

Congestion Relief Plan Authorization and Recommendations FY 2023/24 to FY 2026/27



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Contents

Executive Summary	1
1 Introduction	4
CRP Background and History	4
The CRP Update	7
2 Recommended Changes	11
Recommendation 1: Increase fees to maintain consistent levels of support	11
Recommendation 2: Simplify funding designation	15
3 CRP Authorization	17
Funding	18
Dedicated Annual Support	19
4 Conclusion	23

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Executive Summary

Background

The San Mateo County Congestion Relief Plan (CRP) was first adopted by C/CAG on February 8, 2002, in response to traffic congestion measurements, at locations throughout the County, which exceeded the standards adopted by C/CAG under the Congestion Management Program (CMP). Each urban area in California is required to adopt a CMP, per the requirements of California Government Code 65088.¹ CMPs detail the process that each area will undertake in order to track current and possible impacts to congestion on their roadways, and set standards against which those metrics are compared in order to identify deficiencies.

When deficiencies are identified, the area or specific jurisdictions within it must take efforts to fix the specific congested locations identified. The adoption of the Congestion Relief Plan in San Mateo County provides a countywide deficiency plan, relieving all San Mateo County jurisdictions from State mandates to fix the specific congested locations that triggered a deficiency, and any locations that might trigger a deficiency in the subsequent four years.

The CRP has historically funded projects and programs with funding allocated across four designated categories:

1. Local Transportation Services
2. Travel Demand Management
3. Intelligent Traffic System (ITS)/Traffic Operational Improvement Strategies
4. Linking Transportation and Land Use

CRP Authorization Update

In late 2022, C/CAG began the process of designing the new authorization for the current CRP, which will cover the period from July 2023 through June 2027. The project team undertook a financial analysis of previous CRP funded projects and programs, and engaged with county stakeholders to identify priorities relating to mobility improvement across the county.

Through that process, the following key considerations were identified:

- County stakeholders see value in the goals of the CRP, and continue to prioritize the programs that have received consistent funding.
- The transportation and mobility landscape has changed significantly since the most recent CRP Authorization. New priorities have emerged, particularly related to responding to regulatory pressures and capitalizing on emerging remote work and service opportunities.
- Fees to fund the CRP have not been adjusted since 2007, and as cost of services have adjusted in that time due to inflation, the program's overall spending power has decreased.

¹ CA Govt Code § 65088 (2021)

Proposed recommendations

Based on those considerations, this document proposes two recommendations:

1. **A small increase to the annual CRP budget:** The CRP fund has remained the same since 2007, and during that time the cost of operation for the projects and programs have increased. This signifies that the CRP is not able to fund mobility projects and programs at the level of service originally intended. Recommended fee increases will help better align the CRP with its intended capacity to support mobility improvements across the county.
2. **Simplification of the allocation process:** The current process of allocating dollar amounts per category limits the ability to fund programs flexibly and to more proactively address changing needs and priorities. A simplified process will make it easier for C/CAG to track the CRP successes on an annual basis, while maintaining flexibility to fund Board-approved projects and programs on an as-needed basis. It is recommended that the CRP continue to support four ongoing programs at consistent levels each year:
 - The **Countywide Shuttle program**, which provides first and last mile as well as community-wide shuttle service
 - **Commute.org**, which provides transportation demand management support to employers, developers, and directly to travelers within San Mateo County
 - **21 Elements**, which provides support to jurisdictions in implementing Housing Elements as well as developing on-going housing policies and programs.
 - **C/CAG's Climate Initiatives**, which include the Resource Management and Climate Protection Committee (RMCP) to support the development of climate change-related programs as well as the Regionally Integrated Climate Action Planning Suite (RICAPS), which serves to provide ongoing climate action planning technical assistance to local governments in the county.

CRP Authorization

The CRP fund consists of fees provided by each jurisdiction. The total budget is set and approved by the C/CAG Board of Directors, and the fee for each jurisdiction is determined based on a combination of population and projected trip generation.

Per recommendation 1 above, the budget included in the FY23/24-FY 26/27 CRP Authorization will include incremental increases as follows:

- Year 1 – No total budget increase, but individual jurisdiction fees will be adjusted within the current budget based on updates to population and projected trip generation
- Year 2 – A 5% increase to the budget and jurisdiction fees in order to better adjust to inflation since 2007.
- Years 3 and 4 – an increase to the budget and jurisdiction fees to align with recorded CPI and capped at 3%.

The table below outlines the funding allocation structure for the upcoming authorization period, assuming the cap of 3% CPI increase in Years 3 and 4.

Table 1. CRP Authorization Allocation Budget

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Dedicated Annual Support	Countywide Shuttle Program	500,000.00	525,000.00	540,750.00	556,972.50
	Commute.org TDM Program	510,000.00	535,500.00	551,565.00	568,111.95
	21 Elements Program	200,000.00	210,000.00	216,300.00	222,789.00
	Climate Initiatives	150,000.00	157,500.00	162,225.00	167,091.75
CRP Mobility Fund	Mobility projects and programs across the county	490,000.00	514,500.00	529,935.00	545,833.05
Total		1,850,000	1,942,500	2,000,775	2,060,798

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1 Introduction

This document describes the changes that were recommended to the CRP process from previous years, and presents the authorization for the CRP for Fiscal Years 23-24 through 26-27.

Chapter 1 – Introduction: provides an overview of the CRP and its history, and introduces the forthcoming authorization changes

Chapter 2 – Recommended Changes: details the two recommendations that were proposed as structural changes to the CRP.

Chapter 3 – CRP Authorization: outlines the CRP funding structure to support mobility improvements across the county for the next four years.

