

Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Subject:	Comal County Railroad Crossing Study
Request for Proposal Issued:	Friday, August 9, 2024 Proposers are responsible for periodically visiting the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's website at www.alamoareampo.org for any updated information on this project.
Deadline for Questions:	5:00 p.m. (CDT), Tuesday, August 20, 2024 Questions will only be accepted in writing by e-mail to Sonia Jimenez at jimenez@alamoareampo.org . Responses will be posted on AAMPO's website at www.alamoareampo.org by 5:00 p.m. (CDT) Thursday, August 22, 2024.
Proposal Due:	12:00 noon (CDT), Monday, September 16, 2024. Late proposals will be rejected and returned unopened. Any electronic mail delays or other matters causing late receipt are irrelevant and will not excuse late submission.
Number of Copies:	One electronic document (pdf) less than 10 MB e-mailed to aampo@alamoareampo.org
Interviews:	If necessary, all interviews will be tentatively scheduled during the week of October 14, 2024.
Scheduled Contract Award:	Monday, October 28, 2024 at the AAMPO Transportation Policy Board Meeting.

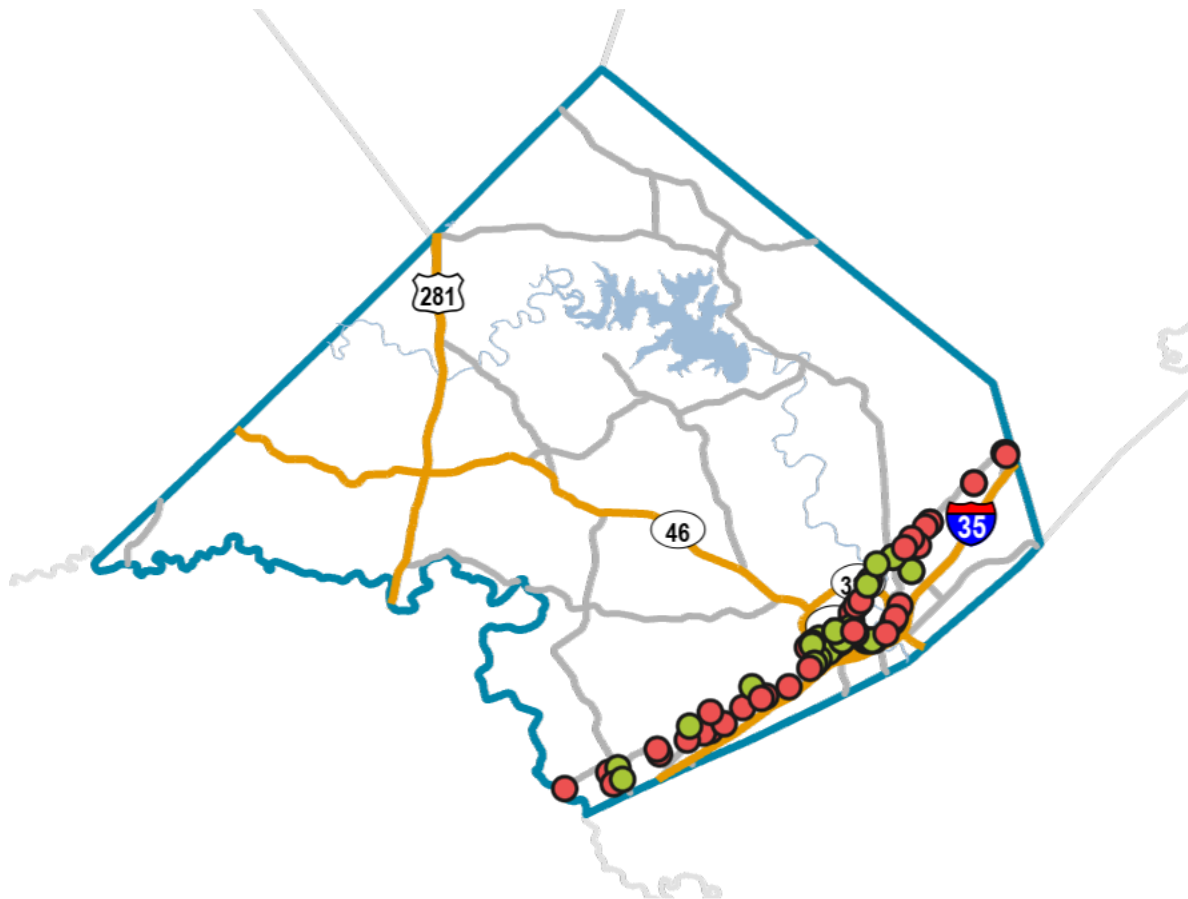
Purpose

The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) is seeking responses from qualified firms in order to develop a Railroad Crossing Study (RRCS). The Study will examine and evaluate current and forecasted multimodal traffic volumes at crossings and blocking locations, classify uncontrolled systems, and research Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) standards. The study will include evaluating railroad crossing in all of Comal County. The study will identify infrastructure at crossings (gates/stop signs), quiet zone locations and infrastructure, and proximity of railroads to schools. This information will be used to classify all railroad crossings as a result of the study.

The Scope of Work includes the four primary tasks listed below. Each task includes one or more sub-task(s) as described in this document. Each task will also involve deliverables that will be included as a part of the study.

1. Project Management
2. Oversight and Stakeholders Committee
3. Research and Background
4. Draft and Final Report

Figure 1. Comal County Study Area



Rail Crossings Map: [Railroad Crossings App \(comal.tx.us\)](http://RailroadCrossingsApp.comal.tx.us)

Proposal Content

The proposal will contain at least the following documentation:

1. Cover Letter - This should include a brief summary of the key points of the proposal and the approach to accomplishing the study. The name, address, and telephone number of the firm, as well as the primary contact person's name and e-mail address, should be included.
