

## HISTORIC

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building was a temporary home for county government offices.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) invites qualified development teams to submit proposals to purchase and redevelop the building. Built in 1914 and encompassing approximately 12,092 square feet, the former Post Office is one of Bardstown's most prominent civic landmarks and a cornerstone of the Bardstown National Historic District. With its impressive architecture, prime location on Court Square, and long-standing public use, Nelson County Fiscal Court views the property as a significant redevelopment opportunity with the potential to influence the future of downtown Bardstown as a historic district, tourist destination, and active community hub.

### DEVELOPER SELECTION AND PROPOSAL EVALUATION

In the press release, the county wants proposals that will "demonstrate a high-quality adaptive reuse" of the Old Historic Post Office. That redevelopment would be done while keeping in mind preservation of the building's architectural integrity "while introducing uses appropriate to its scale, visibility, and strategic position within the Bardstown National Historic District."

According to the press release:

"Proposals will be evaluated based on the overall quality, credibility, and feasibility of the redevelopment concept; the development team's qualifications, experience, and capacity to execute the project as proposed; the level of capital

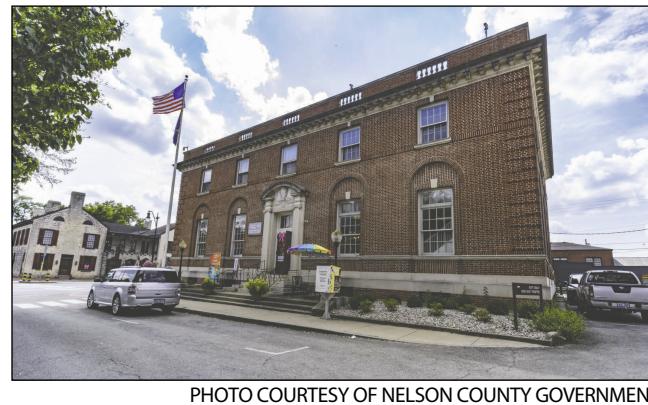


PHOTO COURTESY OF NELSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

This is a front side street-level view of the Historic Old Post Office in downtown Bardstown. Nelson County government is seeking potential developers for the property.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NELSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

This is a rear overhead view of the Historic Old Post Office in downtown Bardstown. Nelson County government is seeking potential developers for the property.

investment committed to the redevelopment; the purchase price offered for the property; and the project's ability to complement and reinforce downtown Bardstown."

County officials believe that the continued growth of downtown Bardstown's tourism economy would make it an attractive opportunity for the right developer. That would fall in line with other downtown growth in recent decades, including new restaurants, bars and other entertainment, as well as other amenities such as Spalding Hall, home of the Oscar Getz Bourbon History Museum, and other museums,

and new additions such as the Mayors Park, further enhancing Bardstown's standing as one of the top small towns in Kentucky and the United States. New residential construction, as well as redevelopment of storefronts and upper floors into short-term rentals has also enhanced downtown, along with the city's streetscape beautification projects.

The full Request for Proposals, including background information, submission requirements, evaluation criteria, and key dates, is available on the Nelson County website at <https://nelsoncountyky.gov/old-historic-post-office-rfp/>.

## BCS

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based on this year's input at \$10.6 million.

This draft is the first of three budgets for FY27. The draft still contains many unknowns at this time. Rogers said they are unaware of the final amounts from state funding such as SEEK. Additionally, she said they will not know the impact of property value assessment until a later date.

Rogers said the impact of an outstanding distilled spirits protest will also affect the budget in an unknown way.

At the top of Tuesday's meeting, Rogers said she'd received a notice of protest from the same local distiller as last year's protest. She said the protest was for the tax year 2024, but the protective claim goes to 2023. She said this means there may be potential refunds from that year.

This will move through the Department of Revenue's appeal process and go to court to make a determination on if there is any amount to be paid back to the distiller.

