



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROGRAM SPONSORS



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (“RFP”) FOR OPPORTUNITY APPALACHIA PROJECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project Sponsor: Augusta Heritage Center, Elkins, WV

Project Name: The Wilt Building (Project Summary provided in Attachment B.)

Release Date:	July 15, 2022
Proposal Due Date:	August 12, 2022
Selection Date:	August 19, 2022
Contract Period:	August 19, 2022 – February 28, 2023 (or later)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Technical Assistance for Opportunity Appalachia Projects

I. Overview of Request for Proposals

Appalachian Community Capital (ACC) seeks contractual support for specified Technical Assistance for real estate project development.

The Technical Assistance contractor will report to the Program Manager of Opportunity Appalachia. The requested Scope of Services is noted in Attachment A, and may involve:

- Architectural and design with expertise in historic preservation
- Capital structure with expertise in opportunity zones, historical tax credits, and state and federal housing subsidies
- Development of investment prospectus
- Investor outreach for project finance/investment & capital campaign structuring and support
- Legal support, including asset purchase or sale
- Capital raise
- And other types of support

Entities interested in providing Technical Assistance must complete the Request for Qualifications RFQ, as noted on the [Opportunity Appalachia](#) webpage and found [here](#). Proposals will be evaluated on contractors' qualifications (per the RFQ), expertise, track record, Scope of Work, budget/timeline, and other project requests.

II. About Opportunity Appalachia

[Opportunity Appalachia](#) will provide technical assistance to develop and structure investable transactions, and it will create investment prospectuses and pitch decks that will be used to bring investment to rural and downtown communities. Investment priorities include projects focusing on downtown development, manufacturing, IT, healthcare, education, food systems, clean energy, heritage tourism, and recreation.

The program recently announced selection of 34 projects to participate in the program to bring jobs, business support, and investment to Central Appalachia. The selected projects propose to create over 1,600 permanent and 190 construction jobs and attract over \$177M in financing to develop textile manufacturing facilities; downtown development; community centers; health, wellness, and childcare centers; food and agricultural facilities; hotels; and retail enterprises in downtown and rural areas across Central Appalachia.

These proposed projects are signals of the growing investment potential in our rural and downtown communities in Central Appalachia. Opportunity Appalachia will work closely with private investors, banks, Community Development Financial Institutions, New Markets Tax Credits investors, Historic Tax Credit Investors, and Federal agencies to highlight participating communities and access financing for transactions.

Once project technical assistance is completed, a highly visible Investor Convening event will be held in early 2023 that will target both local and pre-vetted national investors, as well as federal and state funders. A curated web-based platform hosting prospectus / pitch decks will also be made available to facilitate investor due diligence.

The program is supported by the Appalachian Regional Commission, the US Department of Treasury CDFI Fund, Truist, Goldman Sachs, and the Dogwood Health Trust.

III. About the Appalachian Region

The Appalachian Region, as defined in ARC's authorizing legislation, is a 205,000 square-mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Forty-two percent of the Region's population is rural, compared with 20 percent of the national population.

The Appalachian Region's economy, which was once highly dependent on extractive industries, has become more diversified in recent times and now includes larger shares of manufacturing and professional services, among other industries. Appalachia has made significant progress over the past five decades: its poverty rate, which was 31 percent in 1960, had fallen to 16.3 percent over the 2013– 2017 period. The number of high-poverty counties in the Region (those with poverty rates more than 1.5 times the U.S. average) declined from 295 in 1960 to 98 over the 2013–2017 period.

These gains have transformed the Region from one of widespread poverty to one of economic contrasts: some communities have successfully diversified their economies, while others still require basic infrastructure such as roads, clinics, and water and wastewater systems. The contrasts are not surprising considering the Region's size and diversity—the Region extends more than 1,000 miles from southern New York to northeastern Mississippi, and it is home to more than 25 million people.

Target geography

Central Appalachia – North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia



IV. Project Timeline

It is anticipated that the contractor will be selected by August 19, 2022 for an estimated contract start date of August 19, 2022 through February 28, 2023.