Chapter 4 – Conclusion: provides a discussion on next steps for the CRP

CRP Background and History

The San Mateo County Congestion Relief Plan (CRP) was first adopted by C/CAG on February 8, 2002, in response to traffic congestion measurements, at locations throughout the County, which exceeded the standards adopted by C/CAG under the Congestion Management Program (CMP). The CMP is a legal requirement (California Government Code Section 65089(b)(1)(A)), enforceable with financial penalties, and requiring deficiency plans when the congestion exceeds set standards.

CMPs must include the following elements:

- *Designated roadway system:* A description of the area’s roadway system, which must be an appropriately-sized network to allow performance monitoring of established LOS standards.
- *Traffic LOS Standards:* Established standards by which the abovementioned roadway system and its intersections will be evaluated for their operating condition in order to evaluate changes in congestion.
- *System Performance:* Performance measures to understand current and future multimodal system performance for the movement of people and goods. These performance measures may include elements such as LOS, Travel times for SOVs, Carpools, and Transit, Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements, and Ridership/Person Throughput for Transit.
- *Trip Reduction and Travel Demand Element:* Projects and strategies that promote alternate modes of transportation and thereby help reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality, as defined by California Government Code Section 65089(b). These elements also keep jurisdictions eligible for Measure A funding, which finances specified transportation improvements.

- *Land Use Impact Analysis*: A program to analyze the impacts of land use decisions made by local jurisdictions on highways and transit in the regional transportation system. This program must also include an estimate of the cost to mitigate impacts of development on the system.
- *Capital Improvement Program (CIP)*: A seven-year CIP to maintain or improve the performance of the multimodal system and to mitigate regional transportation impacts identified through the Land Use Impact Analysis program. Capital improvement projects must conform to transportation-related vehicle emissions and air quality mitigation measures.

Locations that are identified as exceeding or having the potential to exceed the standards set by the CMP must provide a deficiency plan, outlining how congestion will be mitigated. Instead of each jurisdiction with a location exceeding standards to research, develop, fund, and implement its own deficiency plan, C/CAG and member jurisdictions have chosen to create a **Congestion Relief Plan (CRP)**, which is developed to serve as a Countywide Deficiency Plan.

Over the years, the C/CAG Board determined that a countywide approach would be more cost-effective and provide more comprehensive benefits to the overall transportation system in the County. The adoption of the Congestion Relief Plan relieves all San Mateo County jurisdictions from State mandates to fix the specific congested locations that triggered a deficiency, and any locations that might trigger a deficiency in the subsequent four years. Aside from meeting the State mandate, it is also prudent for all San Mateo County jurisdictions to share resources and address traffic and transportation issues together, as it allows the agencies to address congestion in a more impactful manner. The Congestion Relief Plan was developed to respect and support the economic development efforts made by local jurisdictions. Since economic prosperity tends to create severe traffic congestion which also threatens economic growth, the CRP was designed to find ways to improve mobility Countywide and in every jurisdiction without halting economic growth.

The CRP is also designed to be used as matching funds to leverage other competitive federal, state, and local grants that align with its goals. This approach has provided more impact with the invested funds.

As dictated by the CMP, deficiency plans aim to reduce congestion and improve mobility in specific locations where additional support may be needed. Therefore, as the countywide deficiency plan, the CRP aims to achieve a similar goal across a broader area.

Under the umbrella of improving mobility countywide, the CRP addresses four major goals:

1. **Provide local transportation service** in order to provide alternatives to driving and improve access to transportation options.
2. **Reduce vehicle trips** through Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and other planning efforts discouraging single occupancy trips.
3. **Expand and support innovative mobility solutions** to increase travel efficiency.
4. **Support land use efforts that reduce GHG emissions** by reducing or eliminating trips where appropriate.

Funding the CRP

The C/CAG Board authorizes the Congestion Relief Plan for a period of 4 years and all jurisdictions make financial contributions to the Plan based on population and trip generation. The last reauthorization in 2019 was based on 2018 population percentages and 2015 projected trip generation data. The proposed assessment is updated to reflect the latest population percentages and projected trip generation data.

Despite the fact that CRP fees were initially intended to increase with inflation (they were increased significantly in 2007 at the conclusion of the first authorization period), there has been no fee increase since 2007. Meanwhile, the consumer price index (CPI) has increased 51.4%². Therefore, there has been a decrease in support for programs since 2007 as inflation increases, and the authorization amount remains the same.

Figure 1. Consumer Price Index Changes

Year	CPI
2022	327.060
2007	216.048
Change in Index Points	111.012
Percent Change	51.4%

Historically Supported Projects and Programs

In recent authorization periods, the CRP has funded projects and programs across four designated categories to support mobility improvements across the county:

1. **Local Transportation Services:** The Local Transportation Services category is designed to support initiatives such as the countywide shuttle program and other efforts, that facilitate local transportation services and reduce congestion. Historically, this category has primarily supported the countywide shuttle program jointly funded by C/CAG and the San Mateo County Transit Authority. The shuttle program provides both local and first/last mile shuttle service. C/CAG has also expressed interest in funding additional transportation services such as new mobility or shared micromobility options. In the most recent authorization, the Local Transportation Services category was allocated \$500,000
2. **Travel Demand Management (TDM):** The Travel Demand Management category has funded the Countywide TDM program, Commute.org. The organization provides service to employers and residents in San Mateo County with the goals of decreasing single-occupancy travel, and increasing the use of transit and other alternative modes through education and incentives. In the most recent authorization, the TDM category was allocated \$550,000
3. **ITS/Traffic Operational Improvement Strategies:** The Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)/Traffic Operational Improvement Strategies category has funded programs that study, design, implement, or maintain operational and safety improvement strategies. This also includes technological components that support congestion reduction and improve travel safety and efficiency along major corridors. Historically, this funding has supported the Smart

² CA Dept. of Industrial Relations. California Consumer Price Index (base year 1982-1984).

