



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROGRAM SPONSORS



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

Project Sponsor: Swisher Partners, LLC, Somerset, OH

Project Name: Swisher Development Complex (Project Summary provided in Attachment B.)

Release Date: July 18, 2022

Proposal Due Date: August 15, 2022

Selection Date: August 22, 2022

Contract Period: August 22, 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 engineering,
- Market research/demand assessment,
- Development of investment prospectus, preparation of pro forma financial projections, structuring of projecting financing,
- Feasibility assessment,
- Identification of project developers and/or business operators,
- Investor outreach for project finance/investment,
- 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 22, 2022 for an estimated contract start date of August 22, 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 \$25,000. 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: Swisher Partners, LLC

Project Name: Swisher Development Complex

Project Summary provided in Attachment B.

TA Requested

The activities listed below will be sequenced with other work elements undertaken by the Project Sponsor.

- Business Plan / Operations Plan for the Cidery. Relevant industry expertise required.
- Architect to serve as owner's representative to support architectural design work to be completed by American Structure Point (specified in the note below). Owner's Rep to support following original design intent for the Cidery and keeping to historic guidelines. Expertise in historic preservation required.
- Accounting support for financial structuring of the transaction, to include State and Federal Historic Tax Credits and participation of existing Qualified Opportunity Zone Fund. Support also to be provided for preparation of State of Ohio HTC Certification and Project Completion report, and Federal HTC Part 3 Request for Certification of Completed Work.
- Branding for the Swisher Development Complex suite of businesses, i.e., cidery (cider production and events venue), retail bottle shop and tasting room, and lodging.
- Promotion and marketing in the Swisher Development Complex suite of businesses (listed in the item above), with expertise in the distillery / craft beverage industry.

Notes:

Historic Preservation Certification application Parts I & II have been approved by the National Park Service.

American Structure Point will be undertaking the following activities as part of this project. These services are separate and apart from the provision of Opportunity Appalachia Technical Assistance described above, and include:

1. Architectural drawings for 121 & 115 East Main Street, which will be sufficient for building permits
2. Site development - 121 East Main Street
3. Building design/plans for events venue and cidery - 121 East Main Street

Attachment B

Summary Information

Lead Contact: Michelle Robinson

Applicant Organization: Swisher Partners, LLC

Address: 1223 East Main Street, Columbus, OH 43205

Phone: (614) 348-7909

Email: marswisherltd@gmail.com

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.

Somerset, Ohio Census Tract 9659
2. Service area of applicant (note if different than above, or note same): same
3. Community Development Strategy(ies): Somerset is a gateway community for the Appalachian region of Ohio and boasts outdoor recreation, cultural, artistic, and local foods offerings that attract visitors. These projects are in response to the significant growth that Somerset has experienced in the last 5 years that includes three new restaurants, three new retail businesses, and plans for a fourth restaurant in early 2023. Somerset has embarked on a systematic redevelopment of its historic downtown focusing on the strategies outlined by the Appalachian Regional Commission, preserving and investing in the local and regional culture, heritage, and natural assets. Somerset is at the apex of change for Perry County, linking strong economic development of Buckeye Lake to the southern parts of Perry County and beyond. This project aligns with the overall Somerset Economic Revitalization and Tourism Project that strives to enhance the historical district to promote economic growth through heritage tourism as well as regional efforts to enhance livability of communities through a vibrant and growing creative economy strategy that supports entrepreneurship, and business development and growth. The developer of this project has taken the initiative to spearhead and support economic incentives implemented for the benefit of this and future projects such as the Community Reinvestment Area tax abatement program, becoming a Certified Local Government, embarking on updating zoning and historic preservation guidelines, and developing new historic design guidelines. The Village has become a Revitalization District bringing five additional D5-L liquor licenses to existing and new food focused businesses. The Innovation Gateway, a 1.5MM makerspace and learning hub is well underway, further adding to the draw of visitors to the Village and region. This project is the second phase in the Swisher Complex renovations and targets two underutilized buildings central to the historic district of Somerset and the historic Jacob Miller's Tavern, uniting them in an overall development and marketing strategy focusing on lodging and destination craft beverage production and retail sales. The project will yield two renovated properties that will be put into service immediately housing a retail business and lodging and provide the strategic outline for the development of a craft distillery and cider house.

Project Information

4. Proposed Projects (list up to 3):
 - I. **Name of Project, address:** Swisher Development Complex - 115, East Main Street, 121 East Main Street, Somerset, Ohio 43783

