood Cohesion, Social Activity, and Community Affect. *Social Forces*, 58(1), 176. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2577792>
- Hasegawa, R. (2023, April 11). *New Westminster police seek 3 suspects after stabbing at Columbia SkyTrain Station*. CTV News Vancouver. <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/new-westminster-police-seek-3-suspects-after-stabbing-at-columbia-skytrain-station-1.6350566>
- Heinen, E. (2023). The impact of crime and crime-related experiences, worries, and perceptions on travel behavior. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 96, 265–284. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2023.06.014>
- Houselink & Mainstay Community Housing. (2024). *Houselink & Mainstay, Toronto's largest non-profit housing agency*. Houselink and Mainstay Community Housing. <https://www.hlms.ca/about-us/>
- Housen, J. (2023, October 25). *CARE Department's Dual Dispatch Launches: Expanding Seattle's Emergency Response Toolkit and Mayor Harrell's New Public Safety Department*. Office of the Mayor. <https://harrell.seattle.gov/2023/10/25/care-departments-dual-dispatch-launches-expanding-seattles-emergency-response-toolkit-and-mayor-harrells-new-public-safety-department/>
- Hurwitz, J., & Peffley, M. (1997). Public Perceptions of Race and Crime: The Role of Racial Stereotypes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 41(2), 375–401. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111769>
- Hutchinson, A. (2023). *Housing First: A Proven Approach to Addressing Street Homelessness*. Office of the New York City. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/housing-first/>

- Infrastructure Canada. (2022, July 1). *Building Canada's public transit future: Healthy and sustainable modes of transportation for all*.  
<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/transit-transport/index-eng.html>
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO). (2024). *ISO 22341:2021*. ISO.  
<https://www.iso.org/standard/50078.html>
- International Transit Forum. (2018). *Women's Safety and Security: A Public Transport Priority*. OECD Reporting. [https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/womens-safety-security\\_0.pdf](https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/womens-safety-security_0.pdf)
- Ipsos. (2023, March 6). *Over a Quarter (27%) of Canadians Do Not Feel Safe Taking Public Transit Alone, Rising to 44% of Toronto Residents | Ipsos*.  
<https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/over-quarter-of-canadians-do-not-feel-safe-taking-public-transit-alone>
- Irvin-Erickson, Y., & La Vigne, N. (2015). A Spatio-temporal Analysis of Crime at Washington, DC Metro Rail: Stations' Crime-generating and Crime-attracting Characteristics as Transportation Nodes and Places. *Crime Science*, 4(1), 14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-015-0026-5>
- Itoi, N. G. (2023, February 27). *How Social Media Shapes Our Perceptions About Crime*.  
<https://hai.stanford.edu/news/how-social-media-shapes-our-perceptions-about-crime>
- Jackson, H. (2023, January 30). *Toronto to provide additional TTC safety measures after series of violent attacks—Toronto*. Global News.  
<https://globalnews.ca/news/9447134/toronto-additional-ttc-safety-measures-violent-attacks/>
- Jordan, M. (2019, November 6). *Successful elevator attendant program expands to two more stations | Bay Area Rapid Transit*. Bart.Gov.  
<https://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2019/news20191106>
- Kania, R. R. E., & Walsh, W. F. (1993). Mass media and criminal justice: The introduction to this special issue. *The Justice Professional*, 8(1), 1–11.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1478601X.1993.10383020>
- Kergin, B. (2023, April 23). *Poll: Majority of people feel unsafe on Metro Vancouver's transit system*. Vancouver Is Awesome - Glacier Media Group.  
<https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/local-news/poll-majority-of-people-feel-unsafe-on-metro-vancouver-transit-system-6896315>
- Kim, J. W. (2018). They liked and shared: Effects of social media virality metrics on perceptions of message influence and behavioral intentions. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 84, 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.01.030>

