

ITEM #:	5
DATE:	05-26-26
DEPT:	AAMPO

TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH TOOLE DESIGN GROUP, LLC FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

BACKGROUND:

The Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (AAMPO's) Metropolitan Transportation Plan, *Ames Connect 2050*, and the City of Ames Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan, *Walk Bike Roll Ames*, both identify the need to develop a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan for the region.

The SRTS Plan will identify strategies, programs, and infrastructure improvements that enhance safety and accessibility for students walking and bicycling to school. The plan will include all 11 public primary and secondary schools located within the [AAMPO planning area](#), including schools in both the Ames Community School District and Gilbert Community School District.

Funding for development of the SRTS Plan is available as follows:

Source	Amount
AAMPO Federal Planning Funds	\$48,000
City of Ames 2026/27 Transportation Planning Program (Road Use Tax Fund)	\$12,000
Total:	\$60,000

CONSULTANT SELECTION:

Following applicable federal and state-mandated purchasing requirements to allow use of federal planning funds, the AAMPO solicited proposals for the development of the SRTS Plan. On January 8, 2026, staff released a Request for Proposals, with a due date for submittals of February 5, 2026. **The Request for Proposals required that no cost or fee be included with the proposal submittal in accordance with federal requirements for a strictly qualifications-based selection process.**

A project selection team reviewed the received proposals using the following criteria:

Proposal Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Project Understanding & Approach	50%
Previous Experience	15%
Project Team & Key Personnel	15%
Understanding of AAMPO	10%
Project Management	10%

The scores for the received proposals, utilizing the above criteria, are as follows:

Rank	Firm(s)	Score
1	Toole Design (<i>Prime</i>), HDR	93
2	MSA	86

Given the above rankings, staff has negotiated a contract (see attached) with the highest-ranked firm, Toole Design Group, LLC. The negotiated agreement has a not-to-exceed amount of \$60,000.

The City of Ames is intended to be the lead agency on the project. The AAMPO Policy Committee is being asked to recommend that the Ames City Council award this work to Toole Design Group, LLC. The Ames City Council will be asked to consider this recommendation at a City Council meeting in June 2026.

PROJECT SCOPE & SCHEDULE:

The key services the consultant will perform include the following:

- Assess existing conditions around each public primary and secondary school within the AAMPO planning area. This will include review of existing Safe Routes to School maps, state and national best practices, student-related data as available, pickup/drop-off circulation patterns, crossing guard locations, observed pedestrian and bicycle behaviors, infrastructure gaps, and safety concerns.
- Gather and review data within approximately one-half mile of each school, including crash data, vehicle counts, speed limit data, pedestrian and bicycle counts, and existing sidewalk, trail, and crossing locations and conditions.
- Identify needs and opportunities around each school, including infrastructure gaps and deficiencies, barriers, conflict points, crash trends, and priority Safe Routes to School routes. The consultant will also identify education and encouragement program opportunities and develop a prioritization framework for scoring and ranking projects.
- Develop recommendations and an implementation plan, including a prioritized list of infrastructure projects, planning-level cost estimates, potential funding sources, responsible implementing agencies, sample policies and programs, and a high-level framework for tracking progress after plan adoption.
- Conduct stakeholder and public engagement, including interviews with school principals and/or other school administrative staff, an online survey for students and parents, and in-person public feedback opportunities.

- Create a Safe Routes to School Plan based upon the aforementioned research, analyses, and outreach efforts.

The full scope of work can be found as Attachment A in the attached agreement.

The currently anticipated schedule for the project is:

- **July 2026:** Begin Project
- **July-August 2026:** Initial Outreach to Schools
- **January 2027:** SRTS Plan Workshop with AAMPO Transportation Technical Committee
- **April 2027:** Draft SRTS Plan Presentations to AAMPO Transportation Technical and Policy Committees
- **May 2027:** Final SRTS Plan Adoption

A more detailed schedule can be found on the final page of the attached agreement.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend that the City of Ames approve the Professional Services Agreement with Toole Design Group, LLC of Minneapolis, Minnesota for creation of a Safe Routes to School Plan in an amount not to exceed \$60,000.
2. Direct staff to negotiate an agreement with the next highest ranked firm.

MPO DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The development of a Safe Routes to School Plan will assist the AAMPO, City of Ames, City of Gilbert, Ames Community School District, and Gilbert Community School District in identifying infrastructure improvements, programs, policies, and implementation strategies that support safer and more accessible walking and bicycling routes to schools within the AAMPO planning area.

Toole's proposal demonstrated a strong understanding of the project scope and the needs of the AAMPO planning area. Its previous work on the City of Ames' *Walk Bike Roll Ames Plan*, along with HDR's previous work on the AAMPO's *Ames Connect 2050 Plan* and Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, will also be valuable for creating the SRTS Plan.

The Ames City Council will consider this item at a future meeting based upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee.

Given the project selection team's scoring identifying Toole's proposal as the most qualified, it is the recommendation of the MPO Director that the Transportation Policy Committee adopt Alternative No. 1.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[SRTS Plan PSA Agreement w Toole Design.pdf](#)