



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SAN MARCOS OUTER LOOP TRAIL – LA CIMA (NORTH)

TRAIL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

SOLICITATION SUMMARY

- **Organization:** Great Springs Project
- **Project Name:** San Marcos Outer Loop Trail – La Cima (North), Trail Design & Construction Services
- **Project Location:** San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
- **Request Timeline:**
 - **Release Date:** Friday, July 31, 2026, at 5:00pm (CDT)
 - **Submission Due Date:** Monday, August 31, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT)
- **Submission Format:** 1 single PDF file; max 10 MB in size. Emailed to RFP@greatspringsproject.org.
- **Bid Support:**
 - **Pre-Bid Meeting:** Wednesday, August 5, 2026, at 9:00am (CDT). The meeting will be held at the project site. Online registration (www.greatspringsproject.org) required prior to Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at 9:00am (CDT).
 - **Questions:** Questions (asked outside of the Pre-Bid Meeting) will only be accepted via email to RFP@greatspringsproject.org and must be sent prior to Friday, August 7, 2026, at 5:00pm (CDT). Responses will be posted on the organization's website (www.greatspringsproject.org) by Friday, August 14, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Great Springs Project (GSP) is seeking proposals from qualified entities in order to successfully complete both design and construction activities for the La Cima (North) segment of the San Marcos Outer Loop Trail. This segment of trail will be an approximately 1.41-mile corridor of natural surface trail within western San Marcos. The



trail will span between Ranch Road 12 and the Freeman Center and is planned to be part of a larger, roughly 4.20-mile, recreational nature trail.

