

# Fort Smith National Historic Site

National Park Service  
US Department of the Interior



## Frisco Railroad Station

Request for Expression of Interest  
Regarding Adaptive Re-use  
Fort Smith National Historic Site  
Fort Smith, Arkansas  
Spring 2016





The National Park Service (NPS) announces a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) for the adaptive reuse of the Frisco Railroad Station (Frisco) (19,600 square feet). The RFEI allows interested parties an opportunity to review the property, facilities, and park area and to submit their concept(s) of potential future use of the facility, taking into account the park's purpose and building's significance. The NPS may choose all or part of the content of one or more responses to the RFEI for further consideration and possible development into a public solicitation that the NPS then would advertise to the public, inviting all qualified candidates to submit proposals for the operation.

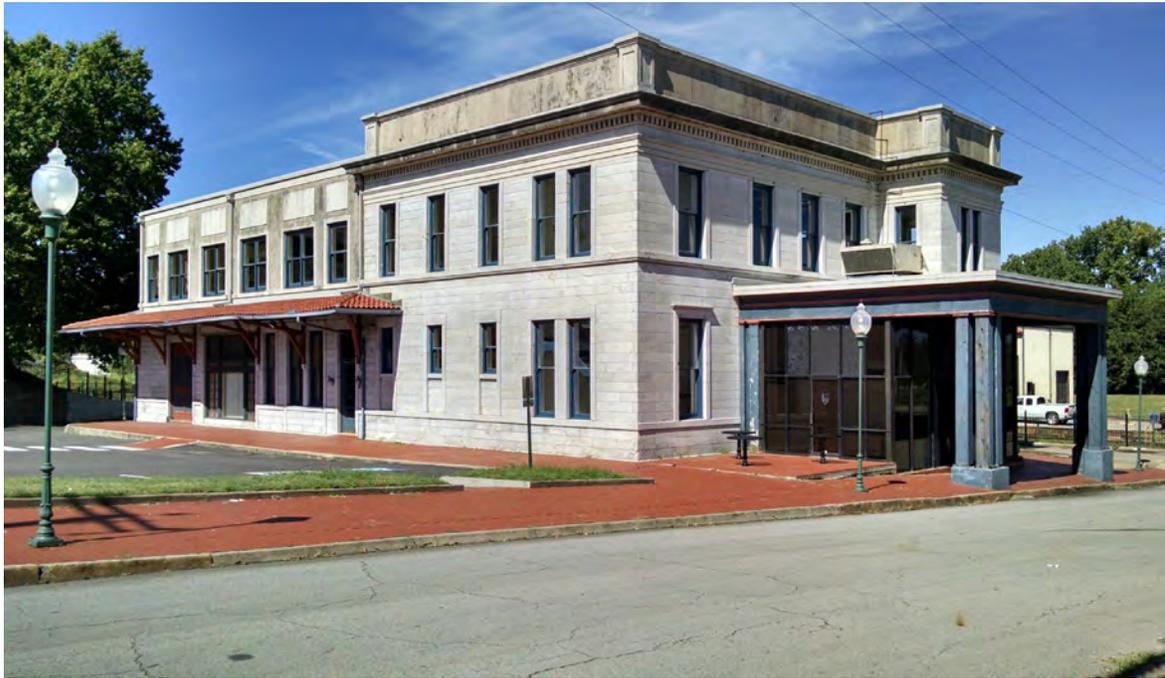
The Frisco was constructed in 1903 and is the last remaining of several railroad stations that were built in Fort Smith. The station served as a passenger and freight depot for the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company. It continued to function as a passenger and freight depot until the 1960s. It is currently being used for special events and NPS storage. However, the facility is available for adaptive reuse.

The Frisco Railroad Station is managed as part of Fort Smith National Historic Site in the historic downtown area of Fort Smith, Arkansas. The 37-acre national historic site includes the remains of the First Fort, the Second Fort, Commissary Building, the Trail of Tears Overlook, the barracks, jails and historic Courthouse of



Judge Isaac C. Parker, and a reconstructed gallows. The downtown area includes many eateries, shops, museums, tourist amenities, and the famous Bass Reeves Statue. The future US Marshals Museum will be built near the site along the Arkansas River and will be connected by a trail system. Annual visitation to the Fort Smith area is approximately 1 million per year. The entire Fort Smith National Historic Site welcomes approximately 112,000 visitors each year.