- Kroman, D. (2023, November 27). *Sound Transit fare ambassadors are checking if you paid, but nicely*. The Seattle Times. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/sound-transit-fare-ambassadors-are-checking-if-you-paid-but-nicely/>
- Kulkarni, A. (2023a, April 18). *Preventing violent crime in B.C. and on transit will take more than just police, criminologists say*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-transit-public-violence-solutions-1.6813746>
- Kulkarni, A. (2023b, April 29). In 2022, public transit use in Metro Vancouver nearly as much as pre-pandemic levels, TransLink data shows. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/translink-ridership-rebound-2022-1.6827116>
- LA Metro Media Relations. (2023, June 26). *LADOT AND METRO TO CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION OF THE VENICE BLVD SAFETY AND MOBILITY PROJECT*. LA Metro. <https://www.metro.net/about/ladot-and-metro-to-celebrate-the-completion-of-the-venice-blvd-safety-and-mobility-project/>
- Lazaruk, S. (2023, April 18). *How do we keep people safe on Metro Vancouver transit?* *VancouverSun.Com*. <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/how-do-we-keep-people-safe-on-metro-vancouver-transit>
- Lee, M., Wickes, R., & Jackson, J. (2020). *Social Cohesion and Pro-Social Responses to Perceptions of Crime: Victorian Report*. <https://doi.org/10.25910/5E65AB40054F5>
- Lindblom, M. (2023, October 6). *Violence and transit: What's happening and what Seattle-area agencies are doing to protect riders*. The Seattle Times. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/transportation/what-are-seattle-area-transit-agencies-doing-to-protect-riders/>
- Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2009). HOW TO EASE WOMEN'S FEAR OF TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENTS. *MINETA Transportation Institute*. <https://transweb.sjsu.edu/sites/default/files/2611-women-transportation-bf.pdf>
- Loukaitou-Sideris, A. (2014). Fear and safety in transit environments from the women's perspective. *Security Journal*, 27(2), 242–256. <https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2014.9>
- Loxton, E., O'Rourke, D., & Salman, N. (2019, July 25). *Declining bus ridership: Improving the efficiency of transit networks* | *McKinsey*. *McKinsey.Com*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-logistics-and-infrastructure/our-insights/declining-bus-ridership-improving-the-efficiency-of-transit-networks>
- Manning, M., & Fleming, C. (2017). The economics of private security expenditure: The influence of perceptions of crime. *Security Journal*, 30(2), 401–416. <https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2014.24>

- Manning, M., Fleming, C. M., Pham, H.-T., & Wong, G. T. W. (2022). What Matters More, Perceived or Real Crime? *Social Indicators Research*, 163(3), 1221–1248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-022-02924-7>
- Marchesan, J., & Talbot, M. (2023, January 26). *Toronto police to increase presence on TTC to deal with rash of violence*. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2023/01/26/toronto-police-increase-presence-ttc-violence/>
- Mass Transit. (2020, June 18). *TriMet reallocates \$1.8 million in funding from transit police and additional sources to community-based services that preserve public safety*. Mass Transit. <https://www.masstransitmag.com/management/press-release/21142785/trimet-trimet-reallocates-18-million-in-funding-from-transit-police-and-additional-sources-to-community-based-services-that-preserve-public-safety>
- Mass Transit. (2022, March 16). *Safety response team works to create safe, welcoming environment on TriMet*. Mass Transit. <https://www.masstransitmag.com/safety-security/press-release/21260638/trimet-safety-response-team-works-to-create-safe-welcoming-environment-on-trimet>
- Mass Transit. (2023, November 9). *Province of British Columbia introduces legislation to support building more homes near transit hubs*. Mass Transit. <https://www.masstransitmag.com/management/press-release/53077725/province-of-british-columbia-introduces-legislation-to-support-building-more-homes-near-transit-hubs>
- Matassa-Fung, D. (2023, April 16). *'Crisis levels': SkyTrain workers union wants help dealing with violence on system* | *Globalnews.ca*. Global News. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9628029/skytrain-workers-union-calling-for-help/>
- McElhanney, Mustel Group, & City of Vancouver. (2020). *Summary Report 2019 Vancouver Panel Survey* (Panel Survey) [Summary Report]. City of Vancouver. <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2019-transportation-panel-survey.pdf>
- McKnight, P. (2022, January 25). *Peter McKnight: Crime in Vancouver not at all-time high, despite perception*. *VancouverSun.Com*. <https://vancouver.sun.com/opinion/peter-mcknight-crime-in-vancouver-not-at-all-time-high-despite-perception>
- McSheffrey, E. (2023, April 13). *'Concerning': Metro Vancouver Transit Police spokesperson speaks to officer workload, safety issues - BC*. Global News. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9621754/metro-vancouver-transit-police-not-enough-officers/>
- Mental Health and Addictions. (2024, January 25). *Record expansion of treatment options will support more people with addictions* | *BC Gov News*. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024MMHA0004-000080>