Also at Tuesday's meeting,

Steven Osborne with Codell Construction gave an update for the ongoing construction and renovation at Bardstown High School. Crews are currently working on the A-Wing classroom and the addition, which will be become the future Smotherman Arts Wing. The lower-level classrooms and old BHS library (Area C) are also being worked on at this time. This space will be a future science wing with labs.

The ductwork is being installed, with Osborne stating contractors will soon be coming in to install the geothermal. The foundation in the Area A addition has been poured with the wall coming together soon. One contract team is finishing up demolition on walls and door frames and installing the new ones.

He said masonry teams are onsite as they build new walls in Area C.

Osborne said they have been in meetings and discussions about the gym (Area B) to beginning its renovations. He said right now, they're continuing to meet, but they are hoping to begin in March and get it back to the school as soon as possible.

"We've been meeting with

contractors to see what we need to do and everything we can do make sure that we get that back to you as soon as possible once we do take it over," he said. "Right now, I'm not seeing any issues, but we're going to continue to meet and discuss. ... I know that that's the backup plan for graduation, so whatever it is, we need to make sure that we have something that is attainable and that we can guarantee."

In other news from Tuesday's meeting, the Board voted for new leadership at the top of the year. Andy Stone was selected as Board Chair and Jim Roby was selected as Vice Chair.

The Board also approved two officers of assistance.

Kentucky Education Technology Systems (KETS) offer is for \$27,765. Rogers said traditionally, they school will escrow it for up to three years.

She said they'll pull it out after the first year and match it. The other offer of assistance from the School Facilities Construction Commission for debt services is \$27,825.

The BCS Board of Education will meet again next month on Feb. 17 at noon at Central Office.

would be located on the second floor. Middle school students would be in the former high school.

Additionally, Ward said they are focusing on making the building have more of a presence, with the public front entrance serving as a gateway to the whole campus. This addition will also connect NCHS to the UP Center (the former Area Technology Center).

Board Member Karen Lee said she favored the new draft designs of the school as it focuses on each area of the school being useable at all times.

Sekulski said safety was a big part of the discussion for making the draft. In previous designs, the NCHS addition extended straight across to the UP Center, which left a large courtyard for students open. Sekulski said curving the addition to have the internal courtyard was the safer options for students.

The NCHS softball field will be moving to prepare for the new addition. Ward said the softball field would be relocated to the space currently occupied by the Old Kentucky Home Middle School football field. She said they're currently meeting to

discuss the best position for the field and will have a final design and bid documents for the Board in March.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Jessica Rogers, NCS Chief Financial Officer, and Alex Martin, NCS Chief Operating Officer, spoke about the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. This is the first of the budgets the Board will see in the coming months — this draft budget has the most unknowns.

Rogers said the things they do know going into the draft is payroll will increase by at least \$500,000. She said they're expecting property tax income and the facilities fund to see growth as property values increase. Additionally, with ongoing inflation, she said they will likely see higher expenses such as with fuel, utilities and insurance.

At this stage of drafting the budget, Rogers said they don't yet know the final SEEK amount or the impact of the Barrel Tax changes that go into effect next year. She said they also can only estimate the beginning balance for FY27 as the current fiscal year has not yet ended.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, the Board voted for Tracy Bowling to remain Board Chair and Lee remain to remain as Vice Chair.

## SCHOOLS

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Sekulski, NCHS Principal, and Cate Ward, Architect with Studio Kremer, shared drafts of potential designs for the school during the first phase of renovations.

Sekulski said they are actively meeting with students and teachers to talk about the future of schools and what those spaces look like.

Ward said there are three design principals they are focused on during the NCHS project: flexibility and evolving use, safety and transparency and elevating modern identity. She said the drafts presented at the meeting look different than ones seen in previous years.

The new draft makes the front of the building circular; Ward said this will allow them to build the new addition and keep the school functioning throughout. The draft also includes two student courtyard spaces in the middle of the building, which student and teachers would be able to use collaboratively.

The current plan for the school would see high school

classes in the new addition. A math and science wing

would be located on the second floor. Middle school students would be in the former high school.

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Also at Tuesday's meeting,

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