Facility under consideration	The NPS is seeking expressions of interest in developing the 19,600 square foot facility within Fort Smith National Historic Site. The site is located on the edge of the 37 acres of the national historic site in downtown Fort Smith, along Garrison Avenue and next to the Garrison Avenue Bridge. The facility includes a recently re-covered asphalt parking lot. Although this building was historically used as passenger and freight railroad depot, the NPS seeks concepts and ideas for adaptive reuse of the building. The NPS particularly believes that a spa hotel, bed and breakfast or other lodging operations, retail operations and amenities, gallery, market, or restaurant may be appropriate.
Instruments	The two instruments most commonly used by the NPS for a facility such as the one under consideration in this RFEI are a concession contract and a lease. These instruments are governed by 36 CFR 51 (concession contracts) and 36 CFR 18 (leasing).
Financial requirements	Financial requirements vary based on the legal instrument under which the proposal is issued and may be based on fair market lease value or a financial analysis of the business opportunity.
Term length	Only long-term occupancy arrangements will be considered. Term length will be determined by the NPS. Depending upon the instrument used, the shortest term may be 10 years, and the longest could be up to 60 years.
Process	<p>Detailed guidance for responses to this RFEI are contained in the "Considerations" and "Submission Guidelines" sections. The NPS may choose all or part of the content of one or more responses to the RFEI for further consideration and possible development into a public solicitation that the NPS then would advertise to the public, inviting all qualified candidates to submit proposals for the operation. There are very limited circumstances under which the building may be reused by a non-NPS entity without a public solicitation. The precise process for soliciting and selecting proposals will depend on the nature of the business opportunity and the legal instrument under which the proposal is issued.</p> <p>A concessions contract is awarded through a prospectus process and issued to provide necessary and appropriate visitor services within a park area. Concessioners pay, to the NPS, a franchise fee for privileges granted under the contract. The franchise fee is determined through a franchise fee analysis; consideration of revenue to the NPS is subordinate to protecting park resources and providing services to the park visitors. The franchise fee also takes into consideration that the Concessioner has a reasonable opportunity for a net profit related to capital invested and the obligations of the contract. Concession contracts include compensation for capital investments in the property. Concession contracts are generally 10 years or less, but may be awarded for a term up to 20 years if warranted by the contract terms and conditions, including required capital improvements.</p> <p>A lease is typically awarded through a Request for Proposal. Leased property can be used for any lawful purpose with some required determinations identified in 36 CFR 18 § 18.4. Fair market value rent is required for leases. However requirements under the lease for the lessee to restore, rehabilitate, or otherwise improve the property are taken into consideration when determining the fair market value rent, as well as possible restrictions on the use of the property. In addition, tax credits are available for rehabilitation of certain historic structures pursuant to capital investment requirements. A lease term may be up to 60 years in duration.</p>
Visiting the site	Site visits are scheduled by appointment from July 15, 2016 through September 16, 2016. All parties intending to request a site visit must send an email message to the contact listed below to make an appointment.
Response due	December 15, 2016
Contact	Lisa Conard Frost, Superintendent lisa_conard_frost@nps.gov (479) 226-3701 Fort Smith National Historic Site, 301 Parker Avenue, Fort Smith, AR 72901



## The facility

The Frisco Railroad Station, is a Classic Revival structure built in 1903 as a passenger and freight depot for the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company. It is a contributing structure to the West Garrison Avenue National Historic District and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. Its period of significance is 1875 to 1974.

Garrison Avenue, a twelve block grand thoroughfare that forms the main street of Fort Smith, Arkansas, was laid out by the city's founder, John Rogers in 1838. The town of Fort Smith was built around the first military fort on the Great Southwestern Frontier. It was, from the beginning, a merchant town, full of storehouses and suppliers. It sold guns and saddles and "necessaries" to the wagon trains of westward-moving Americans. Situated near the Santa Fe Trail, the town saw California gold rushes, Great Plains settlers, cattle drivers, and the Butterfield Overland Stage. Here, in the wake of the Civil War, lingering Old South traditions came together with Northern industrial enterprise on the rough edge of Indian Territory and the Great West.