Corridor project as well as express lanes management through the San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority (SMCEL-JPA). In the most recent authorization period, the ITS/Traffic Operational Improvement Strategies category was allocated \$200,000.

4. **Linking Transportation and Land Use:** Beginning in FY2005-06, C/CAG has programmed funds to support various activities that address the linkage between housing and transportation. Over these years, the Board has reviewed and approved staff proposals for housing/transportation-related activities in four broad areas: policy leadership; promotion of housing in transit corridors; cost-effective responses to State regulatory mandates; and local funding to meeting housing goals. Since 2006, C/CAG and the County Department of Housing (DOH) have co-sponsored the 21 Elements project which is a nationally recognized collaboration among all San Mateo County jurisdictions. The program funds studies and expert advisory services that assist all jurisdictions in San Mateo County to update their respective Housing Elements and share information on housing policies and programs. In the most recent authorization period, the Linking Transportation and Land Use category was allocated \$600,000.

Within those categories, some funding has been allocated to ongoing programs at a flat rate annually. For example, the Commute.org program has historically received \$510,000 per year. Other funding has continuously supported initiatives on an annual basis at varying costs, such as the Smart Corridor project, where program costs and needs often vary depending on where the project is in its development cycle. The funding has also been utilized for one-time countywide projects such as MAP 101 which identifies 59 equity-based, non-infrastructure measures to increase vehicle occupancy rates and otherwise reduce congestion on the US 101 corridor, and the Local Road Safety Plan, which identifies and analyzes roadway safety needs in local jurisdictions and helps to develop a prioritized list of safety countermeasures.

The CRP Update

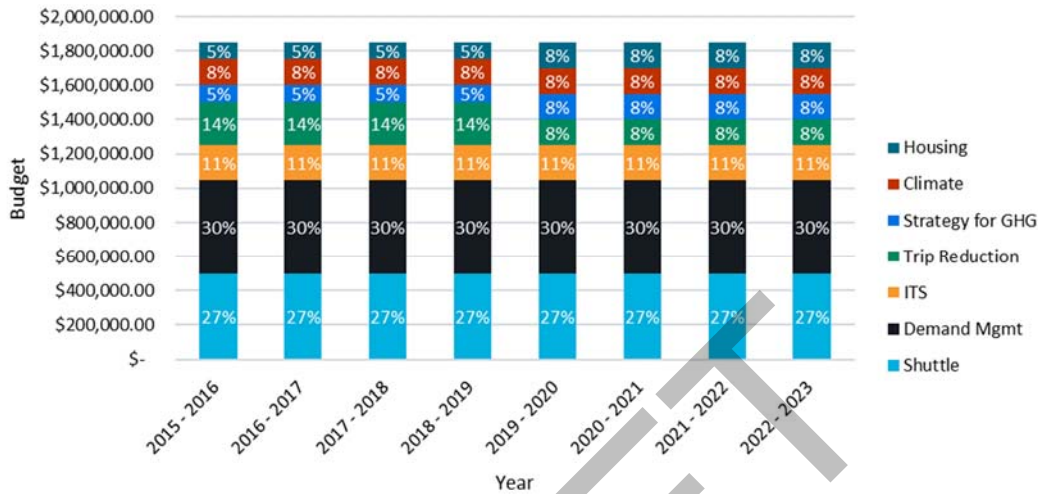
In late 2022, C/CAG began the process of designing the new authorization for the CRP. Along with their consultant team they undertook a financial analysis of previous CRP funded projects and programs, and engaged with county stakeholders to identify priorities relating to movability improvement across the county.

Financial Review

The team's financial review consisted of an analysis of allocations and expenditures by category, and a review of the overall spending power adjustments of the CRP since its initiation. The review focused primarily on the most recent two authorization periods (covering FY 2015-2016 through

FY 2022-2023). The two periods showed very similar allocations, with only minor adjustments between sub-categories within the 'Linking Transportation and Land Use' category.

Figure 2. CRP Budget Allocated by Category



It demonstrated that in cases where funding has historically been allocated for single specific program uses, the allocations and expenditures have typically aligned. The Travel Demand Management category, for example, has seen a steady allocation of \$550,000 per year, and has spent just under that annually (\$510,000), with expenditures all supporting the Commute.org program.

In the other categories however, the allocations and expenditures tended to vary, as expenditure was dependent on the need for specific projects. For example, the ITS category saw some years with no expenditures at all, and some years with expenditures greater than the allocated \$200,000. This is due to the nature of ITS projects, which do not follow a consistent level of effort each year.

As discussed in the sections above, the financial review demonstrated that due to inflation and stagnant fees, the overall spending power of the CRP has decreased. This is evidenced directly within the CRP fund expenditure history in two ways. First, programs that have historically been funded at the same rate annually have seen costs increase elsewhere, and therefore the CRP expenditure is covering less than it was in 2007. Second, the CRP has funded additional work or programming annually where amounts were not set. Those have increased over time, meaning they are utilizing a larger portion of the total CRP budget than they had been originally.