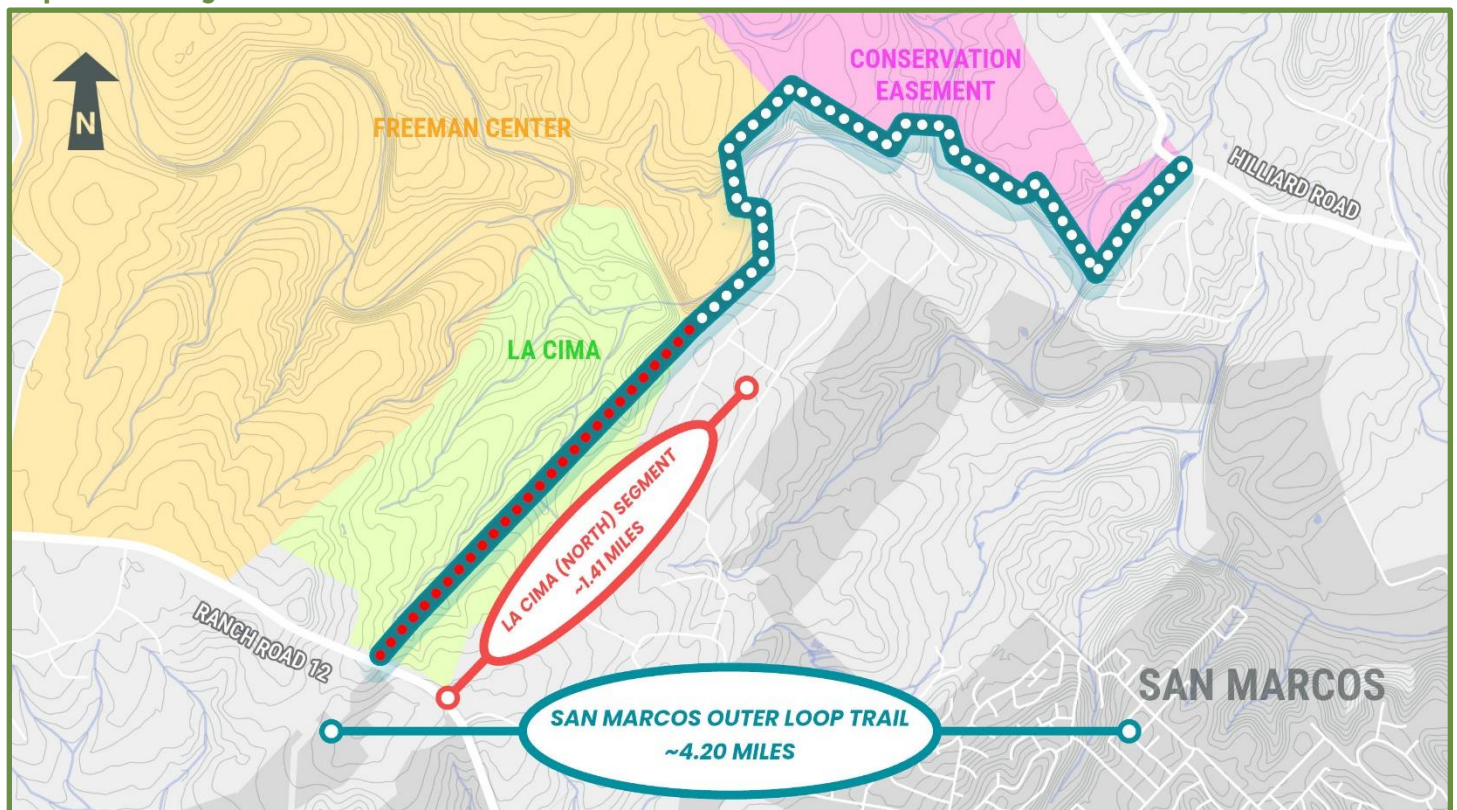
BACKGROUND

GSP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to help create a network of spring-to-spring trails and a corridor of protected lands over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, between San Antonio and Austin.

GSP has partnered with several different public, private, and nonprofit entities in order to realize the vision of the San Marcos Outer Loop Trail. In the case of the La Cima (North) segment, GSP has partnered with a residential developer (La Cima) to plan and implement the trail system as it interacts with their development. Through this partnership, GSP applied for a Recreational Trails grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) in order to fund the design and construction of the project. In 2023, TPWD selected the project for federal funding and GSP has been working since to prepare the project for construction.

PROJECT DETAILS

Map 1: Trail Alignment



Trail Details

- **Length:** ~1.41 Miles | ~7450 Feet
- **Useable Space for Construction:** ~14.48 Acres, ~90 Feet in Width



- **Typical Width:** 5 Feet
- **Potential Facilities:** Shade Structures, Benches, Wayfinding/Safety/Informational Signage
- **Material:** Natural Surface
- **Intended Uses:** Hiking, Mountain Biking (Motorized Vehicle Uses Not Permitted)

Design Goals

The San Marcos Outer Loop Trail, including the La Cima (North) segment, is visioned to be a natural greenway that is harmonious with the context of rural Hays County. GSP's goal is to create a safe and inviting recreational facility that will allow users to experience and appreciate the landscapes, vegetation, and wildlife that make this area unique.

The La Cima (North) segment will eventually lie within a residential neighborhood. Additionally, the land provided for the trail largely overlaps with a transmission line easement. As such, the trail will have to simultaneously provide community recreation and connectivity benefits while navigating the constraints of existing electric utility infrastructure.

Conservation Techniques

As the project has received federal funding, it must comply with certain environmental regulations. Particularly, the project area potentially interacts with golden-cheeked warbler habitat and as such, the project must comply with the following conservation techniques:

- Clearing/trimming of individual trees and shrubs MUST be phased so that any activities occur outside the breeding season (March 1 – September 15).
- Trails SHALL NOT break woodland canopy.
- Removal of trees with a diameter-at-breast-height of 12 inches or greater is PROHIBITED.

Successful delivery of this project will require (to the highest extent possible and practicable) the reuse of disturbed natural materials (tree branches, large rocks, soils, etc.), preservation of existing topography, and minimal impact on established drainage patterns.

Accessibility

The trail itself is not required to be ADA compliant; however, trailheads, parking facilities, trail bridges and restrooms that are included in the final design MUST be fully ADA compliant.