The Frisco Railroad Station is a two-story limestone and wood frame structure built in the Classic Revival style has undergone a number of changes over the years. As originally constructed, only the north half of the building was two stories tall. It had a flat roof with a parapet, and housed the waiting room and rest rooms for white passengers, a smoking room, and the ticket office on the first floor, while an impressive stairway led up to the second floor lobby and offices of the roadmaster, trainmaster, chief of dispatch, and the telegraph office. The south half of the building was one story with a hipped roof. It housed the waiting room for "colored" passengers, a baggage room, mail room, express room, and a freight office.

Around 1940 an addition was constructed making the south half of the structure two stories. The second floor addition was finished with white stucco, helping it blend in with the original limestone portions of the structure. Starting in the 1970s, after the building was abandoned as a passenger rail station, the interior was rehabilitated for use in succession as a disco, a restaurant, a medical office, and until 2013 as the U.S. Marshals Museum offices. During this time an elevator was added to the west elevation, stairwells were forced into the interior, and interior finishes were extensively altered.

Most of the interior is essentially chopped up into small offices and cubicles. At some point during the past several decades the stone Classical Revival porch overlooking the bridge crossing the Arkansas River was demolished and replaced with a partially-enclosed, wood-framed portico with large plate glass windows. The building was transferred to the care of the NPS in 2003 and was vacated by the U.S. Marshals Museum in 2013, although the park has since continued to utilize the building for National Train Day, special events, special use requests and to interpret the building's history including segregation.

The 1903 limestone portion of the building has a flat membrane roof with a cornice. The architectural details include the frieze, bed molding, dentils, and crown molding typical of Classic Revival style. The cornice evidences signs of deteriorations as pieces of the dripstone and crown molding are cracked or missing. The cornice has been stabilized with cables. A stone belt course set at the level of the window sills for the second floor draws a strong horizontal line around the building. A similar belt course is set at the level of the window sills for the double-hung windows on the ground floor.

The roof line for the addition portion of the building is much simpler than that of the historic portion of the building. The parapet does have a frieze and copestones, but lacks the ornamental details of the original second floor.

Fenestration throughout the structure includes a variety of styles of windows. The majority of windows are one-over-one, with some windows set singly and others in pairs. There are also both large and small fixed windows, some of which are multi-light. Most of the windows were recently stripped (2015) of lead-containing paint and repaired.

The north end of the structure has a large flat roofed wooden portico supported on square wooden columns. The low-slope roof is covered with a synthetic membrane installed about 2010. About two thirds of the portico has been enclosed. An open hipped roof shelters the west, east, and south sides. The porch roof is finished with terra cotta clay tiles, and is supported on the east side with wooden brackets and on the west side by cast iron Corinthian order columns.

The structure's footprint is roughly rectangular with square projections at the northwest corner, a feature that was part of the original design, and the southwest corner. The latter is comparatively recent modification to the building that houses the elevator. There is also a small, shed-roofed addition to the south end of the building. The barn-style door affixed to the shed is not a functioning door; it was attached primarily to provide a more historic appearance.

A rough cost estimate is provided. This cost estimate does not include costs that may be incurred depending upon the use of the facility and business plan.

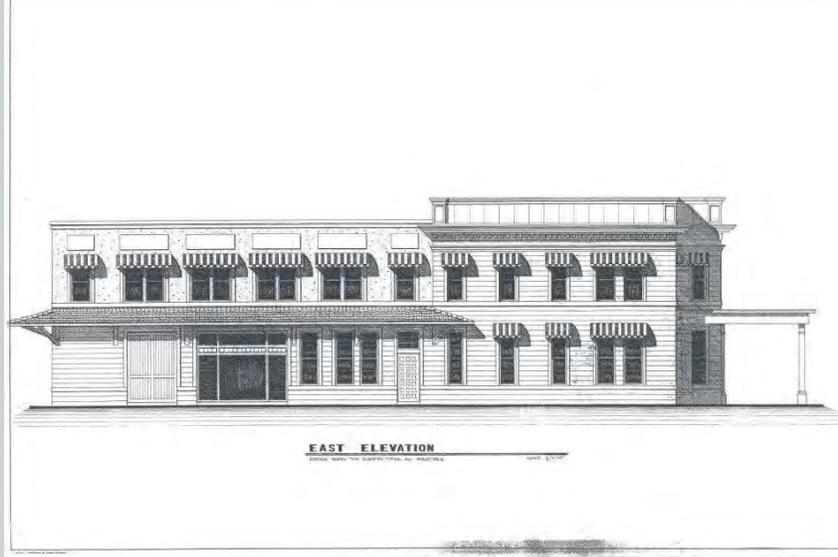
<b>Frisco Railroad Station</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Wet Suppression System	\$200,000
Plumbing System & Fixtures	168,000
HVAC	50,000
Elevator	250,000
Exterior	150,000
Interior	150,000
ADA Compliant	60,000
Total	\$1,028,000