Stakeholder Outreach

In addition to analyzing past data, the team engaged with CRP stakeholders to understand strengths and challenges of the current CRP, in addition to identifying priorities for the new authorization period. Stakeholder outreach was undertaken by two major avenues:

- **A workshop with C/CAG’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** In February, the consultant team led a workshop as a part of C/CAG’s TAC meeting to introduce the upcoming CRP update. The goal of this workshop was to gain a greater understanding of how the C/CAG’s various jurisdictions interact with the CRP and identify points of success, weakness, and opportunities for the future. The CRP’s scope was introduced and then a conversation was facilitated to gain better understanding of needs of the relevant jurisdictions within C/CAG. The conversation covered such topics as strengths and weaknesses of the current program, opportunities for additions, and aspects that should be left behind. The final output from this meeting was an updated PowerPoint document with notes from the meeting and discussion.
- **One-on-one interviews with key stakeholders receiving regular CRP funding:** Along with the workshop, the consultant team interviewed the managers of four programs that have consistently received CRP funds annually (including Commute.org, the Countywide Shuttle Program, 21 Elements, and C/CAG’s Climate program). The purpose of these interviews was to understand how these programs with annual support are using the funding, as well as their perceived areas for improvement or continued success.
- **Board and Committee Review:** The project team also engaged with C/CAG’s Committees and Board throughout the development of this document to obtain feedback:
 - CMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Congestion Management and Environmental Quality Committee (CMEQ)
 - C/CAG Board of Directors

Countywide Mobility Investment Strategies

Based on feedback received from C/CAG’s Board, Committees, and other stakeholders, a list of strategic investment areas has been established to help guide C/CAG in identifying appropriate projects and programs for CRP funding throughout the upcoming authorization period. These various components include:

- Response to increasing regulatory pressure, particularly related to housing and emission reduction
- Improvement and expansion upon cross-jurisdictional collaboration and benefiting from economies of scale, particularly related to:
 - Data collection
 - Response to cross-border and cut through traffic
 - Delivery of county-wide resources for jurisdictional use
- County-wide planning efforts, particularly those that unlock funding opportunities
- Support for shared micromobility and other first/last mile solutions
- Advocacy for active transportation modes that reduce vehicle trips, increase safety and enhance vehicle connectivity, while considering realities of way limitation
- A focus on trip reduction efforts, including telework and virtual services provision
- Response to technology projects and Smart Corridor development and maintenance needs

- A focus on ensuring funded projects can be maintained long-term
- Support for equitable transportation initiatives across the county

Examples of projects that may be funded through the CRP to align with the above focuses include:

- Planning initiatives such as the Countywide Transportation Plan
- Continued funding for technology projects/Smart Corridor initiatives
- Countywide approaches to Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) reduction
- The development and implementation of innovative first/last mile solutions, such as a shared micromobility program

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2 Recommended Changes

Recommendation 1: Increase fees to maintain consistent levels of support

The CRP has maintained a consistent fee since 2007, without changes. In the meantime, the CPI has increased 54%, meaning that proportionally, programs under the CRP have access to less funding than they did at its last fee update. As such, there has been a *decrease* in support for programs since 2007 with the same total authorization amount. This has resulted in a decrease in countywide support in two ways:

1. Programs receiving continuous annual support have seen a smaller portion of their budget come from the CRP year over year. For example, since 2010, the hourly operational costs for shuttle management have increased by 42%, while CRP allocation for the shuttle program has remained static.
2. Similarly, the CRP has spent more on annually-funded ad-hoc services or one-off programs, which have become more expensive year after year. With a proportionally dwindling authorization, the CRP has less flexibility to contribute to programs that may be the product of unexpected events or emerging technologies.

In order to keep up with increasing program costs and continue to provide sufficient support for mobility planning across the county, a small fee increase is proposed. This fee increase would take place in stages:

- **Year 1:** It is recommended that in year one of this authorization period, the contribution from the jurisdictions remains the same. This is intended to allow jurisdictions to adjust to the new baseline fee from the updated trip data.
- **Year 2:** In Year Two, once the baseline is determined with the new trip generation data from the travel demand model, a 5% upward adjustment will be made to the fee structure. This modification allows the CRP funds to take steps toward closing the current gap created by inflation.
- **Years 3-4:** In the third year, it is proposed that the fee increase annually to align with CPI, with a cap of 3% each year. This process will ultimately align fee increases with the increases utilized to determine C/CAG Member fees. As with the member fees, CRP fee increases will be approved by the Finance Committee and Board during the annual agency budget approval each year.

Figure 3. Recommended Future Year Increases

# YRS	Baseline	Staff Recommendation
Year 1- FY 23/24	No change ¹	No change ¹
Year 2- FY 24/25	No change	5% Increase
Year 3- FY 25/26	No change	Increase of lesser of CPI or 3%
Year 4-FY 26/27	No change	Increase of lesser of CPI or 3%
Aggregate Increase in Year 4	\$0	\$454,073
Total Increase in cost per jurisdiction over 4 years	\$0	Ranges from \$2,576 to \$66,615
Highest and Lowest Average Annual Increase	\$0	Ranges from \$644 to \$16,654

Assuming the annual CPI increases at 3% annually, this recommendation will result in an increase to the CRP budget of \$454,073 over the four-year period. This means individual four-year contributions will range from \$2,576 (Colma) up to \$66,615 (City of San Mateo). The expected annual and four-year contributions per jurisdiction are included in Table 2 below.

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Table 2. Proposed Fees by Jurisdiction