2. Study Methodology - This should include the Consultant's approach to tasks to accomplish the work outlined in the Scope of Work. This Section should demonstrate an understanding of the project, the local transportation system and Federal and State transportation planning requirements. This

section is limited to 10 pages (8.5" x 11") set to no less than 0.5" margins and no less than 11-point font.

3. Key Personnel - One paragraph summaries of qualifications and experience should be submitted for all personnel assigned to the project. The assignment of personnel must specifically contain the percent of time by personnel for each task included in the Scope of Work. The successful responder to this RFP must understand they are expected to provide qualified personnel to accomplish each portion of the work in this study. AAMPO and/or its representative(s) will maintain the right to request the removal of any personnel found, in their opinion, during the course of work on this project, to be unqualified to perform the work.
4. Management Plan - The management plan must contain a schedule of work that reflects the timing of deliverables and other significant milestones in the completion of the project; a percent of time by task for the Prime and each subconsultant; and the means by which the project would be coordinated with other related work. The purpose of the management plan is to specify the distribution of effort between tasks and the distribution of participation between the Prime and each subconsultant for each task described in the Scope of Work. (Refer to the form in Attachment A. This form is available on AAMPO's website as an Excel document, and it must be completed and submitted with the proposal for the proposal to be considered.)
5. Related Work - Work closely related to that described in the Scope of Work, which has been performed by the specific personnel assigned to this project, should be briefly outlined in the proposal. Emphasis should be placed on work undertaken in the past five years only.

Criteria for Evaluation

The Selection Committee will review all proposals received. After the initial responsiveness review, the committee members will read the proposals separately then convene to discuss and review the written proposals. Each member of the selection panel will then evaluate each proposal using the criteria identified below to arrive at a "proposal score" in the range of 0 to 100 for each proposal. A list of top ranked proposals will be developed based upon the totals of each committee member's score for each proposal.