Grand Total: \$1,028,000

## Frisco Railroad Station - EXTERIOR IMAGES



## Frisco Railroad Station - Historic Renderings



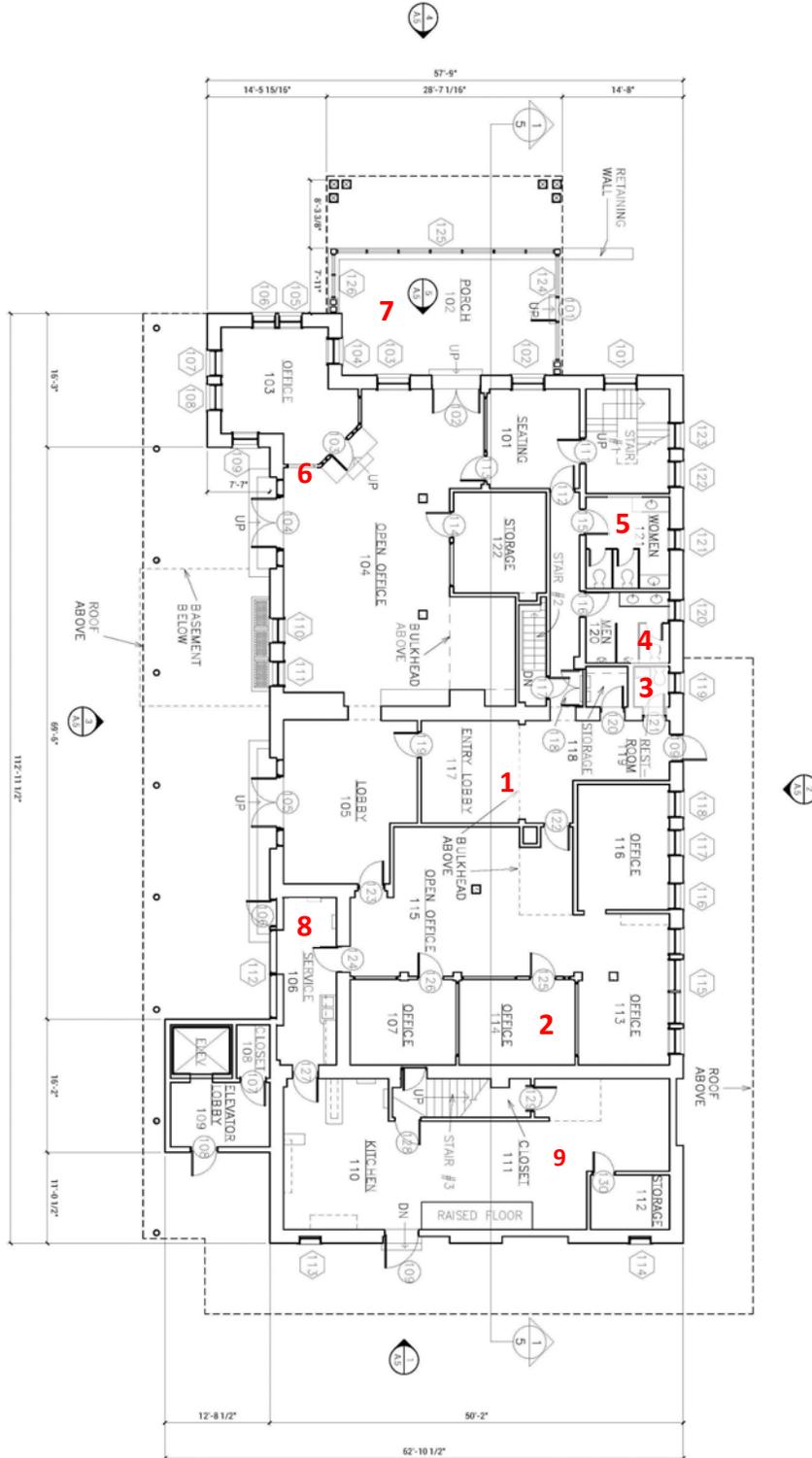
# Frisco Railroad Station - FIRST FLOOR

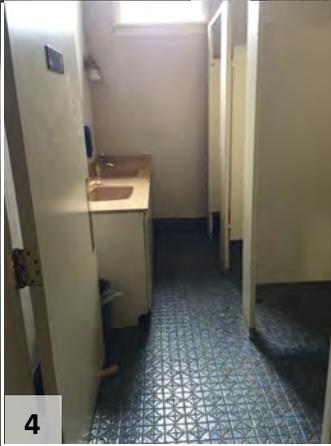
The numbers on the drawing correspond to the photographs on the following page.