- Meserole, C. (2018, May 9). *How Misinformation Spreads on Social Media—And What To Do About It*. Default. <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/how-misinformation-spreads-on-social-media-and-what-to-do-about-it>
- Metro Vancouver Transit Police. (2014). *Annual Statistical Report 2009-2013*. MVTP. <https://transitpolice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2014-Transit-Police-Five-Year-Trend-Report.pdf>
- Metro Vancouver Transit Police. (2023a). *2022-2026 Strategic Plan 2022 Year-End Update Report* [Year-End Update Report]. MVTP. [https://transitpolice.ca/wp-content/uploads/\\_pda/2023/02/2022-Year-End-Strategic-Plan-Report.pdf](https://transitpolice.ca/wp-content/uploads/_pda/2023/02/2022-Year-End-Strategic-Plan-Report.pdf)
- Metro Vancouver Transit Police. (2023b). History. *Transit Police*. <https://transitpolice.ca/about-us/history/>
- Metro Vancouver Transit Police. (2024). Community Safety Officer. *Transit Police*. <https://transitpolice.ca/careers/cso/>
- Mochrie, P. (2021, December 16). *Council Memo—Business Roundtable on Property Crime—RTS 14744*. <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/12-16-2021-council-memo-council-memo-business-roundtable-on-property-crime.pdf>
- NBC New York. (2022, February 18). NYC's New Subway Safety Plan: Mental Health Teams, More Police Enforcement. *NBC New York*. <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/adams-hochul-to-unveil-plan-on-homelessness-and-the-subways/3561222/>
- Nerbovig, A. (2023, June 29). *Seattle's "Police Alternative" Pilot Includes Police, Launches in October*. The Stranger. <https://www.thestranger.com/news/2023/06/29/79056116/seattles-police-alternative-pilot-includes-police>
- Newton, A. (2014). Crime on Public Transport. In G. Bruinsma & D. Weisburd (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice* (pp. 709–720). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2\\_301](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2_301)
- Newton, A., & Ceccato, V. (2015). Theoretical Perspectives of Safety and Security in Transit Environments. In V. Ceccato & A. Newton (Eds.), *Safety and Security in Transit Environments: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (pp. 23–36). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137457653\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137457653_2)
- Nicholson, K., & McQuillan, L. (2023, February 8). Shaken by Toronto transit attacks, riders say they don't feel safe—But doubt more police will help. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-transit-riders-safety-1.6739872>
- Nino, J. D. (2023, March 17). How Canada's housing crisis is fuelling violence on our public-transit systems. *Macleans.Ca*. <https://macleans.ca/society/how-canadas-housing-crisis-is-fuelling-violence-on-our-public-transit-systems/>

