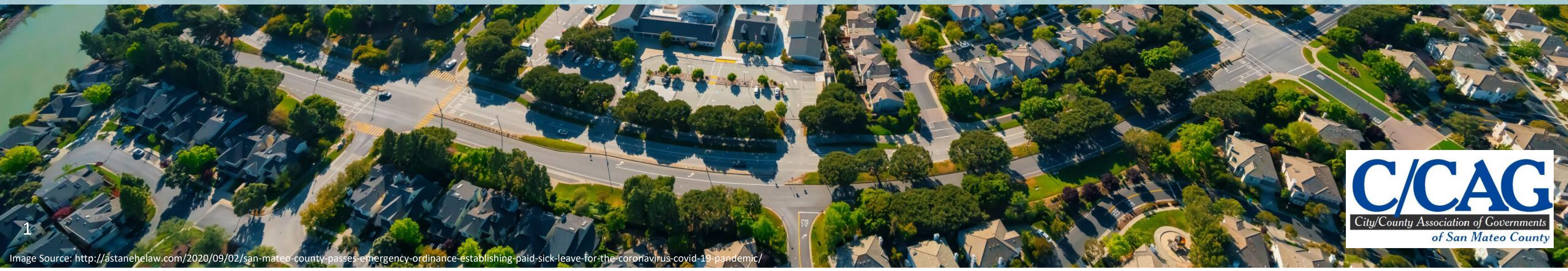




Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 8 Framework (FY26-27-FY27-28)

C/CAG Congestion Management and Environmental Quality Committee
August 31, 2026



C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program

Lifeline Transportation Program

Program aimed to support transit projects that improve mobility for low-income residents

- Projects that are funded have been identified in community-based transportation planning (CBTP) process and other local planning efforts for disadvantaged communities.
- Project examples include shuttle service, transit stop improvements, purchase of transit passes, capital projects, New, continued or expanded fixed-route transit service, etc.

Funding

- C/CAG Board approved the 63% Lifeline, 37% Paratransit split for FY 26-27 at May 2026 Board meeting
- New estimate for the Lifeline Program Call for Projects is \$4.9M



Purpose of Lifeline Cycle 8 Framework

Maintain continuity of service

and minimize disruptions to communities reliant on Lifeline-funded services.

Preserve meaningful funding opportunities

for jurisdictions and project sponsors serving disadvantaged communities.