## 1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"

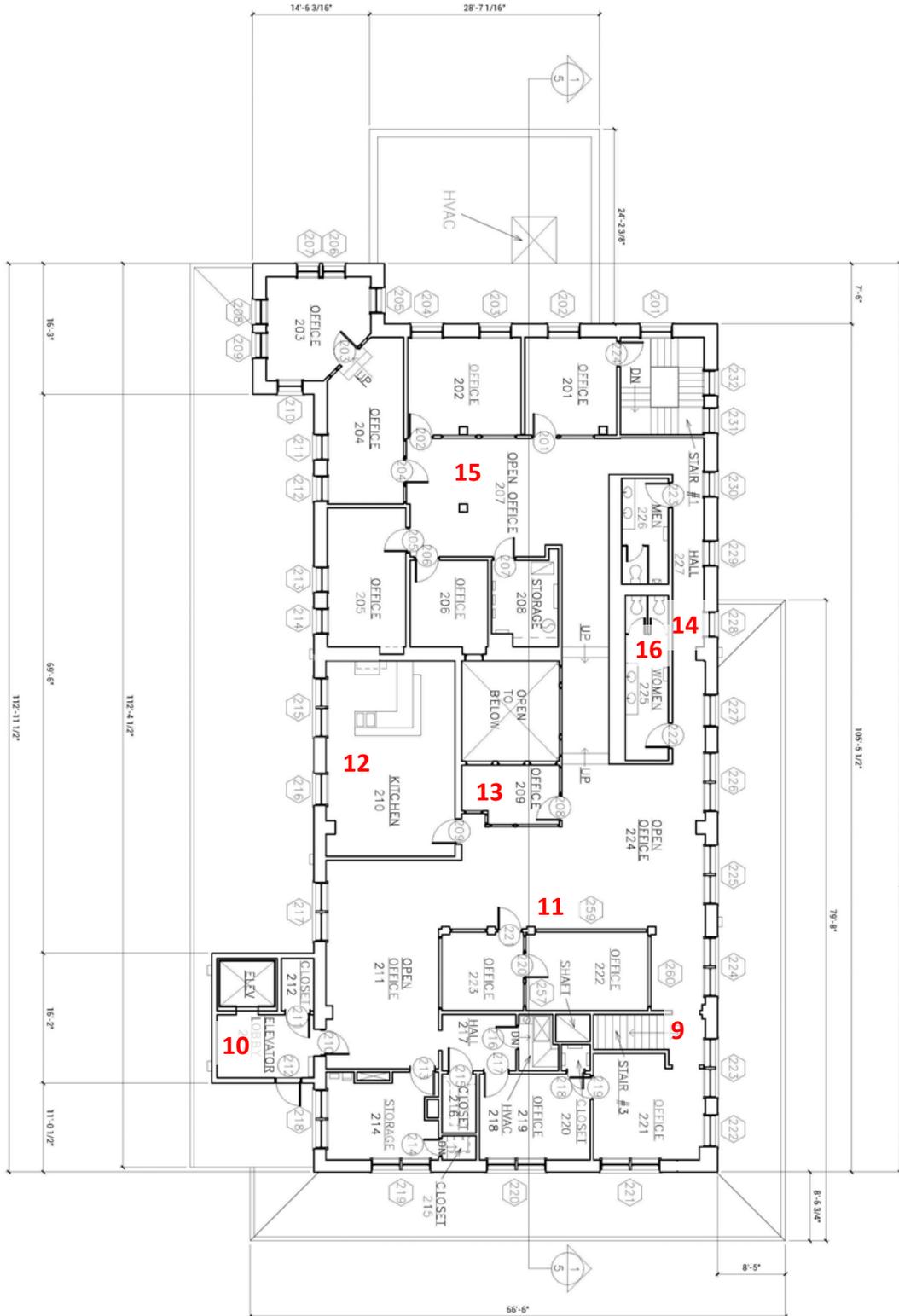




# Frisco Railroad Station - SECOND FLOOR

The numbers on the drawing correspond to the photographs on the following page.

**1** SECOND FLOOR  
118'-11 1/2"





## The park area

Shaped by a diverse cast of characters—soldiers, Indians, outlaws, and lawmen—Fort Smith National Historic Site evokes 80 years of turbulent history on the western frontier. At the park you can explore the remnants of two frontier forts, the tragic Trail of Tears, and the historic jail and federal courthouse of Judge Isaac C. Parker. The US military and federal court presence at Fort Smith changed the fate of the region by introducing a new political system, economic structure, and set of rules and social values from which people benefited, adapted to, or perished. Fort Smith National Historic Site provides opportunities to create a shared dialogue within the public discourse to reflect upon the profound impact that the concept of Manifest Destiny and our shared frontier heritage played in our nation's history and the influence it has had as we shape the fabric of American identity.

According to historic accounts, when army units first arrived at Belle Point, the land was heavily wooded with several varieties of oak, hickory, and cottonwood trees. Canebrakes occupied low ground along the rivers' edge. The forests soon disappeared, cut down to make room for the First Fort, and used for construction material and fuel. Construction of the First Fort was started in 1817 by a detachment of the US Rifle Regiment and was 132 feet square with two blockhouses and many outbuildings. Soldiers cleared land for an 80-acre garden to feed the garrison. One correspondent noted in 1838 that "nearly all remaining timber on the land for near half a mile back" from Belle Point was cut down.

The distinctive location at Belle Point, the rocky promontory selected by Major Long for the fort site, is a significant intersection of several important trade routes with continued use dating back at least 1,000 years. This site and its associated history is a powerful reminder of natural and cultural interconnectedness and how each reciprocally affects the other. Beyond the mission endowed by Congress through the park's enabling legislation, the park establishes a common grounds where people come together to share in the American experience and formulate a public identity.