- Phillips, N. D. (2017). Violence, Media Effects, and Criminology. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.013.189>
- Public Safety Canada. (2023). *Public Safety Canada Departmental Plan 2023–24*. Public Safety Canada. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/dprtmntl-pln-2023-24/index-en.aspx>
- Radin, D. (2023, March 6). *LA Metro launches ambassador pilot program to improve transit safety*. CBS Los Angeles. <https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/la-metro-launches-ambassador-pilot-program-to-improve-transit-safety/>
- Richardson, H. (2023, November 1). *Surmounting the Fiscal Cliff: Identifying Stable Funding Solutions for Public Transportation Systems*. Transit Center. <https://transitcenter.org/surmounting-the-fiscal-cliff/>
- Riebe, N. (2023, May 17). 58% of all Edmonton transit tickets in 2020 and 2021 were issued to Indigenous people. *CBC News*.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/58-of-all-edmonton-transit-tickets-in-2020-and-2021-were-issued-to-indigenous-people-1.6845823>
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. SAGE Publications.
- Sajan, B. (2023, April 17). *B.C. premier outlines measures to address safety on transit*. CTV News Vancouver. <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/b-c-premier-outlines-measures-to-address-safety-on-transit-1.6359775>
- Seyd, J. (2023, April 14). *West Van Blue Bus drivers voice safety concerns after violent fight breaks out onboard*. North Shore News. <https://www.nsnews.com/local-news/west-van-blue-bus-drivers-voice-safety-concerns-after-violent-fight-breaks-out-onboard-bus-6856937>
- Sharkey, P., Besbris, M., & Friedson, M. (2017). Poverty and Crime. In D. Brady & L. M. Burton (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty* (1st ed., pp. 623–636). Oxford University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199914050.013.28>
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). (2023). *SCOPE Program*. Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.  
<https://www5.septa.org/safety/scope/>
- Stanford Law School. (2023, May 10). *San Francisco's Street Crisis Response Team: Can an Alternative Approach to Emergency Response Reduce Harm?* Stanford Law School. <https://law.stanford.edu/2023/05/10/can-an-alternative-approach-to-emergency-response-reduce-harm/>
- Statista. (2023). *Canada: Rate of criminal offences 2022*. Statista.  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/526160/canada-rate-of-criminal-offences/>



- Statistics Canada. (2018, May 31). *Violent victimization of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in Canada, 2014*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2018001/article/54923-eng.htm>
- The Canadian Press. (2023, April 13). *List of recent violent attacks on public transit in Canada*. Toronto Star. [https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/list-of-recent-violent-attacks-on-public-transit-in-canada/article\\_fe681a17-318f-5ee2-89a3-7ae6b34c7cbe.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/list-of-recent-violent-attacks-on-public-transit-in-canada/article_fe681a17-318f-5ee2-89a3-7ae6b34c7cbe.html)
- The City of Calgary. (2023, April 3). *The City of Calgary announces immediate actions to make Transit safer*. The City of Calgary Announces Immediate Actions to Make Transit Safer. <https://newsroom.calgary.ca/the-city-of-calgary-announces-immediate-actions-to-make-transit-safer/>
- The Federation of Community Social Service of BC. (2020). *Issues @ FCSSBC*. The Federation of Community Social Services of BC. <https://fcssbc.ca/issues/>
- The Homeless Hub. (2020, August 19). *Does Transit Matter? Connections between Transportation Systems & Homelessness for Women in Canada | The Homeless Hub*. Homelesshub.Ca. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/does-transit-matter-connections-between-transportation-systems-homelessness-women-canada>
- The International CPTED Association. (2024). <https://www.cpted.net/>. The International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association. <https://www.cpted.net/>
- Toronto Transit Commission. (2023a, June 12). *Community Safety and Security Update*. Toronto Transit Commission. [https://www.ttc.ca/-/media/Project/TTC/DevProto/Documents/Home/Public-Meetings/Board/2023/June-12/3\\_Community\\_Safety\\_and\\_Security\\_Update.pdf?rev=1cd14d52a6234b63837024ea37161735&hash=800B31BD046F50083FE2946B1720D8DC](https://www.ttc.ca/-/media/Project/TTC/DevProto/Documents/Home/Public-Meetings/Board/2023/June-12/3_Community_Safety_and_Security_Update.pdf?rev=1cd14d52a6234b63837024ea37161735&hash=800B31BD046F50083FE2946B1720D8DC)
- Toronto Transit Commission. (2023b, June 12). *TTC, City data shows safety and security on transit is improving with new and enhanced measures*. Ttc.Ca. <https://www.ttc.ca/news/2023/June/TTC-City-data-shows-safety-and-security-on-transit-is-improving-with-new-and-enhanced-measures>
- Transit Center. (2021, July). *Transit Center Policy Paper: Safety for All*. <https://transitcenter.org/publication/safety-for-all/>
- TransLink. (2012). *Transit-Oriented Communities Design Guidelines*. TransLink. [https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/plans-and-projects/managing-the-transit-network/transit\\_oriented\\_communities\\_design\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/plans-and-projects/managing-the-transit-network/transit_oriented_communities_design_guidelines.pdf)
- TransLink. (2020). *TransLink 2019 Accountability Report*. TransLink. [https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/about-translink/corporate-reports/accountability\\_reports/2019/accountability\\_report\\_2019.pdf](https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/about-translink/corporate-reports/accountability_reports/2019/accountability_report_2019.pdf)