The Selection Committee will review all proposals submitted on time and deemed eligible. The committee will evaluate the proposals, and make a selection, based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of the key personnel assigned to the project (up to 20 points)

2. Qualifications and experience of the Firm (up to 20 points)
3. Experience conducting similar projects, e.g. railroad crossing evaluations and traffic safety studies (up to 20 points)
4. Clarity on approach to complete all tasks, including schedule, budget, and scope of work (up to 20 points)
5. Project understanding (up to 20 points)

During the evaluation period, the Selection Committee may interview some or all of the proposing firms. The interview may consist of a short presentation by the Proposer after which the evaluation committee will ask questions related to the firm's proposal and qualifications.

AAMPO reserves the right to select a consultant based solely on written submittals and not convene oral interviews. If oral interviews are necessary, the selected Proposers will be requested to make a formal presentation. The Selection Committee will recommend one Consultant team following any interviews. The Committee's recommendation will be reviewed by the Executive Director before proceeding to the Transportation Policy Board for action.

Selection will be based on a "best value" analysis. AAMPO reserves the right to select the proposal which in its sole judgment best meets the needs of AAMPO.

Budget

The source of funding for this study is Federal and State funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and TxDOT. The budget for this project **\$250,000** and is included in AAMPO's Unified Planning Work Program.

Consultant Selection Committee/Study Oversight Committee

The responsibility of the Consultant Selection Committee is to make a recommendation to the AAMPO Transportation Policy Board on the Consultant selection. Once the project is underway, the Consultant Selection Committee will provide oversight for the conduct of the study.

Selection Procedure

The Selection Committee will review proposals based on the evaluation criteria (see above). Their recommendations will be forwarded to AAMPO's Transportation Policy Board. Firms, at the discretion of the Consultant Selection Committee may be selected for oral presentations and interviews. The contract award will be made by the AAMPO Transportation Policy Board; however, AAMPO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. The Selection Committee will be comprised of representatives from each of the following entities and is subject to change:

- Alamo Area MPO
- City of New Braunfels
- City of Schertz
- City of Garden Ridge
- Comal County
- Texas Department of Transportation – Rail Division

Other stakeholders will be invited to participate in the Study Oversight Committee as needed.

Any cost or expense incurred by the Consultant in the preparation of the proposal response shall be paid by the Consultant.

Duration of Contract

This contract will cover an approximate twelve (12) month period from the date of the Notice to Proceed.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation

Based on the project's Federal funding, type of work, location, overall and item cost estimate values, subcontracting opportunities, certified DBE firms in vicinity of the project location, and size of the project, the Texas Department of Transportation has assigned a race-conscious DBE goal of **zero (0.0%)** percent for this project proposal.

TxDOT has encouraged race-neutral DBE participation in this study.

Compliance with Federal Regulations

The Proposer's attention is called to the fact that this contract is subject to a financial assistance contract between AAMPO and FHWA and FTA of the USDOT and TxDOT. The contract to be let, therefore, is subject to the terms of the contract between AAMPO, USDOT and TxDOT. The successful Proposer will be required to comply with, in addition to other provisions of the Request for Proposal, the conditions required by all applicable Federal and State regulations, including the following:

1. Equal Employment Opportunity - Successful Proposer will be required to comply with all applicable Equal Employment Opportunity Laws and Regulations.
2. Title VI Assurances - Successful Proposer will be required to comply with all requirements imposed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (49 U.S.C. Section 2000d), the Regulations of DOT issued thereunder (49 C.F.R. part 21), and assurances by the MPO thereto.

3. AAMPO, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C 2000d to 2000d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office the Secretary, Part 21, Nondiscrimination in Federally assisted programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all bidden that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

Debarment Certification

The Prime Consultant and any subconsultants must complete, and submit with the proposal, the "Certification of Lower-Tier Participant" (Attachment B).

