

# Bell Tower RFP

## Brief

The Town of Clarksville's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is seeking proposals to relocate a historic school bell tower and transportation features for the creation of a new historic park site in South Clarksville.

## Overview

Clarksville, Indiana is the oldest American settlement in the Northwest territory, founded in 1783 by George Rogers Clark. Located at the Falls of the Ohio, Clarksville became a logistical and transportation hub for travelers and cargo on their way down the Ohio River. Boats, roads, and rail lines all converged in Clarksville. Over time, families would converge here as well.

A result of this growth was the creation of several neighborhood schools. One of these schools was the George Rogers Clark Public School, a classic piece of American architecture, graced with a bell tower soaring 50 feet over the neighborhood.



The former George Rogers Clark Public School with bell tower.

As the Town grew, people began living farther and farther north. Due to changing population centers, the school was closed and the bell tower was removed in 1973. In 2008, the property was sold to the Safe Harbor Community Church, occupying the same essential site as the school once had. The tower remains on the site. The bell itself was relocated to Clarksville High School.

The neighborhood was also home to multiple commuter rail lines, including an interurban and a dinky line. This connected South Clarksville to neighboring Jeffersonville and Louisville across the Ohio River. These line were a large part of the appeal of the area, with news homes advertising their proximity to the rail lines.

Over the past five years, the southern end of Clarksville has seen a major revitalization, with the development of the South Clarksville Mixed Use Neighborhood and Origin Park. While these developments are welcome and exciting, the Town and the HPC want to ensure that the neighborhood's history was not lost amid the new development.

Therefore, the Town and the HPC are seeking proposals to relocate the bell tower and stones from a historic rail switching station to a site at nearby Colgate Park, located at the "Y" intersection of two old rail lines, creating a new historic landmark in South Clarksville.

### **Project Details and Goals**

The end goal of the project is to incorporate major historic elements from South Clarksville into a new architectural feature to help tell and celebrate the story of the community. The site is at Colgate Park at the "Y" intersection of South Clark Boulevard and Sherwood Avenue, near Newman Avenue.



The bell tower and columns at their current site.

The project must incorporate certain historic elements, including the bell tower, railway foundation stones, and the columns from the school entry. The bell itself is on display at Clarksville High School and is available for incorporation as well, assuming it is functional. The tower is in need of some superficial updates but is structurally sound.

The HPC has envisioned the final project to be a new tower to serve as a landmark and visual representation of the area and its history. In this conception, the historic portion of the bell tower would be the top of an even taller tower, with appropriate art below representing the area's history, both in terms of education and rail history. However, other designs are welcome so long as they adequately tell the story of the neighborhood.

The project should also be functional as a bell tower. Ideally, the original bell would be reunited with its old home and be able to sound regularly. If this is not possible, a new bell is to take its place. A plaza and benches would also be incorporated.



### **Budget**

The expected budget for the project will be \$50,000, including a \$30,000 grant from the Southern Indiana Arts Alliance.

### **Submittal**

Consultant proposals are to be submitted by email to Planning Director Neal Turpin ([nturpin@townofclarksville.com](mailto:nturpin@townofclarksville.com)). An email response will be provided by the Town to the

sender of each proposal that is submitted upon receipt of their proposal. Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. (EST), March 17, 2023.

All communications in specific reference to this RFP shall be sent by email to [nturpin@townofclarksville.com](mailto:nturpin@townofclarksville.com), and should reference the Bell Tower RFP.

The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals.

### **Submittal Format and Required Elements**

*Cover Sheet:* This cover sheet should be no more than one page and should provide all contact information including mailing address, phone number, and email address (one page).

*Description of Approach:* Provide the design restoration contractor's typical approach to projects similar to this one (1-2 pages).

*Team Expertise:* Brief description of general qualifications and multidisciplinary nature of the team assembled for this project (1-2 pages).

*Comparable Projects:* Examples of similar projects in progress or completed by the contractor (up to 3 examples).

### **Evaluation**

The choice of design restoration contractor will be made by the selection committee, which shall consist of the following:

- Clarksville Planning Director
- Clarksville Associate Planner
- President of Clarksville's Historic Preservation Commission
- Town Council President

The selection committee will evaluate the RFP on the following criteria:

- Specialized experience of the firm and persons that will perform the services (20 points)
- Technical qualifications of firm and persons assigned to perform the work (20 points).
- Capacity of the firm and professionals to perform the work within time limitations, taking into consideration the current and planned workload (15 points).
- Location of the firm, distance from Clarksville (10 points).
- Experience of the firm with the type of project (35 points).

Upon completion of the review and evaluation of all proposals by the Selection Committee, the most qualified design restoration contractor will be selected. This contractor will be notified and will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with the Town. Should the selected contractor and the Town be unable to negotiate a satisfactory arrangement, the second most qualified contractor will be invited to negotiate.



The former railway switching station at the “Y.”



Railroad foundation stones, to be incorporated into the design of the site.