Engineering Requirement

All structures (bridges/restrooms/pavilions/etc.) that cost over \$8,000.00 MUST be designed by a civil engineer. Sealed plans will have to be obtained for such structures should they be included in the final design..

Permitting Needs

As of May 1, 2026, the project has been granted a Notice to Proceed (NTP) from TPWD for construction. As plans for the trail evolve, GSP must keep TPWD up to date on changes in order to ensure the project complies with the requirements of the grant.

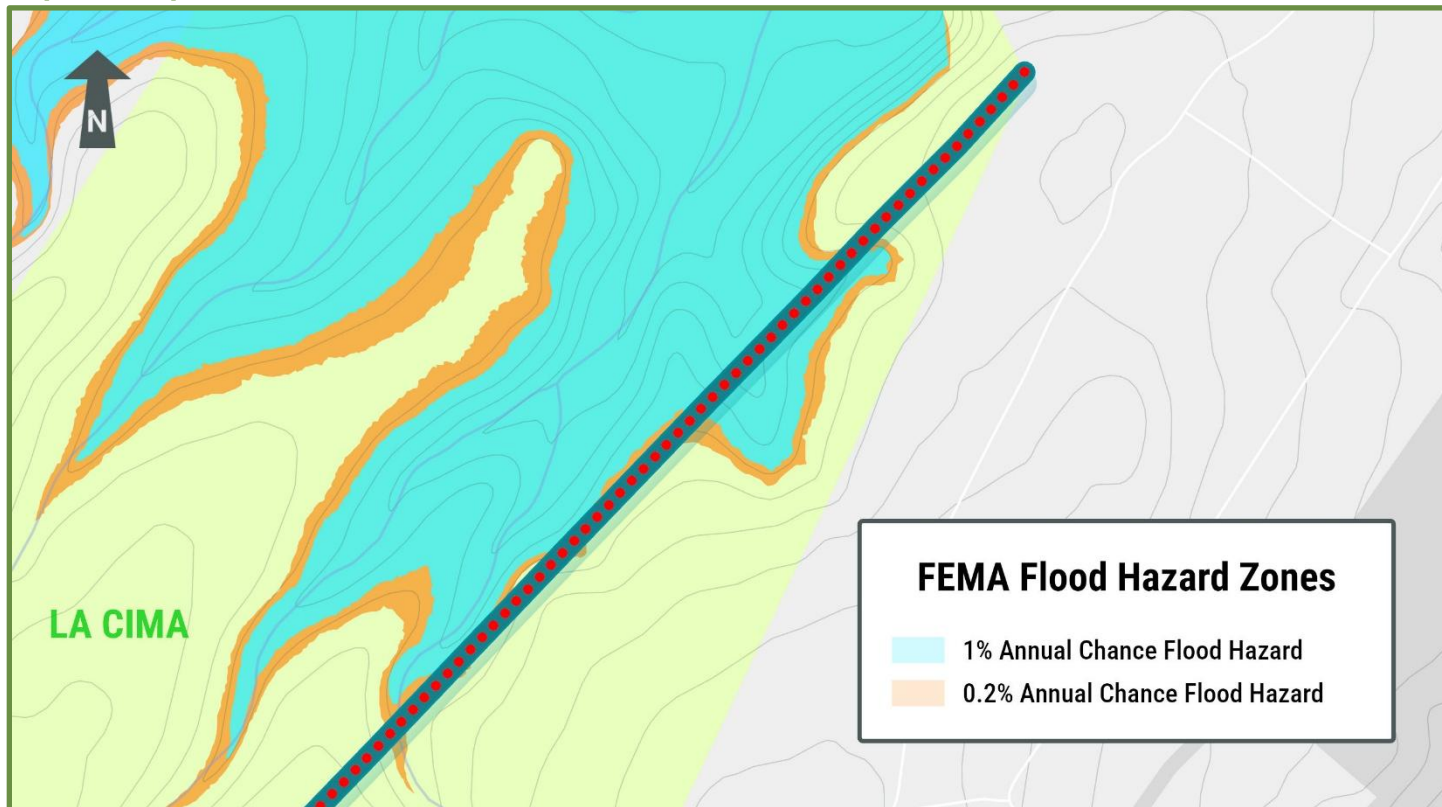


The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) owns a transmission line easement that largely interacts with the land provided for the La Cima (North) segment. As such, GSP will be required to submit documentation to LCRA in order to receive a Letter of No Objection (LONO) from the entity.