V. Instructions to Submit a Proposal

Contractors seeking to provide the full suite of TA services should submit the items listed below. It is expected that one proposal should include all requested services, which may mean that multiple entities are providing services, with one identified lead contractor.

- Scope of Work (max 3 pages) describing proposed activities to be undertaken as requested in Attachment A, with identified staffing (lead and support) for each work element.
- Budget that defines deliverables, rates and proposed payment schedule including indirect costs. A Not to Exceed cost for the full engagement must be provided; costs not to exceed \$75,000. Payment Schedule to be based on deliverables / outcome milestones.
- Timeline for Scope of Work, with deliverable milestones.
- Biography/resume for all staff noted in proposal (or provided in RFQ response).
- References from current or prior clients, including name, title, organization, contact information, and a brief description of the relevant work performed (or provided in RFQ response).

Please submit responses via email in one pdf attachment by Proposal Due Date to Kathryn Coulter Rhodes oa@acc1.org.

VI. Proposal Evaluation

ACC will select contractors through a competitive process based on the following criteria.

- Qualifications (per those provided in the RFQ), expertise, track record, and staff bios.
- Scope of Work and Timeline
- Budget
- Requests from project sponsors

Attachment A

Requested Scope of Services

Project Sponsor: Augusta Heritage Center

Project Name: The Wilt Building

Project Summary provided in Attachment B.

TA Requested

- Architectural and Design, including necessary materials for Historic Tax Credit submissions to state Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service.
- Financial Structuring, to include the following components: capital campaign, historic tax credits, and housing development subsidies (for workforce housing)
- Project Prospectus to be used for capital raise
- Investor outreach & capital campaign structuring and support
- Legal support for the building acquisition, survey, title work, and review of existing environmental study

Attachment B

Summary Information

Lead Contact: Seth Young

Applicant Organization: Augusta Heritage Center

Address: 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, WV 26241

Phone: (304) 637-1209

Email: youngs@dewv.edu

Community Information

1. Communities targeted by this application (municipality(ies), county(ies), and census tract(s):
Note: See Appendix I for a list of eligible counties.

Municipality: Elkins, WV; County: Randolph; Census Tract: 540839661

2. Service area of applicant (note if different than above, or note same): Augusta Heritage works throughout the State of West Virginia.
3. Community Development Strategy(ies): The Augusta Heritage Center serves to nurture traditional music, dance, foodways, craft, and folklore of West Virginia and beyond, especially the culture of marginalized groups. We see the conservation, practice, and appreciation of folk art and culture as integral to our community. We aim to enrich our local cultural landscape, provide community access to a diverse range of human experiences and creative ideas, and elevate traditional arts and artists. Each year we facilitate programming that not only impacts our immediate community through educational and enrichment activities but also attracts thousands of cultural tourists to our area. The transformation of the Wilt Building into a downtown Augusta Heritage Center will enable us to expand upon our partnerships and develop symbiotic programming that pairs our area's already robust adventure tourism industry with cultural tourists seeking to explore our region. The Wilt Building is a seminal downtown Elkins commercial (mixed-use) property. It is within the sightline of the train depot, one of the town's main tourism drivers. Currently, it is difficult to create pedestrian traffic from the train depot into the downtown commercial district, as vacant or unutilized storefronts create a mental barrier to downtown exploration. An Augusta-occupied Wilt Building seeks to solve this challenge. The three first-floor business areas will remain commercial. The large corner storefront will house already procured museum items and lead into a retail artisan and gallery space. The remaining storefront will be transformed into an event space for workshops, family events, and cultural enrichment activities. The second floor will become permanent classroom locations. School-aged, family, and lifelong learning programs will have a year-round impact on our immediate community. The third and fourth floors will remain residential, providing much-needed housing for those currently serving in the AmeriCorps program. A downtown Elkins Augusta Heritage Center not only creates vibrancy in the heart of the commercial district but it will also have a direct economic impact and create sustainable employment opportunities. Managers, instructors, retail, and restaurant positions are only a part of this project's more significant economic impact. Hotels, restaurants, and shops will see a direct benefit.