The purpose of the US Army military installation at this location was to protect the expanding sovereign interests and ensure regional influence by the United States of America against other sovereign European nations that laid claim to territory within North America, as well as American Indian sovereign nations. President James Monroe made treaties with the Cherokee, moving them into Western Arkansas in the 1820s. Fort Smith also served as a post to moderate a peaceful coexistence between local Osage Indians and Cherokee Indians who had been resettled there. The Cherokee had clashed severely with the local Osage populations, as well as with American immigrant hunters and squatters who had moved into the region. Through Army efforts, the immigrant squatters were removed from the region and in 1822 the two Indian tribes successfully negotiated a treaty.

The federal government, after passing the Indian Removal Act of 1830, forcibly removed the Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole from their ancestral homelands in the Southeast to Indian Territory. Fort Smith is directly associated with the historic events surrounding the removal of many American Indian tribes, both before and following the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Fort Smith National Historic Site and the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail preserve the specific location and physical remnants of a portion of one of the historic American Indian removal routes, including a segment of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.

The Second Fort, begun in 1838 a short distance from the site of the First, was garrisoned until 1871. The Fort Smith commissary building received incoming goods such as food, medicine, hay, tents, and uniforms, for distribution to approximately 17 forts. The fort continued in this function until 1861, when peace in the Indian Country, a goal shared by the Army and the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Seminole, and Creek Nations—who were known as "the Five Civilized Tribes"—was shattered by the Civil War.