Floodplain

Parts of the La Cima (North) segment do lie within the 500- & 100-year floodplains. Design considerations should be made to ensure the trail is minimally impacted by flooding and that future users are made aware of potential hazards.

Map 2: Floodplain Interactions



Infrastructure Interactions

The only known utility within the project area is a LCRA electric transmission line. Additional due diligence will be needed to understand all utility interactions. Considerations are as follows:

- **Electric Transmission Line:** Generally, trail facilities should be distanced at least 30 feet from any utility poles and preferably veer away from guy wires to reduce complications with approvals and to minimize potential disruptions to the trail from LCRA construction and maintenance activities.

SCOPE OF WORK

Task 1: Project Management

The selected entity will be responsible for managing all of their project activities and continuously coordinating with GSP. Activities such as general administration, task scheduling, financial bookkeeping, procuring goods/services,



managing labor, reporting on progress, ensuring safety, and maintaining compliance with federal and state regulations are expected during all stages of the project.

Deliverables:

- Coordination with GSP on project progress in the form of written reports and/or virtual/in-person meetings.
- Regular invoices and billing to GSP, preferably monthly.
- Maintaining financial records related to the project (invoices, proof of payment/cancelled checks, receipts, labor logs, order confirmations, etc.) and providing them to GSP upon request.
- Maintaining a general management plan and schedule for the project.

Task 2: Design

Design expectations for this project are expected to be relatively minimal. Nevertheless, the selected entity is expected to be involved in determining the final placement for the trail and potential amenities, as well as determining the supplies, tools, machinery, and construction methods required to deliver the proposed trail. For permitting and grant compliance purposes, the selected entity will need to produce digital files (in the form of plan sets and/or GIS-compatible files).

Deliverables:

- Conducting site visits of the project area to evaluate environmental conditions and determine the final placement of the trail and potential amenities. After such determinations have been made, both a written and graphic plan for construction will be produced and reviewed by GSP staff to confirm the plan meets the organization's standards and needs. Expected construction costs will also be presented to GSP staff for consideration.
- Prior to construction, GSP will be required to receive a LONO from LCRA in order to encroach within their transmission line easement. A plan set will be produced so LCRA staff may review the proposed scope of work and provide feedback on any necessary changes.
- After the project is fully constructed, an as-built survey will be required to document what was ultimately constructed. Said survey will need to be satisfactory to TPWD.

Task 3: Construction

The selected entity will be responsible for ultimately constructing the project to the specifications laid out in the design process. Selected entities are also expected to perform full construction management activities. In certain phases of the construction process, the selected entity could expect to work at times with volunteers managed by GSP.

Deliverables:



- The fully constructed trail with amenities installed per the specifications laid out in the design process (the plans for the trail may be changed during the construction process with approval from GSP). The trail MUST be constructed to the standards and needs of GSP and receive approval from TPWD.

BID SELECTION

Evaluation Process

Bids will be reviewed by GSP staff who will make recommendations to the GSP Board of Directors for final approval. The contract award will be made by the GSP Board of Directors or their staff designee. Bids will be evaluated over the course of 2 rounds; however, the number of bids that are selected to move on to the second round is at the discretion of GSP.

Round 1 – Initial Evaluation of Qualifications

Proposals will be checked for completeness; any incomplete proposals will be automatically disqualified at this time. After the completeness check, GSP staff will rank remaining proposals based on the Round 1 evaluation criteria listed in the RFP. The top-ranking bid(s) will be selected to move on to the second round of evaluation.

