

Reconnecting Communities Project Frequently Asked Questions

Community-Informed Planning Study for Highway Burial, Capping, and Stitching in San Antonio's Eastside

Q: What is the deadline to submit questions regarding the RFQ and/or application?

A: The deadline for questions is June 3, 2026. Consultant teams/firms should expect to receive a response to questions submitted within 24-48 hours. As needed, SAGE will update this FAQ document to ensure all consultant teams/firms have access to the same information.

NOTE: The question deadline, originally set for June 9, was moved up at the request of attendees to the May 6 pre-positional meeting to provide firms additional time to adjust submissions based on responses received.

Q: What is SAGE's vision for this project?

A: We seek an ambitious analysis that explores the feasibility of retrofitting interstate highways (I-10, I-35, and I-37) as green spaces where people can gain greater access to housing, work, and play, while moving freely and safely across the Eastside.

Q: What concerns SAGE about this grant? In other words, what keeps you up?

A: Although SAGE has been provided reasonable assurance that this grant will not be delayed or canceled, we have no guarantee. Additionally, SAGE has to strike the right balance of maximizing the depths of the community's imagination to redesign highways spaces, while being realistic about the time, cost, and probability of implementation.

Q: Will this project be coordinated with the City?

A: Yes. In March 2026 (through a similar USDOT grant), the City of San Antonio awarded a \$3.7 million contract to AECOM Technical Services Inc. to study ways to bridge the barrier between downtown and the Eastside. SAGE is involved in this process and is actively working with City to coordinate both projects. However, please note that the City's project only studies one highway (I-37 from Houston St. to Carolina St.) SAGE's projects consider four areas of three highways (I-10 from Piedmont Ave to Walters St and MLK Dr. to Houston St., I-35 from Broadway St. to Walters St., and I-37 from Broadway St to Carolina St.).

Q: Can you explain the amount awarded for this grant? I was confused by seeing different numbers.

A: The Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) program requires a non-federal match to ensure local investment. For planning grants, the federal share is 80% (requiring a 20% non-federal match). Accordingly, SAGE was awarded \$2,000,000 and SAGE will contribute the remaining \$500,000 for a total of \$2,500,000. The contract(s)



for professional services is not-to-exceed the contract value of approximately \$2,300,000. The remainder of the grant is expected to be used by SAGE personnel to promote community engagement efforts.

Q: Will the contract for this project be time and materials or cost plus fixed fee?

A: We are open to either approach, so long as it does not exceed \$2,300,000; the contract signed with the selected firm will stipulate that it can exceed that number. That said, we want to be flexible and are open to the possibility for a blended option.

Q: For the Final Statements of Qualifications (SOQ), do cover letters, dividers, table of contents, or resumes count towards the 20-page limit?

A: Yes, 20-page limit for the Final SOQ includes all content - to include cover letters, dividers, etc. Standard page size of 8.5 x 11-inch should be used. There aren't any limitations regarding font size so long as font remains comfortably legible (so not too small to read).

Q: Can you clarify the cost breakdown requirements referenced under the "Budget and Timeline" section? Cost information is not included in the submittal requirements or evaluation criteria in the RFQ.

A: Submissions will be evaluated, amongst other factors, on the feasibility of a firm's methodology, timeline, and quality control measures. A general explanation of how you anticipate fee to be distributed across your proposed approach will be sufficient for a cost breakdown at this stage.

Q: Did the federal administration make any changes to contracts?

A: The full grant awarded to SAGE, including the terms of contract, can be found on our Reconnecting Communities Project [webpage](#). No changes were made to SAGE's grant, which was first awarded in January 2025 and contractually executed in February 2026.

Q: Given the federal funding in play, are there any certifications, affirmations, or representations that respondents or the selected firm will be required to complete that aren't referenced in the RFQ?

A: There aren't any specific certifications required. For further guidance, visit our Reconnecting Communities Project [webpage](#) to see the full grant awarded to SAGE, including the terms of contract.

Q: Does SAGE have any DBE, HUB, and MWBE requirements?

A: We understand that certain government entities will usually require contractors to utilize small, for-profit businesses owned (at least 51%) by socially/economically disadvantaged individuals—primarily women and minority groups—to ensure fair opportunity for competing on federally funded transportation projects. No, at

this time, SAGE does not have any requirements for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise(s), Historically Underutilized Business(es), or Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises.

Q: Do you have a standard contract for professional services, or would this be negotiated at the next stage?

A: We do not have a standard contract for this project. The terms of a contract for professional services will be negotiated with the firm deemed best qualified.

Q: Can you expand on the expected scope under Task 3 that asks us to prepare economic and environmental impact? With economic impact in particular, what analyses are included within the scope?

A: We'd like to understand the potential economic and environmental impacts of the recommendations made within the study. For example, if it is determined burial is viable, are there any environmental concerns? Or, if it is determined a land bridge is viable, what are the anticipated benefits (or consequences) on the local economy? This could be a market demand study for residents seeking amenities on the other side of the highway, economic impact study, or SWOT analysis for the proposed recommendation.

Q: The RFQ indicates that SAGE will assist with community engagement scope and has allocated costs to cover this work. Can you elaborate on SAGE's expected role in community engagement, and what expectations there are in terms of type and number of community touch points?

A: Community engagement is expected to be collaborative between both SAGE and the selected firm. Engagement needs vary by project; however, historically SAGE community engagement has included focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and project-specific activities (including surveys).

Q: Will there be a shortlist from the proposers and an interview?

A: Yes, we will select and, by June 24, notify the subset of firms who have been identified to be interviewed. Once notified, SAGE will coordinate and schedule interviews with those firms. Interviews will be conducted by a committee comprised of SAGE staff and board members as well as experts from the field - transportation and civil engineers as well as architects – who are not bidding on this project.