Project Information

4. Proposed Projects (list up to 3):
 - I. **Name of Project, address:** The Wilt Building, 102 3rd St, Elkins, WV 26241
 - **Size in Sq Ft.:** 19,520

- **Total anticipated financing need \$:** 4,559,000
- **Financing identified/anticipated, list source and dollar amount or note 'None':**
 State & Federal Historic Tax Credits - \$1.36M;
 Capital Campaign - \$2M;
 HOME funding - \$1M
- **Project description (include url link if available):**
 The Wilt Building sits at the central corner of Elkins' Downtown District. Originally constructed as an Opera House in 1932, it was soon converted into a 4 story mixed use building that has housed a variety of retail businesses, restaurants, and office space over the years. Like many buildings in our region's downtowns, the Wilt slowly declined over the years; a foreclosure on the property in 2018 put the building back in the hands of a local community bank, Davis Trust Company. The building is a Contributing Structure in the Downtown Elkins' Historic District. Augusta Heritage is proposing to partner with Woodlands Development Group, an Elkins-based Community Development Corporation, to fully renovate the Wilt and convert it into a new downtown headquarters for Augusta. The renovated Wilt will allow Augusta to establish downtown classroom and event space, relocate its offices, and provide artist housing on the upper floors. Woodlands brings extensive experience in historic building redevelopment, and Augusta has the demonstrated capacity to raise significant donor contributions.
 The Wilt's redevelopment will strongly compliment other related efforts in downtown Elkins: the restoration of the Tygart Hotel, now under construction; recent owner transitions of several buildings on Davis Avenue; the redevelopment of the Delmonte Hotel into a successful artisan market, deli, flower shop, and offices. The Durbin and Greenbrier scenic train continues to draw thousands of visitors to downtown, as does the region's outdoor recreation opportunities. The project will also engage the Tucker Community Foundation (TCF), a regional foundation based in a neighboring county. TCF has already committed to establishing a donor-advised fund on behalf of Augusta, and has a long history with Woodlands, supporting its efforts as a CDC and investing in its partner CDFI, Woodlands Community Lenders. It is the goal of both Augusta and Woodlands to further engage TCF, and explore other ways in which it can invest in real estate development, in support of the Wilt and other similar projects in the region.
 Woodlands and Augusta have already conducted preliminary assessments of the building, and generated a preliminary cost estimate for the proposed reuse. Augusta has entered into a purchase agreement for the building with Davis Trust Company, and Davis Trust has expressed a strong willingness to work with both Augusta and Woodlands to see the project completed.
- **Community Impact (quantify / provide estimates):**
 During much of the last decade, Elkins' downtown district lost population, and it's household median incomes dropped significantly. Many storefronts were vacant ten years ago, and two of the largest multifamily downtown rental properties had devolved into very substandard slum housing. Of the businesses and restaurants that remained in the downtown, very few would remain open after 5:00.
 That picture has changed significantly over the last few years as new ownership and new investments have helped revive the district. The two 'slum' rental properties are now under new ownership, with one now nearly fully refurbished, and the other -- the Tygart Hotel -- recently closed on financing for a \$16M conversion back to a boutique hotel. The Wilt renovation will be a critical piece in carrying that momentum forward, and getting downtown Elkins 'over the edge' in its revitalization efforts.
 Augusta anticipates that relocating its offices and classroom spaces will increase demand for its workshops focused on local heritage and traditional arts. Expanding its base will result in the

creation of an anticipated 3 jobs over a 2-year period post-construction. Augusta commits to providing Quality Jobs -- paying an hourly wage that at least meets the living wage for the area and providing full benefits. The renovation of the Wilt will also provide 2 commercial retail spaces, with one outfitted as a restaurant/kitchen. It is anticipated that occupancy of these spaces will result in the creation of 12-15 new jobs, and Augusta will prioritize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, and those tenants that commit to hiring employees from the surrounding distressed census tract.

(Anecdotally, Woodlands Community Lenders -- a CDFI affiliate of Woodlands Development Group -- states that there are currently 4 entrepreneurs looking for kitchen/restaurant space in downtown Elkins. They believe this is reflective of a growing trend of businesses looking to locate downtown.)