- **Size in Sq Ft.:** 10,500
- **Total anticipated financing need \$:** 2,500,000
- **Financing identified/anticipated, list source and dollar amount or note 'None':**
 Opportunity Zone, 1,400,000;
 APEG, \$500,000;
 Historic Tax Credits, \$650,000
- **Project description (include url link if available):**
 The \$ 2.5MM project renovates two historic structures being united under the Swisher Partners LLC umbrella who will own and operate all facilities. Swisher Partners LLC has purchased two properties adjacent to Hotel Swisher to develop as part of the lodging and entertainment complex. The development strategy is to build five (5) lodging units, a retail bottle shop and tasting room, and cider house. The Cidery will be developed as a craft spirits manufacturing facility focusing on small batch production that builds on the heritage of the spirits industry in Somerset with the development and location to be further determined as an outcome of this project. Solar power is being planned as part of this project that will serve the Hotel and adjacent buildings.
 Swisher Partners LLC brings together a strong development and operations team building on decades of experience in design, construction, lodging facility management, and craft beverage production and distribution. This project has significant equity investment, pre-development investment, 100% financing in place for the lodging and retail establishment. In addition to the approximately \$200,000 in grant funding, there is an owner equity investment of approximately 1.6MM that includes an established Opportunity Zone Fund.
 The public-private partnership rallying to save the Tavern and incorporate the marketing and promotions strategy to Hotel Swisher is comprised of the Perry County Historical and Cultural Arts Society, the Village of Somerset, and Swisher Partners LLC. Concept designs have been developed by award-winning historic preservation specialists at Schooley Caldwell Associates. This project advances the established 1.4MM Opportunity Zone Fund dedicated to Somerset development.
- **Community Impact (quantify / provide estimates):**
 The project is located in Somerset, Ohio in Perry County and will serve the residents of Somerset and surrounding communities as well as tourists that visit this small town to share in its rich heritage as one of the best surviving early Ohio pioneer era market towns. The village of Somerset is a small, rural Appalachian town in Southeastern Ohio with a population of 1452, median family income of \$49,516,000 and 14.25% overall poverty rate. Perry County ranks 78 out of Ohio's 88 counties in per capita income. Countywide unemployment is currently 5.7% (as of January, 2022). This project aligns with the overall Somerset Economic Revitalization and Tourism Project that strives to enhance the historical district to promote economic growth through heritage tourism as well as regional efforts to enhance livability of communities through a vibrant and growing creative economy strategy that supports entrepreneurship, and business development and growth.
 The Village of Somerset in Perry County was the original county seat and today acts as a cultural and tourist hub for the entire county. Tourism efforts in Perry County to date have been extremely limited unlike neighboring Hocking County where tourism has become the county's largest industry. Given that Perry County boasts two towns with large National Register Historic Districts, Somerset and Shawnee, combined with unique picturesque farmlands in the north and the Wayne National Forest in the southern portion, eco-civic tourism has tremendous growth potential.

Somerset businesses have been asked to project how many jobs they will grow as the Economic Revitalization & Heritage Tourism Project is successfully implemented, and they are predicting a net increase of 50 jobs primarily in the restaurant/retail sectors. These projects are another step for Somerset to achieve this growth.

This project will realize over 65 construction jobs with average wages of \$28.00 per hour and 10-15 permanent FTE's with wages in the range of \$15.00 - \$25.00 per hour, as well as and increased tax base, direct, indirect, and induced spending because of the increased traffic to the Village.

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

MARSwisherLTD - Michelle Robinson (Developer, Designer, Project Manager, Distillery Operations)

Rivendell Resorts - David Wilhelm, Ben Logan, Logan Wilhelm (Primary Investor, Lodging Development and Project Management)

Sunday Creek Horizons, LLC - Zack Space, Zach Reizes (Project Management, Community Engagement)

Eric Hedin (Cidery Production)

- **Technical Assistance Needed (*note: the below list includes items additional to assistance needed for this specific RFP*):**

1. Architectural and Engineering – 121, 115, Jacob Miller's Tavern Construction Documentation (pre-development is already complete that includes conceptual design, schematic design, design development, and preliminary construction budgets)
2. Feasibility Study – Cidery and Craft Beverage Manufacturing
3. Business Plan and Prospectus - Cidery and Craft Beverage Manufacturing
4. Marketing and Promotion – cidery (cider production and events venue), retail bottle shop and tasting room, and lodging
5. Branding – cidery (cider production and events venue), retail bottle shop and tasting room, and lodging
6. Solar Design

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

5. **Clean Energy Focus:** This project anticipates developing a large solar array on the roof of Hotel Swisher, approximately 4,500 s.f. Third Sun Solar has prepared a preliminary design and energy production model for a solar installation on the soon to be renovated hotel and has determined that approximately 31.825kW of solar would fit in the desired location, generating 39,217kwh of electricity per year. This project will finalize planning for the solar array and determine if additional opportunities are available.
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: Swisher Partners has been working directly with the Village of Somerset for the past 5+ years to improve the economic development environment for existing business owners and

entrepreneurs who want to locate their business in the Village. Efforts have included writing and receiving business development grants and implementing economic development legislation to benefit business owners with the most recent passing of the Community Reinvestment Area initiative allowing tax abatements for renovated properties within the business and historic district. Swisher Partners LLC brings together a strong development and operations team building on decades of experience in design, construction, and lodging facility management. Initial project development has been spearheaded by Michelle Robinson, resident of Glenford, Ohio, neighboring community to Somerset. Michelle has an extensive background in building and interior design along with project and construction management. Michelle has been integrally involved in the efforts of creative economic revitalization of the region and Somerset and will continue to be intimately involved with the project development and operations. Daily operations will be managed through Rivendale Resorts, owner and operator of Crockett's Run and the Gingerbread Haus, a 55-acre, lodging and events space facility located in the heart of Hocking Hills and in New Plymouth, Ohio. This development will become an extension of Crockett's Run offering expanded lodging and events opportunities to an already established and successful business.