Current Fees:			Proposed Fees:					
Agency	Annual³	4-year Total	2024	2025	2026⁴	2027⁵	4-year Total	4-year Change
			No change	5% increase	CPI increase up to 3%	CPI increase up to 3%		
Atherton	14,055	56,220	\$14,055	\$14,758	\$15,200	\$15,656	\$59,670	\$3,450
Belmont	62,785	251,140	\$62,785	\$65,924	\$67,902	\$69,939	\$266,550	\$15,410
Brisbane	17,385	69,540	\$17,385	\$18,254	\$18,802	\$19,366	\$73,807	\$4,267
Burlingame	92,223	368,892	\$92,223	\$96,834	\$99,739	\$102,731	\$391,528	\$22,636
Colma	10,494	41,976	\$10,494	\$11,019	\$11,349	\$11,690	\$44,552	\$2,576
Daly City	224,205	896,820	\$224,205	\$235,415	\$242,478	\$249,752	\$951,850	\$55,030
East Palo Alto	60,990	243,960	\$60,990	\$64,040	\$65,961	\$67,940	\$258,930	\$14,970
Foster City	86,974	347,896	\$86,974	\$91,323	\$94,062	\$96,884	\$369,243	\$21,347
Half Moon Bay	30,292	121,168	\$30,292	\$31,807	\$32,761	\$33,744	\$128,603	\$7,435
Hillsborough	23,419	93,676	\$23,419	\$24,590	\$25,328	\$26,087	\$99,424	\$5,748
Menlo Park	102,668	410,672	\$102,668	\$107,801	\$111,035	\$114,367	\$435,871	\$25,199
Millbrae	53,205	212,820	\$53,205	\$55,865	\$57,541	\$59,267	\$225,879	\$13,059
Pacifica	82,869	331,476	\$82,869	\$87,012	\$89,623	\$92,312	\$351,816	\$20,340
Portola Valley	11,737	46,948	\$11,737	\$12,324	\$12,694	\$13,074	\$49,829	\$2,881
Redwood City	230,320	921,280	\$230,320	\$241,836	\$249,091	\$256,564	\$977,811	\$56,531
San Bruno	104,525	418,100	\$104,525	\$109,751	\$113,044	\$116,435	\$443,755	\$25,655

³ Distribution of the fee is determined by a calculation that considers jurisdictions’ population and projected trip generation (each weighted at 50%). Population is determined by the Department of Finance numbers from 2022, Projected trip generation is determined through the C/CAG/VTA Travel Demand Model, with data from 2019.

⁴ Table assumes a 3% increase

San Carlos	80,747	322,988	\$80,747	\$84,784	\$87,328	\$89,948	\$342,807	\$19,819
San Mateo	271,405	1,085,620	\$271,405	\$284,975	\$293,525	\$302,330	\$1,152,235	\$66,615
South San Francisco	160,375	641,500	\$160,375	\$168,394	\$173,446	\$178,649	\$680,863	\$39,363
Woodside	13,976	55,904	\$13,976	\$14,675	\$15,115	\$15,568	\$59,334	\$3,430
San Mateo County	115,351	461,404	\$115,351	\$121,119	\$124,752	\$128,495	\$489,716	\$28,312
TOTAL	1,850,000	7,400,000	\$1,850,000	\$1,942,500	\$2,000,775	\$2,060,798	\$7,854,073	\$454,073

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Recommendation 2: Simplify funding designation

The previous funding designation for the CRP was divided into four categories, some of which were tied to specific annual expenditures, while others were not. This signifies that not all expenditure data neatly aligned with the categories and there were sometimes needs to justify or re-classify projects in order to support them through the CRP. Ultimately it also leads to reporting that may not provide a complete picture of the activities that actually align with each category.

For example, while the 2019 CRP Authorization explicitly mentioned that the *Local Transportation Services* category was intended to fund innovative mobility services in addition to funding local shuttle services. However, the Local Transportation Services category was assigned the same amount of money (\$500,000) as had been designated in the prior authorization, which had previously all gone to the county shuttle program. Since C/CAG did not want to decrease the amount provided for shuttles, there was not any residual funding in that category for innovative projects. Instead, innovative projects such as the Shared Micromobility Feasibility Study were funded through the *Linking Transportation and Land Use* category because there was more flexibility within that budget.

In order to streamline funding processes, a simplified framework is proposed. The program would have two categories, one with consistent funding for qualified programs, and another broader, more flexible fund for one-time projects, guided by CRP goals and agreed upon priorities. This simplification removes roadblocks to supporting programs that meet broad goals but don't have room left in the most appropriate category's budget, and allows for flexibility to the changing needs within the authorization period.

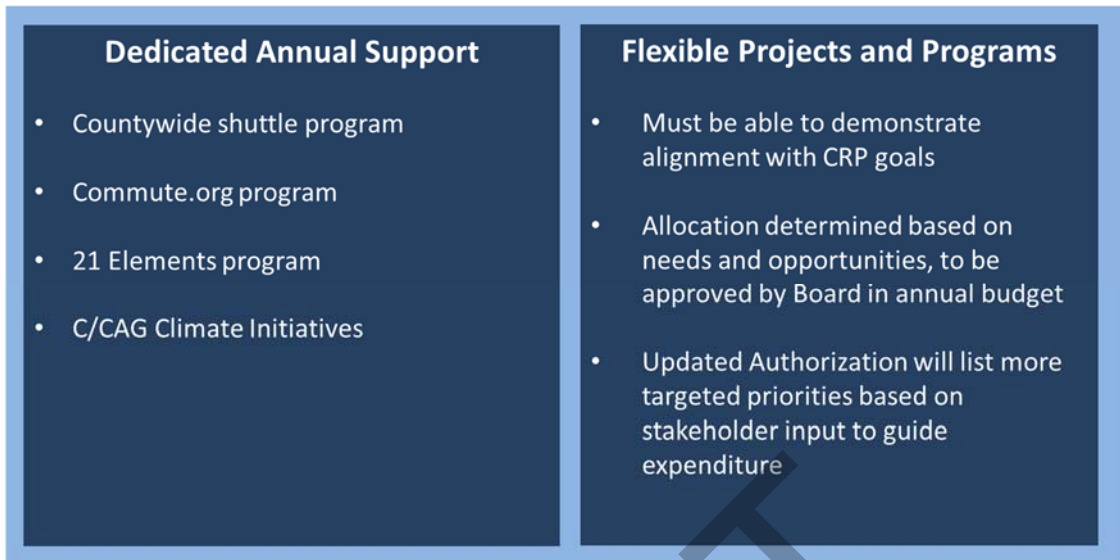
Similarly, having four continuous programs will facilitate better and more consistent reporting, allowing C/CAG to more adeptly demonstrate the impact of the CRP. It is recommended that C/CAG collect an annual report from each of the continuous programs that outlines their accomplishments, and provide a brief update annually to the Board and committees. This way C/CAG can demonstrate progress toward the CRP goals and improving mobility overall, and continue to make informed funding decisions for future authorization periods.