- TransLink. (2022). *Transport 2050 10-Year Priorities*. TransLink. [https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/plans-and-projects/regional-transportation-strategy/transport-2050/t2050\\_10yr-priorities.pdf](https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/plans-and-projects/regional-transportation-strategy/transport-2050/t2050_10yr-priorities.pdf)
- TransLink. (2024a). *Alerts*. TransLink. <https://www.translink.ca/alerts>
- TransLink. (2024b). *Governance Model*. <https://www.translink.ca/about-us/about-translink/governance-model>
- TransLink. (2024c). *Infrastructure Upgrades*. <https://www.translink.ca/plans-and-projects/projects/rapid-transit-projects/skytrain-expansion-program/infrastructure-upgrades>
- TransLink. (2024d). *Safety and Security*. TransLink. <https://www.translink.ca/rider-guide/safety-and-security>
- TransLink. (2024e). *Transit Security*. TransLink. <https://www.translink.ca/about-us/about-translink/transit-security>
- TransLink. (2024f). *TransLink Rules and Regulations*. TransLink. <https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/rider-guide/etiquette-on-transit/rules-and-regulations.pdf>
- TransLink Infrastructure Planning. (2011). *Transit Passenger Facility Design Guidelines*. TransLink. <https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/plans-and-projects/managing-the-transit-network/tpfdg-print-version.pdf>
- Truong, K. (2022, October 24). *San Francisco's answer to safety concerns is more community ambassadors*. The San Francisco Standard. <https://sfstandard.com/2022/10/24/san-franciscos-answer-to-safety-concerns-is-more-community-ambassadors/>
- Vancouver Police Department. (2021a). *Vancouver Police Department Crime Incident and Crime Rate Statistics 2002-2007*. VPD. <https://vpd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/crime-incident-crime-rate-2002-2007.pdf>
- Vancouver Police Department. (2021b). *Vancouver Police Department Crime Incident and Crime Rate Statistics 2014-2019*. VPD. <https://vpd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/crime-incident-crime-rate-2014-2019.pdf>
- Vancouver Police Department. (2024). *Vancouver Police Department Crime Incident and Crime Rate Statistics 2019-2023*. VPD. <https://vpd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/crime-incident-crime-rate-2014-2019.pdf>
- Vera Institute of Justice. (2020, November). *CASE STUDY: CAHOOTS - Eugene, Oregon*. Vera Institute of Justice. <https://www.vera.org/behavioral-health-crisis-alternatives/cahoots>