Background

In 2018, the Texas Department of Transportation – Rail Division, produced the Central Texas Grade Crossing study that developed candidate projects that could potentially serve to improve mobility and reduce vehicular delays associated with the UPRR freight railroad system located in the counties of Williamson, Travis, Hays, Comal, and Bexar through potential improvements to highway-railroad at-grade crossings. The Comal County Railroad Crossing Study will build off the 2018 TxDOT study. It will identify, and prioritize, potential improvements to crossings within Comal County.

Through their Online Railroad Mapping App, Comal Couty has identified and classified all rail crossings in the county, with the majority located in the City of New Braunfels. The study will include further evaluation of all railroad crossings in Comal County and the incorporated cities within the county, studying current and forecasted multimodal traffic at the crossings, blocking locations, classifying uncontrolled systems, and researching UPRR standards. The study will identify infrastructure at crossings (gates/stop signs), quiet zones, and proximity of railroads to schools to classify all railroad crossings.

Table 1 below shows previous TxDOT study’s railroad milage, by subdivision, within Comal County.

Subdivision	Begin Mile Post	End Mile Post	Length (Miles)
Austin	216.9	241.8	24.9
Austin Track 2	216.6	240.1	23.5

Source: TxDOT Central Texas Grade Crossing Study (2018)

Objectives

- Evaluate safety issues related to railroad crossings
- Evaluate land uses around railroad crossings

- Evaluate railroad traffic within Comal County
- Evaluate railroad crossing activity
- Evaluate railroad crossing blockages, locations, durations, and frequencies
- Evaluate all railroad crossing safety features
- Research any existing planning for maintenance and improvements to existing railroad crossings.
- Research Union Pacific standards for railroad crossings
- Classify all existing railroad crossings and prioritize improvement planning

Scope of Work

The following Scope of Work identifies the major components of the study effort.

The Consultant's Scope of Work is as follows:

Task 1 – Project Management

- 1.1 **Project Management Plan:** The Consultant shall develop a project management plan (PMP) to outline project team organization, roles and responsibilities, project schedule (see 1.3 below), project understanding, coordination and communication procedures, document and graphics formatting protocols, filing protocols, project close-out procedures.
- 1.2 **Invoice Preparation and Progress Reports:** Invoices and Progress reports shall be submitted by the Consultant no later than 45 days following the month to which they apply. Each invoice shall also include a copy of the progress report or reports for the period covered by the invoice. Each progress report shall specify, for each type of work that has been assigned, deliverables that were completed during that month, physical and financial percent complete for that work, list of meetings attended, the precise nature of work that was done that did not result in a deliverable, whether the work is on schedule for timely delivery or not, issues that may delay the work in the future, actions by AAMPO or other remedial actions that are required, and for the following month, the anticipated work that shall be performed and the deliverables that shall be submitted. The Consultant shall prepare monthly invoices according to AAMPO's invoicing procedures. The Consultant shall submit each invoice in a format acceptable to AAMPO.
- 1.3 **Project Schedule:** A detailed project schedule will be prepared, indicating tasks, critical dates, key milestones, deliverables, and AAMPO review requirements. The Consultant shall review progress during coordination meetings, and should reviews indicate a substantial change in progress, the schedule shall be updated as necessary. Issues that need resolution, or action items, shall be identified in the

progress report. The Consultant will work closely and meet regularly with AAMPO staff to ensure progress is on schedule and within budget.

- 1.4 Oversight Committee Meetings: The Consultant will organize and coordinate Oversight Committee meetings for technical review, general coordination purposes, and status updates of various elements of the project.

KEY DELIVERABLES, TASK 1:

- *Project Management Plan*
- *Project Schedule (ongoing)*
- *Oversight Committee Meetings (including agendas, summaries, etc.)*
- *Monthly Progress Reports, Invoices, Billings, etc.*

Task 2 – Oversight Committee and Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.1 Oversight Committee: The study will include an Oversight Committee that is comprised of staff and decision makers from AAMPO, City of New Braunfels, City of Schertz, City of Garden Ridge, Comal County, TxDOT-RRD, and additional members of the AAMPO TAC. The Oversight Committee will be responsible for technical memo findings and review of the final plan document.