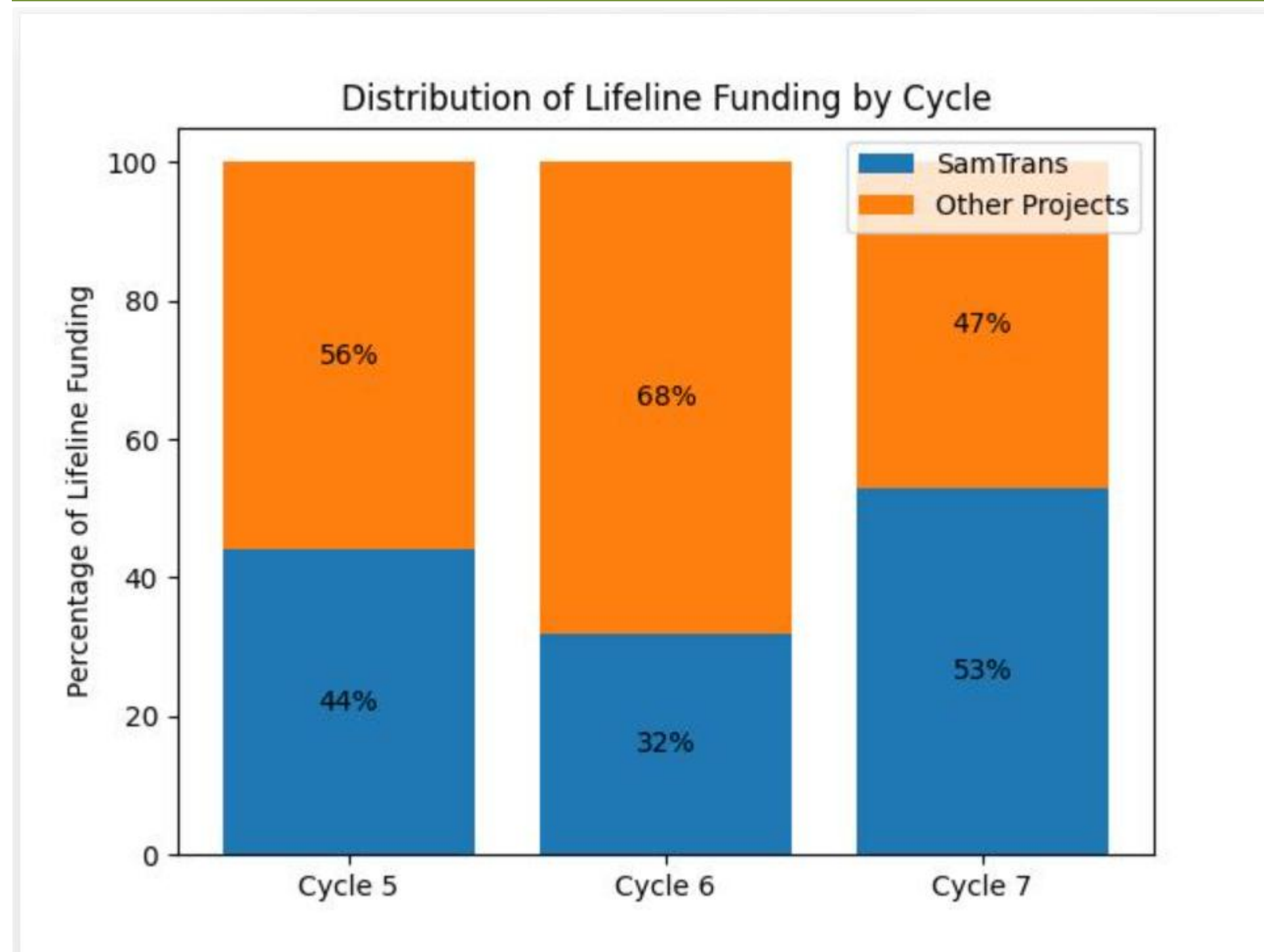
Promote fiscal and performance accountability

by ensuring funds are responsibly managed and projects continue to demonstrate performance and community benefits

STA Fund Distribution History (Cycles 5-7)

SamTrans
(Paratransit)

37%(Formulaic)



63% CFP

SamTrans Operational Funding History

Cycle	SamCoast	Route 117	Total Award	Available Lifeline Funding	% Lifeline Awarded to Sam Coast & Route 117
Cycle 5 FY 2016/17-2017/18	\$203,220	\$338,312	\$541,532	\$1.75M	31%
Cycle 6 FY 2021/22- 2022/23	\$179,820	\$374,000	\$553,820	\$1.75M	32%
Cycle 7 FY 2024/25-2025/26	\$625,000	\$625,000	\$1,250,000	\$4.5M	28%
Total	\$1,008,040.00	\$1,337,312.00	\$2,345,352.00	\$8M	29%
3 year-Cycle Average	\$336,013	\$445,770	\$781,784	-	-

- SamCoast and Route 117 received recurring Lifeline funding during Cycles 5–7
- Proposed Cycle 8 framework: Funding for the streamlined process will be based on actual historical awards, rather than the sponsor’s requested amount.