The four continuous programs include:

- the Countywide shuttle program
- Commute.org
- 21 Elements
- C/CAG's Climate Initiatives.

It is recommended that the rest of the CRP budget be able to be allocated on an annual basis, through the annual agency budget approval process by the C/CAG Board of Directors. Projects and programs in this budget must be able to demonstrate alignment with the overall CRP goal of improving mobility countywide, and should also align with the targeted investment strategies included in the updated Authorization.

Figure 4. Proposed Funding Designation



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3 CRP Authorization

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) sponsors and manages San Mateo County Congestion Relief Plan (CRP). The San Mateo County CRP was first adopted by the C/CAG Board of Directors on February 8, 2002, in response to traffic congestion measurements, at locations throughout the County, which exceeded the standards adopted by C/CAG under the Congestion Management Program (CMP). The CMP is a legal requirement (California Government Code Section 65089(b)(1)(A)), that requires urban areas to set standards for how they track, and designate targets for congestion within their area. CMPs are enforceable with financial penalties, and requiring deficiency plans when congestion exceeds set standards.

The CRP was developed to serve as a Countywide Deficiency Plan so that the individual cities and the County would not have to develop multiple deficiency plans with corresponding implementation costs. The adoption of the San Mateo County CRP also relieves all San Mateo County jurisdictions from State mandates to fix the specific congested locations that triggered a deficiency, and any locations that might trigger a deficiency in the subsequent four years.

As a countywide deficiency plan, the CRP aims to improve mobility across the county, reducing congestion and making it easier for all travelers to get around. The CRP supports mobility improvements through four goals:

1. **Provide local transportation service** in order to provide alternatives to driving and improve access to transportation options.
2. **Reduce vehicle trips** through Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and other planning efforts discouraging single occupancy trips.
3. **Expand and support innovative mobility solutions** to increase travel efficiency.
4. **Support land use efforts that reduce GHG emissions** by reducing or eliminating trips where appropriate.

The C/CAG Board of Directors approves a reauthorization of the CRP every four years, outlining how the CRP's budget will be allocated. The following information sets out the CRP Authorization for Fiscal Years 2023/2024 through 2026/2027.

Funding

The CRP Fee is collected from the jurisdictions annually, based on a calculation that considers population and trips generated. The fee for the authorization period will be adjusted as follows:

- **Year 1 (FY 23/24):** In year one of this authorization period, the contribution from the jurisdictions will remain the same. This is intended to allow jurisdictions to adjust to the new baseline fee from the updated trip data.
- **Year 2 (FY 24/25):** In Year two, once the baseline is determined with the new trip generation data from the travel demand model, a 5% upward adjustment will be made to the fee structure. This modification allows the CRP funds to take steps toward closing the current gap created by inflation.
- **Years 3-4 (FYs 25/27 and 26/27):** In the third year, the fee will increase annually to align with CPI, with a cap of 3% each year. This process will ultimately align fee increases with the increases utilized to determine C/CAG Member fees. As with the member fees, CRP fee increases will be approved by the Finance Committee and Board during the annual agency budget approval each year.

CRP Funding will be allocated to four programs (“Dedicated Annual Support”) that receive a dedicated annual investment, and a broader and more versatile category (“CRP Mobility Fund”) that aims to provide flexibility to support projects and programs on a more ad-hoc basis, as approved by the C/CAG Board of Directors.

Error! Reference source not found. outlines the funding allocation structure for the authorization period. This document provides more detail on the programs receiving dedicated annual support, as well as descriptions of the guiding principles around which C/CAG’s Board may make funding decisions for the Mobility Fund.

Table 3. CRP Budget Allocation FY 23/24-26/27

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Dedicated Annual Support	Countywide Shuttle Program	500,000.00	525,000.00	540,750.00	556,972.50
	Commute.org TDM Program	510,000.00	535,500.00	551,565.00	568,111.95
	21 Elements Program	200,000.00	210,000.00	216,300.00	222,789.00
	Climate Initiatives	150,000.00	157,500.00	162,225.00	167,091.75
CRP Mobility Fund	Mobility projects and programs across the county	490,000.00	514,500.00	529,935.00	545,833.05
Total		1,850,000	1,942,500	2,000,775	2,060,798

Dedicated Annual Support

The Dedicated Annual Support category will consist of four programs, each of which will receive a set allocation, which increases annually at the same rate as the overall CRP fee. Each program will be asked to provide a report and update to the C/CAG Board and committees annually, detailing their accomplishments from that year.

Countywide Shuttle Program

The current Employer-Based Shuttle Program is jointly funded by C/CAG and San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA). The Program supports community shuttles through a competitive process and required match from the project sponsor.

The shuttle program makes use of matching funds both from jurisdictions and from the private sector, leveraging both C/CAG CRP and Countywide Measure A funds to support roughly thirty shuttles on an annual basis. These shuttles provide first-last mile connections between business centers and transit stations, and connections to community centers, particularly within equity priority communities.

As the shuttle program continues to grow and expand, there is an interest in considering how new and shared mobility might align with or support more traditional shuttle services.

Commute.org TDM Program

The Countywide Travel Demand Management (TDM) Program is operated by the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance (Commute.org). The core of Commute.org's mission focuses on voluntary trip reduction programs. Their work includes coordinating with employers to reduce peak commute trips, developing and managing employer-based shuttle programs, providing employer alternative commuting support services, and offering alternative commute incentive programs. Commute.org also incorporates other projects to adapt to changing commute patterns and technologies.