- 2.2 Stakeholder Identification and Outreach: The Consultant should identify key stakeholders, including local government officials, from Comal County, along with the Cities of New Braunfels, Schertz, and Garden Ridge. Other partners could include economic development commissions, emergency services, and possibly the Comal Independent School District (ISD) Transportation Department in the development of plan recommendations. Consultant should organize and conduct up to four (4) virtual and/or in-person stakeholder meetings.

KEY DELIVERABLES, TASK 2:

- *Oversight Committee Meetings (up to four)*
- *Stakeholder Engagement Meetings (up to four)*
- *Meeting materials from committee meetings (e.g. Agendas, PowerPoint Presentations, Meeting Summary Notes)*
- *Technical Memoranda*

Task 3 – Research and Background

- 3.1 Comprehensive Review of Existing Data, Standards, and Maintenance: The study will build upon all previously developed and available databases. The Consultant shall develop an existing conditions assessment for Comal County that includes research of standards, maintenance plans, data compilation, and summary; and identification of issues and needs.

Data collection shall include (at a minimum):

- Railroad crossing classification and features
 - Number of crossings
 - Types of crossings (at-grade, grade separated, quiet-zones)
 - Safety features by classification
- Railroad traffic within Comal County
 - Existing UPRR volumes and schedules
 - Forecasted UPRR future volumes and schedules
- Railroad crossing traffic volumes within Comal County
 - Volumes and classification (auto, truck, school bus, pedestrian, bikes)
- Crash analysis
 - Number of incidents that occurred at railroad crossing including
 - Location
 - Frequency
 - Severity
 - Mode
- Railroad crossing blockages including
 - Locations
 - Durations
 - Frequencies
- Railroad crossing planned maintenance
- Planned or programmed roadway improvement projects at crossings
- Research UPRR standards for railroad crossings including grade crossings, quiet zone crossings, and over/under passes
- Land use patterns around crossings
 - Existing
 - Planned

- Floodplain proximity to crossings
- Impacts to emergency services and response times.

The Consultant will work with AAMPO to identify and procure data from local, state, and federal sources as necessary.

- 3.2 Oversight Committee Work Sessions: Early in the study, the Consultant will participate in work session(s) with the Study Oversight Committee to further define the problems affecting railroad crossings in the study area, familiarize members with key issues, and refine the project's goals and objectives accordingly.
- 3.3 Review of Existing Plans: The Consultant will research current rail plans and other studies within the RRCS study area
- 3.4 Demographics and Traffic Analysis: The Consultant will evaluate population and employment growth trends in Comal County, and analyze current and future traffic congestion levels and safety trends. The Consultant will document major issues in a Study Area Profile Summary and present it to the Study Oversight Committee.
- 3.5 Plan Review: The Consultant will specifically review (at a minimum) the TxDOT Central Texas Grade Crossing Study (2018), TxDOT Texas Rail Plan (2019), AAMPO Long Range Plan: Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Mobility 2050 (2022), and San Antonio Region Freight Study (2008). The Consultant will document detailed takeaways from these existing studies, that support the direction of this study, in a technical memorandum and present it to the Study Oversight Committee.

KEY DELIVERABLES, TASK 3:

- *Study Area Summary*
- *Data Acquisition and Maintenance Plan*
- *Existing Studies and Plans Review Technical Memorandum*

Task 4 – Draft and Final Report

- 4.1 Draft Report: The Consultant will prepare a draft final report, including an executive summary, documenting all the tasks, railroad crossing profiles, possible safety improvements and stakeholder input. The draft final report with results, analysis, conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the Oversight Committee for approval. The Final Report submittal will include all relevant GIS data associated with the final recommendations.