A significant “meeting of nations” occurred at Fort Smith in 1865 called the “Council of 1865.” This council was called to address several major issues following the Civil War. Three significant topics included: reinstatement of tribal loyalty to the United States by those tribes who supported the Confederacy; additional attempts by the US government to acquire land cessions from various tribes along with rescinding much of their original tribal authority; and the initial naming and establishment of “Oklahoma” as a territory. The tribes did not agree to the initial provisions of the treaty, and the negotiation process continued until 1866 when the treaty was finally signed in Washington, DC. The Treaty of 1866 has had a lasting impact on federal relations and American Indian policy to this day.

After being abandoned by the military, the US District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, which included jurisdiction within Indian Territory, moved into the facility in 1872.

By the late 19th century, the territory had become a haven for all manner of fugitives hoping to escape from justice. Judge Isaac C. Parker was appointed to the bench in 1875 and for a few years, Parker’s jurisdiction extended over 74,000 square miles—half of Arkansas and all of the Indian Territory. During his 21 years Parker tried more than 13,000 cases, sentencing 160 men and women to be executed by hanging. Of those, only 79 men were hanged. The Courthouse/Jail remains today through the initial restoration work of the Fort Smith Public Historical Restorations, Inc.



**First Fort/Belle Point**



**Barracks/Jails/Courthouse**



**Commissary Building**



**Trail of Tears Overlook**

# Considerations

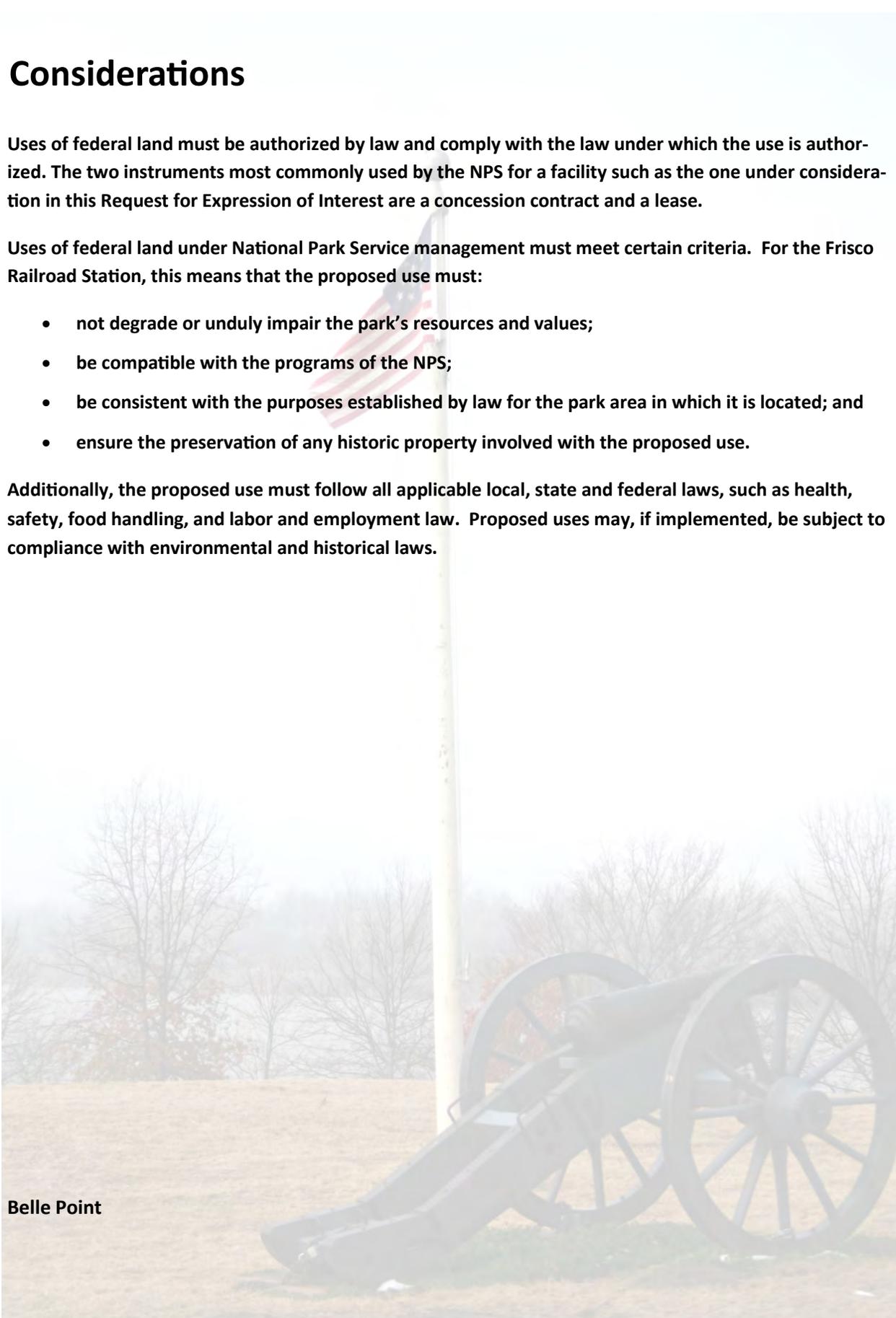
Uses of federal land must be authorized by law and comply with the law under which the use is authorized. The two instruments most commonly used by the NPS for a facility such as the one under consideration in this Request for Expression of Interest are a concession contract and a lease.