Round 2 – Final Comprehensive Evaluation

Bidders selected to move on to the second round will be notified of this result and asked to have follow-up in-person/virtual interviews with GSP staff. Following all interviews, GSP staff will make final evaluations of any bids. The top-ranked bid will be recommended to the GSP Board of Directors for selection and contract negotiation.

Evaluation Timeline

Evaluations will take place over the course of the timeline provided below. Should there be any changes to the schedule, changes will be noted on the organization's website (www.greatspringsproject.org) and the RFP will be updated accordingly. Additionally, GSP will notify bidders of any schedule changes during the evaluation process.

INITIAL SOLICITATION	
Solicitation Posted; Begin Accepting Proposals	Friday, July 31, 2026, at 5:00pm (CDT)
Proposal Submission Deadline	Monday, August 31, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT)
EVALUATIONS – ROUND 1	
Evaluations Completed; Bidders Selected for Next Round Notified	Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT)
EVALUATIONS – ROUND 2	
Interviews Conducted	Monday, September 14, 2026 – Friday, September 18, 2026



Evaluations Completed; Bid Selected for Recommendation Notified	Monday, September 21, 2026 – Friday, September 25, 2026
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Required Submission Content

Interested bidders are required to submit the following to be considered for selection (bids that do not include all the required information will be automatically disqualified):

1. **Cover Letter:** A letter introducing the bidding entity and summarizing the key points of the bid. The name, physical address, email address, and phone number of the entity and entity's primary point of contact should be included (also applies to any subprime entities).
2. **Statement of Qualifications:** A report on the qualifications of the bidding entity. This report should highlight the entity's previous work on comparable recreational trail projects and capacity to complete all the tasks listed out in the scope of work. (Emphasis should only be placed on work conducted within the last 5 years.) Bidders should also demonstrate their understanding of the project and detail their approach to constructing recreational trails. Bidding entities may also provide any other information they feel will be relevant for consideration.
3. **Examples of Previous Work:** Images/plan drawings that demonstrate previous work on comparable recreational trails. Example images/drawings preferably highlight work comparable to the scope of the project. For each example provided, please provide: 1) the project/trail name and location; 2) the client's name; 3) the length of the associated trail; 4) the project budget; and 5) the time spent (in months) on designing and/or constructing the trail.
4. **Initial Cost Estimate:** An estimate for the expected costs associated with all of the tasks listed out in the scope of work. Costs at a minimum should be broken down by task but are preferably as detailed as possible. If the bidder expects to subcontract any responsibilities, please also provide a breakdown of the amount and percentage of costs per entity.
5. **Management Plan and Expected Project Schedule:** A plan and timeline for how the selected entity expects to manage tasks and when key milestones will be achieved. If the bidder expects to subcontract any responsibilities, the management plan should detail the division of responsibilities between all entities.

Have all components of the submission compiled into 1 single PDF file; max 10 MB. Bids MUST be submitted to RFP@greatspringsproject.org to be considered. Refer to the Evaluation Timeline for deadlines.

Evaluation Criteria

GSP is seeking an entity that will provide the "best value" for the needs of the project. Evaluation criteria in Round 1 will focus on the qualifications, expertise, and demonstrated project delivery approach of the bidder. Top-ranking bids will be selected to move on to Round 2 where other considerations, including costs, will be factored.