The renovation of the upper floor apartments will additionally provide much needed workforce housing for area artists and others. With extensive experience in developing similar housing projects in the region, Woodlands will help secure the needed financing to support residential units that meet this community need.

- **Name(s) of project sponsors, developer, and/or business owner, if identified:**

Project Sponsor: Augusta Heritage (Contact - Seth Young)

Project Developer: Woodlands Development Group (Dave Clark)

Project Architect: VanNostrand Associates (Bryson VanNostrand)

Project Contractor: Woodlands Development Group (Dave Clark)

Fund Manager: Tucker Community Foundation (Mike Moore)

Tax Credit Syndicator -- Virginia Community Development Corporation (Jeff Meyer)

Woodlands has successfully engaged a consortium of local community banks to pool investments in similar tax credit projects. These local banks include: Davis Trust Company, Pendleton Community Bank, Freedom Bank, and Grant County Bank. These banks and others will be approached as the investment opportunity is defined.

- **Technical Assistance Needed:**

1. Architectural and Design Services -- Designs will be completed to the extent needed for submission to WV's State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service for HTC approval. A more complete set of drawings is also required to refine the construction scope and solidify the financing structure.
2. Financial Structuring -- Augusta intends to conduct a capital campaign with its Board of Directors, and the Tucker Community Foundation will be managing a donor-advised fund in support of that capital campaign. Assistance is needed to successfully blend tax credit investments and campaign contributions, in addition to housing development subsidies that are secured. Additionally, the engagement of a progressive community foundation provides opportunities to think creatively about an expanded role for that foundation.
3. Project Packaging -- Augusta will additionally need assistance in 'packaging' the project for potential investors, applying for state and federal housing subsidies, and compiling the information needed for an HTC allocation.

- **Describe the connection to other proposed projects listed on this form (if applicable):** N/A

5. **Clean Energy Focus:** Augusta's project partner, Woodlands Development Group, recently secured funding from Enterprise Community Partners to develop project specific plans and strategies to incorporate solar

energy into all its current and pending projects. As a result, Woodlands has committed to including the Wilt Building in that Scope of Work, and that assessment work is anticipated to start in June 2022.

6. **Applicant Capacity:** What is the relationship of the applicant to the community? How has the community demonstrated its support of the project(s)? Describe the applicant's role and capacity for completing or overseeing project activities: The Augusta Heritage Center has served the community for nearly 50 years. Our programming has become embedded with the identity of the town, and the brand of Augusta has a broad international reach. We have developed strategic partnerships with other area arts organizations, hotels, restaurants, tourist destinations, hospitals, and Davis & Elkins College. The community overwhelmingly supports this project, as evident in both the financial pledges and the spirit of volunteerism it has generated. Davis Trust Bank, which currently owns the property, believes this is the best plan for this crucial business location. They have agreed to an extended and generous purchase agreement while the financing plan is implemented. They see this project as key to the development of our downtown and support this vision coming to fruition. Many business leaders have already made individual private pledges to this project. The impact and future reward of a vibrant downtown commercial district is readily apparent in the business plan. A rising tide lifts all boats and our area's business leaders are highly energized and have an authentic stake in the outcome. While some give monetarily, others give through service. Legal, financial, and business consultations are currently donated. While we know we are going to need future funding to support paid engagement in this area, it is a testament to the community as a whole coming together to bring this vision to life. Without exaggeration, every citizen of our community will be impacted by a successful renovation of the Wilt Building. Our area's leaders see this and have shown nearly unanimous support. This project is also supported at the state level. The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History recognizes this transformation as having a state-wide footprint. It has encouraged Augusta to apply for all building project grants for the cycles in which the work is occurring. National granting agencies, such as the NEA, have also reached out to invite applications for project funding. Augusta has developed a team of stakeholders that have overseen the completion of many similar projects. These industry experts are guiding us and are optimistic about the outcome, and it is with the support of programs such as Opportunity Appalachia that it will be seen to completion.