Why a Cycle 8 Framework Change

Current Approach

- C/CAG has historically issued a competitive Call for Projects process for Lifeline Program

Observed Opportunity

- Since Cycle 2, SamTrans' Route 117 and SamCoast have received recurring Lifeline funding.
- Services for both routes are expected to continue

Cycle 8 Response

- Pilot a streamlined renewal process for qualifying and stable operational projects
- Reduce administrative burden, and preserve competition for new routes

Step 1 : Eligibility for Streamlined Projects

Established service: Ongoing transportation service is already operational

Stable Scope: Substantially stable scope and service model; expected to continue during Cycle 8

Recurring History: Demonstrated Lifeline Funding over multiple cycles

Continuous Compliance: Continues to meet lifeline eligibility and performance requirements

When criteria is not met, a new Lifeline application will be required

Step 2 –Pilot Streamlined Renewal Funding (3-Year Baseline)

Three-Year Baseline

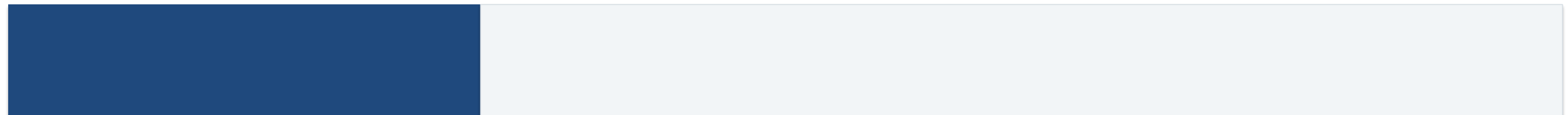
Average annual C/CAG Lifeline award over the preceding three funding cycles.

Preliminary Baseline

Route 117 Average: **\$445,771**
SamCoast Average: **\$336,013**

Combined Allocation

Approx. \$781,784 for both projects, based on current estimates.



16% Streamlined Renewal
(approx. \$781,784)

84% Preserved for Competitive Call
(approx. \$4.1M)

Pilot Performance Safeguards

Available Funds Protection

Streamlined allocations are established only after considering total STA funds available for the Lifeline program

Competitive Funding Protection

Staff proposes preserving a minimum of 70% of Lifeline resources for the competitive process

Performance Requirements

Staff will monitor continued operation, service levels consistent with approved scope, continued service to equity areas

Corrective Action

Performance concerns may result in corrective action or a requirement to return to the competitive process

Not an Entitlement

- Streamlined renewal remains conditional on eligibility, performance, available funds, and C/CAG approval

Not an Entitlement Continued

- No automatic cost escalation beyond annual CPI

Step 3- Competitive Call for Projects

Estimated Funds Available

- Approximately \$4.9 M in STA funding is currently estimated for Cycle 8

After Streamlined Allocation

- Approximately \$4.1M remains for the competitive process.

Grant Minimum and Maximum Amounts

- \$55K–\$130K: transit-based education/outreach projects
- \$110K–\$670K: shuttle/operations, transit or active transportation capital, transit pass, and fixed-route projects.

Local Match

- MTC Equity Priority Community/ Tier 1 C/CAG Equity Focus Area (11.47%)
- Tier 2 C/CAG EFA (15%)
- Other 20%

Pilot Evaluation

- C/CAG Staff to assess the following:
 - Administrative burden for project sponsors
 - Number of project submittals
 - Mid-Cycle review of streamlined projects

Lifeline Program Schedule

Milestone	Date
TAC Review of Lifeline Framework	August 20, 2026
CMEQ Review of Framework	August 31, 2026
TAC Approval of Guidelines	September 17, 2026
CMEQ Approval of Guidelines	September 28, 2026
Board Review of Final Guidelines	October 8, 2026
Call for Projects Issued	Week of October 12th
Applicant Workshop	Week of October 19, 2026
Public Workshop	Week of October 19, 2026
Applications Due	November 13, 2026
Selection Panel Review Applications	November 16 – December 14, 2026
C/CAG Committees Consider Recommendations	January 2027
C/CAG Board Considers Recommendations	February 11, 2027

Questions for the Committee

- Other factor for staff to consider in the evaluation process?
- Will pilot appropriately reduce administrative burden for project sponsors?
- Should staff consider additional safeguards?
- Is the proposed minimum 70% set-aside adequate funding for the competitive process?



Thank You!

Eva Gaye
egaye@smcgov.org