Criteria – Round 1

Bids will be evaluated based on the following criteria (maximum point value in parenthesis):



- Understanding of the project and scope of work and proposed approach for completing required tasks. **(25 Points)**
- Relevant trail design & construction experience, particularly with natural surface trail projects and working with public/non-profit entities. **(25 Points)**
- Provided management plan and timeline detailing how the bidder expects to handle required tasks, divide responsibilities (if applicable), and complete tasks in a timely and orderly manner. **(20 Points)**
- Demonstrated knowledge in sustainable trail design & construction, best practices, and local site conditions. **(20 Points)**
- Previous experience working with TPWD and/or Recreational Trail grant projects. **(10 Points)**

Criteria – Round 2

Following interviews and additional proposal evaluation, bids will be reevaluated based on the following criteria (maximum point value in parenthesis):

- Understanding of the project and scope of work and proposed approach for completing required tasks. **(25 Points)**
- Relevant trail design & construction experience, particularly with natural surface trail projects and working with public/non-profit entities. **(25 Points)**
- Provided management plan and timeline detailing how the bidder expects to handle required tasks, divide responsibilities (if applicable), and complete tasks in a timely and orderly manner. **(20 Points)**
- Demonstrated knowledge in sustainable trail design & construction, best practices, and local site conditions. **(20 Points)**
- Previous experience working with TPWD and/or Recreational Trail grant projects. **(10 Points)**
- Provided initial cost estimate for all services. **(20 Points)**
- Overall interview performance and demonstrated ability to be a viable project partner. **(5 Points)**

BID SUPPORT

Pre-Bid Meeting

An in-person meeting will be held prior to the proposal submission deadline to allow potential bidders the opportunity to see the project site and ask GSP staff questions regarding the project and the bidding process. Online registration will be required in advance in order to attend and specific details will be emailed to registrants in advance. Refer to the Support Timeline for registration deadlines and timing.

The registration form can be found on the organization's website (www.greatspringsproject.org).



Questions

Questions (asked outside of the Pre-Bid Meeting) will only be accepted in writing by email to RFP@greatspringsproject.org. Responses to these questions will be posted on the organization's website (www.greatspringsproject.org). Refer to the Support Timeline for deadlines and response timing.

Support Timeline

Bid support will take place over the course of the timeline provided below. Should there be any changes to the schedule, changes will be noted on the organization's website (www.greatspringsproject.org) and the RFP will be updated accordingly. Additionally, GSP will notify registrants of the Pre-Bid Meeting of any changes.

PRE-BID MEETING	
Online Registration Deadline	Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at 9:00am (CDT)
Meeting Details Sent to Registrants	Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT)
Meeting Held	Wednesday, August 5, 2026, at 9:00am (CDT)
ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS	
Questions Submission Deadline	Friday, August 7, 2026, at 5:00pm (CDT)
Responses to Questions Posted	Friday, August 14, 2026, at 12:00pm (CDT)

BUDGET & TIMELINE

Budget

The budget for the project (including the costs for potential materials, tools, machinery, labor, etc., required to complete the tasks) shall not exceed \$275,000.00.

Timeline

Complete construction of the La Cima (North) segment is expected by Fall 2027, at the latest.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS

Regulatory Compliance

As this project has received federal funding, any potential contract is subject to federal regulations. The selected entity should expect to comply with applicable regulations.



Insurance Requirements

Any selected entity will be expected to maintain and provide proof of the following insurance policies:

- General Liability Insurance – Minimum of \$500,000.00 Per Occurrence; \$2,000,000.00 Aggregate
- Independent Contractor Status and/or Worker's Compensation Insurance
- Vehicle Liability Insurance – \$500,000.00 Per Person (Personal Injury); \$1,000,000.00 Combined Single Limits

Duration of Contract

This contract will cover no more than a period of approximately 12 months from the date of the Notice to Proceed (NTP) from GSP to the selected entity. Proposals shorter than 12 months will be considered and are encouraged.

Contingent Funding

Project scope and funding is contingent on funding being available and provided by TPWD. Partial or inadequate funding may require a revision of the scope and/or modification of the contract.

Contractor Claims

Contractors will not be entitled to any claims against GSP for damages from any cause whatsoever in the progress of the work for this project. Any damage to property as the result of the contractor's operations shall be the responsibility of the contractor.

GSP's Rights During Solicitation

GSP reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities, to request additional information from bidders, and to modify or cancel this RFP at any time. Issuance of this RFP does not obligate GSP to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in preparation of a proposal.