Commute.org has been extremely successful in meeting the needs of the individual communities, city and county governments, and employers throughout San Mateo County. They recently deployed the STAR Platform (branded by vendor Ride Amigos) to promote, track and incentivize alternative commuting behavior, and they also work with partners who are developing and deploying app-based and other technologies that will lead to the reduction in single-occupancy vehicle trips in San Mateo County. As of the end of FY 2021-2022, Commute.org had 381 employers with whom they were engaging actively, representing over 78,000 employees.

Commute.org also operates a shuttle program jointly funded by C/CAG and SMCTA and private employers. The shuttles provide service between employment sites and Caltrain, BART and WETA Ferry stations. In FY 21-22, their shuttles contributed to almost 134,000 vehicle trips reduced within San Mateo County.

In 2022, C/CAG adopted their updated Countywide TDM Policy, requiring local jurisdictions in San Mateo to notify C/CAG of any new development project within their purview that is estimated to generate at least 100 Average Daily Trips (ADT), and to design a comprehensive site-wide TDM program. With the new policy, projects are required to report periodically on their progress, and

C/CAG has partnered with Commute.org to support regular monitoring and reporting, in addition to assisting non-compliant projects in designing a path toward compliance.

21 Elements Program

The 21 Elements project is a cost-effective countywide program that assists all jurisdictions to implement Housing Elements, and develops effective on-going housing implementation policies. In past years, C/CAG and the San Mateo County Department of Housing (DoH) have largely been co-funding the 21 Elements effort. Local jurisdictions also contribute an annual assessment fee. The DoH acts as the lead agency in managing the consultant contract. Staff recommends the continuation of this cooperative partnership to support the 21 Elements.

The legislative framework that leads to the creation of this 21 Elements program is shown below:

- SB375 - In 2008, state law SB 375 was approved, requiring the Bay Area Region to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to integrate land use planning, transportation policies, and transportation investments. Consistent with this mandate, the MTC/ABAG most recently adopted Plan Bay Area 2050, as the region's SCS, encompass housing, economic, transportation, and environmental strategies.
- State Housing Element Law - Since 1969, California has required that all local governments adequately plan to meet the housing needs of everyone in the community through adoption and implementation of their Housing Elements. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is charged with identifying the total regional housing need (Regional Housing Need Allocation "RHNA") for the San Francisco Bay Area for specific periods (housing element cycles). The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) must then develop a methodology to distribute the RHNA to local governments in a manner that is consistent with the development pattern included in the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and finally the local jurisdiction must update its Housing Element to accommodate its RHNA allocation.

The intent of the 21 Elements collaboration is to provide a forum for sharing resources, successful strategies and best practices for jurisdictions in San Mateo County. Additionally, the program is involved in the development of tools and solicitation of technical support to help member jurisdictions plan and produce housing that improves mobility, reduces climate impact, and strengthen local neighborhoods and the regional economy, consistent with the goals and requirements SCS and HCD.

C/CAG Climate Initiatives

C/CAG's Climate Program began in 2006 when it, jointly with the County, established and staffed the Utilities and Sustainability Task Force. The Task Force developed the San Mateo County Energy Strategy in 2012. More recently, the draft San Mateo County Energy and Water Strategy 2025 focuses on goals, strategies and actions to make use of cleaner energy sources for buildings and vehicles, use energy more efficiently, increase water conservation and pursue alternative sources of water in San Mateo County.

The Climate Program contributes to two major initiatives that the CRP will support:

Resource Management and Climate Protection Committee (RMCP)

In 2009, the C/CAG Board formed the Resource Management and Climate Protection (RMCP) Committee, which supports the development of energy efficiency- and climate change-related programs.

The RMCP Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Congestion Management and Environmental Quality (CMEQ) Committee and the full C/CAG Board related to energy, water use, and greenhouse gas mitigation efforts, including planning measures related to reducing vehicle miles traveled in San Mateo County and the region. More recently, the Committee is also considering the reduction of emissions from transferring the vehicle stock in San Mateo County from gasoline to hybrid or electric.

Regionally Integrated Climate Action Planning Suite (RICAPS)

In 2008, the C/CAG Board launched the San Mateo County Energy Watch Program (SMCEW), a Local Government Partnership between C/CAG and PG&E. A portion of the SMCEW budget, combined with additional C/CAG Congestion Relief Funds, provides climate action planning assistance to San Mateo County local governments through a program called the Regionally Integrated Climate Action Planning Suite (RICAPS).

RICAPS is a set of tools developed through initial grant funding from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and PG&E with matching funds from C/CAG. This grant program provides ongoing climate action planning technical assistance to local governments in San Mateo County and is supported by the C/CAG-PG&E Local Government Partnership (LGP), Peninsula Clean Energy (the local electricity Community Choice Aggregator), and C/CAG. The program includes monthly working group meeting with sustainability staff across San Mateo County. These meetings may include information related to reducing VMT and electrification of existing transportation, in addition to building electrification. Over time, vehicle and building electrification will begin to be guided more independently.

CRP Mobility Fund

In order to account for evolving programs and priorities, this allocation category is set up for programs and projects that may not fit neatly into thematic funding categories or do not require continuous funding. Projects will be approved on an ad-hoc basis with budget approval from the C/CAG Board of Directors.

Projects and programs in this fund must be able to demonstrate alignment with the overall CRP goal of improving mobility countywide, and should also align with the targeted investment strategies identified below. These strategies were identified by C/CAG staff and representatives from the jurisdictions through C/CAG's Congestion Management Program Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

They include:

- **Response to increasing regulatory pressure, particularly related to housing and emission reduction:** An increase in regulation coming from the state and federal level is putting

pressure on jurisdictions, particularly in relation to housing and climate initiatives. Institutional and financial support from the CRP can support jurisdictions in meeting target housing and emission goals in the coming decades.