- 4.2 Presentations: The Consultant will present the draft final report to the AAMPO Transportation Policy Board and the Comal County Commissioners Court.
- 4.3 Final Report: The Consultant will prepare the final report. The final report will address all comments and corrections requested by the Oversight Committee, Comal County Commissioners Court (or staff), and the Transportation Policy Board. All comments will be tracked using a comment response matrix. This matrix will include the commentor, date, reference to document (page # or section), and response to the comment (how it was addressed or why not revised).
- 4.4 Data and File Transfer: After acceptance of the final report by the Transportation Policy Board, the Consultant will provide AAMPO staff with electronic versions of all materials produced during the Plan development process. Each implementing agency will be responsible for adopting recommendations specific to their jurisdiction.

KEY DELIVERABLES, TASK 4:

- *Draft Report*
- *Comment Response Matrix*
- *Presentations to Committees and Boards, as needed*
- *Final Report*

Attachment A
Contract Task Summary

	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3		Task 4		Total	
Firm	Number of Work Hours	Percent Effort	Number of Work Hours	Percent Effort	Number of Work Hours	Percent Effort	Number of Work Hours	Percent Effort	Number of Work Hours	Percent Effort
Personnel										
Prime (Firm Name)										
Name, Title										
Name, Title										
Name, Title										
Prime Total:										
Sub 1. (Firm Name)										
Name, Title										
Name, Title										
Subconsultant Total:										
Sub 2. (Firm Name)										
Name, Title										
Name, Title										
Subconsultant Total:										
Sub 3. (Firm Name)										
Name, Title										
Name, Title										
Subconsultant Total:										
Total:										

**Please provide the above information in a similar format for all key personnel that will be working on this study.

The intent of this form is to determine the level and relative distribution of effort between firms and key personnel.

Lower Tier Participant Debarment Certification (Negotiated Contracts)

_____, being duly
(insert name of certifying official)
sworn or penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States, certifies
that neither _____, nor
(insert name of lower tier participant)
its principals are presently:

- debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment,
- declared ineligible,
- or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Where the above identified lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the above statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall indicate below to whom the exception applies, the initiating agency, and dates of action.

Exceptions will not necessarily result in denial of award, but will be considered in determining contractor responsibility. Providing false information may result in criminal prosecution or administrative sanctions.

EXCEPTIONS:

Signature of Certifying Official

Title

Date of Certification

See Reverse for Information

Certification Information

This certification is to be used by contractors pursuant to 49 CFR 29 when any of the following occur:

- **any transaction between the contractor and a person (other than a procurement contract for goods and services), regardless of type, under a primary covered transaction**
- **any procurement contract for goods or services when the estimated cost is \$25,000 or more**
- **any procurement contract for goods or services between the contractor and a person, regardless of the amount, under which the person will have a critical influence on or substantive control over that covered transaction. Such persons include principal investigators and providers of federally-required audit services.**

***A procurement* transaction is the process of acquiring goods and services.**

***A nonprocurement* transaction is the granting of financial assistance to entities to assist the grantor in meeting objectives that are mutually beneficial to the grantee and grantor.**

A COPY OF THIS CERTIFICATION IS TO BE FURNISHED TO AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPON REQUEST.

Attachment C

**Former AAMPO Official and Employee Restriction
(Negotiated Contracts)**

I, _____, certify that for a period of one year from the date of termination of official duties, no former member of the

- Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff,
- Transportation Policy Board,
- Technical Advisory Committee, or
- his or her parent, child or spouse

with a financial interest will serve on the staff of the consultant team as an employee of the prime contractor, or subcontractor, for this contract.

Financial interest is defined as having a business entity in which the former Transportation Policy Board member, Technical Advisory Committee member and AAMPO employee, or his or her parent, child or spouse, directly or indirectly owns:

(A) ten (10) percent or more of the voting stock or shares of the business entity, or

(B) ten (10) percent or more of the fair market value of the business entity.

Any violation of this policy, with the knowledge, expressed or implied, of the individual or business entity contracting with AAMPO shall render the proposal or contract involved voidable by the Executive Director or the Transportation Policy Board.

Signature of Certifying Official

Title

Date of Certification