- Vescera, Z. (2023, May 29). *The Myth of Increased Transit Violence*. The Tyee. <https://thetyee.ca/News/2023/05/29/Myth-Increased-Transit-Violence/>
- Vijaykumar, S., Jin, Y., & Nowak, G. (2015). Social Media and the Virality of Risk: The Risk Amplification through Media Spread (RAMS) Model. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 12(3), 653–677. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsem-2014-0072>
- White Bird Clinic. (2024). *CAHOOTS*. White Bird Clinic. <https://whitebirdclinic.org/cahoots/>
- Women Abuse Council of Toronto. (2022, April). Issue brief: Women, safety and public transit. *WomanACT*. <https://womanact.ca/publications/issue-brief-women-safety-and-public-transit/>
- Wood, G. (2023, March 30). *Fewer crimes reported on Metro Vancouver's transit system in 2022*. Vancouver Is Awesome. <https://www.newwestrecord.ca/highlights/fewer-crimes-reported-on-metro-vancouvers-transit-system-in-2022-6779667>
- Wortley, R., & Tilley, N. (2014). Theories for Situational and Environmental Crime Prevention. In G. Bruinsma & D. Weisburd (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice* (pp. 5164–5173). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2\\_548](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2_548)
- Yun, T. (2023, February 3). *Nearly 6 in 10 public transit users say they feel less safe commuting after string of violent attacks*. CTVNews. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/nearly-6-in-10-public-transit-users-say-they-feel-less-safe-commuting-after-string-of-violent-attacks-1.6258082>
- Zahm, D. (2007a, March 1). *Using CPTED in Problem Solving*. ASU Center for Problem-Oriented Policing. <https://popcenter.asu.edu/content/using-cpted-problem-solving>
- Zahm, D. (2007b, October). *Using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in Problem-Solving | Office of Justice Programs*. U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/using-crime-prevention-through-environmental-design-problem-solving>

## Appendix.

### Interview Questionnaire Topics and Example Questions

<b>Transit User Interview Questionnaire Topic</b>	<b>Example Question</b>
General Transit Usage	How frequently do you use the Metro Vancouver transit system?
Perception of Safety	What specific elements or incidents have significantly impacted your perception of safety on transit?
Impact of Perceived Safety on Transit Usage	Has your perception of safety affected your transit usage? In what ways?
Existing Safety Measures	How would you evaluate the current safety measures implemented within the transit system? Are there any measures you find particularly effective or ineffective?
Suggestions for Improvement	What additional safety measures or policies do you think could help improve the perception of safety on transit?
<b>Academic Expert Questionnaire Topic</b>	<b>Example Question</b>
Perceptions & Factors	From your experience, are there notable differences in safety perceptions among different demographic groups within the transit user community?
Theoretical Frameworks	Does any theoretical framework guide your thinking on transportation policy (and additionally, how does it relate to transit violence)?
Policy Response and Alternative Measures	What policy alternatives could potentially enhance perceived safety within Metro Vancouver's transit system?
Potential Strategies for Improvement	Are there any successful models or best practices from other regions that could be adopted or adapted for Metro Vancouver?
Communication and Public Engagement	Can transit authorities and policymakers better communicate with the public regarding safety measures and incidents of violent crime on transit? How so?
Long-Term Projections	How can findings from research like this project be integrated into long-term urban planning and policy formulation?
<b>Government/Organizational Representative Questionnaire Topic</b>	<b>Example Question</b>

Perceptions and Factors	From a governmental/organizational perspective, how is the safety of transit users in Metro Vancouver currently being addressed?
Policy Responses and Alternative Measures	How does the government's stance on policy measures align with transit users' perceptions and experiences of safety?
Existing Safety Measures and Policies	Can you discuss any existing governmental policies or safety measures aimed at mitigating violent crime or improving the perception of safety on transit?
Potential Strategies for Improvement	Are there collaborations with other governmental bodies, academia, or the private sector underway or planned to address transit safety?
Communication and Public Engagement	What mechanisms are in place for public feedback on transit safety issues, and how is this feedback integrated into policy formulation?
Long-Term Projections	How is the government planning to address transit safety in the long term to align with urban sustainability and mobility objectives?

Interview Questionnaires and Example Question from each questionnaire.

Three distinct interview questionnaires were prepared and approved for the different audiences of the interviews.