- **Improving and expanding upon cross-jurisdictional collaboration and benefitting from economies of scale:** Cross-jurisdictional collaboration will be vital for the county to maintain uniformity, as well as provide consistent, accessible service to residents. Through the CRP, C/CAG can help jurisdictions benefit from such economies of scale in areas such as:
 - data collection
 - response to cross-border and cut through traffic
 - delivery of county-wide resources for jurisdictional use
- **County-wide planning efforts:** Countywide planning efforts, such as the development of Countywide Transportation Plans, provide guidelines and support for jurisdictions, facilitating their more targeted planning processes. In particular, C/CAG may prioritize opportunities where CRP funding can be used as a match to secure broader statewide or federal funds.
- **Support for shared micromobility:** Stakeholders across the county have shown an interest in the creation of a shared micro-mobility program to introduce more diverse modes of transportation and encourage use of alternative modes in place of single-occupant vehicles (SOVs).
- **Embrace innovative first/last mile solutions:** The “first mile” is from a trip origin (e.g., home) to public transit and the “last mile” is from public transit to the trip destination (e.g., work). In addition to shared micromobility, C/CAG supports other innovative transportation services and infrastructure that increase access to public transportation.
- **Advocacy for active transportation modes:** Planning for and encouraging active transportation can reduce vehicle trips, increase safety and enhance vehicle connectivity. C/CAG can utilize CRP funds to support active mode advocacy and planning, while continuing to consider realities of way limitation and the need to maintain vehicle flow.
- **Focusing on trip reduction efforts:** Beyond infrastructure and mode-change TDM efforts, trip reduction efforts have seen promising success across the county. As workers transition back to working and traveling to offices, finding ways to reduce or change the timing of trips to reduce congestion is heralded as a significant area of study and investment for the county moving forward.
- **Responding to ITS and Smart Corridor development and maintenance needs:** C/CAG has made significant progress in utilizing integrated technology to support mobility across the county by maximizing the efficiency of our existing roadway infrastructure. These initiatives, such as the Smart Corridor project and the San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority (SMCEL-JPA) can continue to benefit from CRP support.
- **Ensuring funded projects can be maintained long-term:** Though the interest in pursuing innovative projects and ideas is largely beneficial for the county, the ensuing result may also be that programs are susceptible to losing funding as they lose momentum and enthusiasm after an initial introduction period. Ensuring funding for projects can be maintained in the long term will be key to reaping the most of their benefits and so that they may effectively be deployed across jurisdictions.

4 Conclusion

The CRP is a valuable tool for San Mateo County. In addition to playing the regulatory role of maintaining compliance with C/CAG's CMP, the CRP supports C/CAG and the jurisdictions in efforts to reduce congestion, improve mobility, and support climate initiatives countywide. This has been clearly demonstrated by the range of projects and programs that have been supported by the CRP since its initiation in 2002, and by the positive feedback C/CAG's stakeholders have provided on the programs it supports regularly.

While this document provides recommendations and outlines for the upcoming Authorization period beginning July 1, 2023, C/CAG has the opportunity to continue to grow and evolve the program. When considering adjustments to future Authorizations, C/CAG may want to consider highlighting or incorporating the following:

- Future strategic considerations, including expanded sets of metrics or targets to further demonstrate the impact of CRP dollars on mobility improvements within San Mateo County
- Guidelines and encouragement for CRP funding recipients related to incorporating the forthcoming Agency Equity Framework
- Formal processes for prioritizing projects or programs that can leverage CRP funding to secure state or federal financial support
- Regular examination of countywide priorities related to mobility improvement and updates or additions to the list of Strategic Investments.

As C/CAG and member jurisdictions grow and evolve, so do their mobility needs and priorities. The CRP will continue to be an indispensable tool to support those efforts for years to come.

A CRP Fee Table

Agency	2024	2025	2026*	2027*	4-year Total
Atherton	\$14,055	\$14,758	\$15,200	\$15,656	\$59,670
Belmont	\$62,785	\$65,924	\$67,902	\$69,939	\$266,550
Brisbane	\$17,385	\$18,254	\$18,802	\$19,366	\$73,807
Burlingame	\$92,223	\$96,834	\$99,739	\$102,731	\$391,528
Colma	\$10,494	\$11,019	\$11,349	\$11,690	\$44,552
Daly City	\$224,205	\$235,415	\$242,478	\$249,752	\$951,850
East Palo Alto	\$60,990	\$64,040	\$65,961	\$67,940	\$258,930
Foster City	\$86,974	\$91,323	\$94,062	\$96,884	\$369,243
Half Moon Bay	\$30,292	\$31,807	\$32,761	\$33,744	\$128,603
Hillsborough	\$23,419	\$24,590	\$25,328	\$26,087	\$99,424
Menlo Park	\$102,668	\$107,801	\$111,035	\$114,367	\$435,871
Millbrae	\$53,205	\$55,865	\$57,541	\$59,267	\$225,879
Pacifica	\$82,869	\$87,012	\$89,623	\$92,312	\$351,816
Portola Valley	\$11,737	\$12,324	\$12,694	\$13,074	\$49,829
Redwood City	\$230,320	\$241,836	\$249,091	\$256,564	\$977,811
San Bruno	\$104,525	\$109,751	\$113,044	\$116,435	\$443,755
San Carlos	\$80,747	\$84,784	\$87,328	\$89,948	\$342,807
San Mateo	\$271,405	\$284,975	\$293,525	\$302,330	\$1,152,235
South San Francisco	\$160,375	\$168,394	\$173,446	\$178,649	\$680,863
Woodside	\$13,976	\$14,675	\$15,115	\$15,568	\$59,334
San Mateo County	\$115,351	\$121,119	\$124,752	\$128,495	\$489,716
TOTAL	\$1,850,000	\$1,942,500	\$2,000,775	\$2,060,798	\$7,854,073

*Assumes a 3% CPI increase

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