Uses of federal land under National Park Service management must meet certain criteria. For the Frisco Railroad Station, this means that the proposed use must:

- not degrade or unduly impair the park's resources and values;
- be compatible with the programs of the NPS;
- be consistent with the purposes established by law for the park area in which it is located; and
- ensure the preservation of any historic property involved with the proposed use.

Additionally, the proposed use must follow all applicable local, state and federal laws, such as health, safety, food handling, and labor and employment law. Proposed uses may, if implemented, be subject to compliance with environmental and historical laws.

**Belle Point**

A faded background image showing a historical cannon on a field. In the background, there is a tall flagpole with an American flag and several bare trees under a light sky. The scene is identified as Belle Point.

# Submission guidelines

Respondents are encouraged to provide input that demonstrates how their concept will support the park's purpose. Responses should not exceed 15 pages total. The NPS is particularly interested in receiving:

- Transmittal letter indicating the name of submitting company or organization, legal structure, and contact information for person(s) authorized to represent the submitting company or organization.
- Description of the reuse concept for the assigned property at the Frisco Railroad Station, including anticipated rehabilitation and site improvements, type and estimated square feet of all uses, estimated parking requirements, and a description of the type of visitor experience.
- Conceptual-level description of financial structure for proposed use. This may be stated in broad terms and may include desired instrument for occupancy (e.g., lease, concession, etc.), general design for compensation to the NPS (e.g., ratio of capital investments vs. cash payments) and anticipated requirements such as lease term in years.
- Any other pertinent points or conditions.
- Please indicate in your submission whether you would like the NPS to retain your contact information and notify you of future Requests for Proposals concerning other historic properties at the historic site.

Please submit two (2) original copies of your response to the Request for Expression of Interest by December 15, 2016. In addition, respondents are encouraged to submit an electronic copy of their proposal. All submittals become the property of the National Park Service. The NPS may choose all or part of the content of one or more responses to the RFEI for further consideration and possible development into a public solicitation that the NPS then would advertise to the public, inviting all qualified candidates to submit proposals for the operation. Submittals should be sent to Superintendent's Office; Fort Smith National Historic Site; 301 Parker Avenue Fort Smith, AR 72901.

The NPS will acknowledge your submission after receipt. Within 90 days of the submission date the NPS will provide a publically available description of the next steps in the process and notify all respondents by email. Due to the variability of requirements associated with the different instruments for occupancy, and until responses can be evaluated, the NPS cannot at this time estimate the date a, or if any, competitive opportunity would be issued or an anticipated date for occupancy.

Pertinent laws, regulations, and policies for both concessions and leasing can be found on the NPS policy web site (<http://home.nps.gov/applications/npspolicy/index.cfm>). More information on the NPS commercial services program can be found at [www.concessions.nps.gov](http://www.concessions.nps.gov). Information about other ways to do business with the NPS can be found at [www.nps.gov/aboutus/doing-business-withus.htm](http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/doing-business-withus.htm). Information specific to Fort Smith National Historic Site is available at [www.nps.gov/fosm](http://www.nps.gov/fosm).

Second Fort/Commissary