

# South Carolina Artisans Center Building Upgrade Project Funding Request

The South Carolina Artisans Center founded in 1994 is the largest single tourist attraction located in Walterboro and was officially designated the "Official Folk Art and Craft Center of South Carolina" in 2000 by the governor. The Center was originally conceived as a rural economic tourism development project. The Center now showcases the work of nearly 250 artists from 35 out of 46 counties across the state. These artists are on a commission structure and every month we distribute part of our sales to them throughout the state.

We have become a major **Tourist Destination** off I-95. Approximately 411,000 people have visited the Center over the past twenty eight (28) years. Over **95%** of the Center's **customers** have traveled from **outside of Colleton County** and over **85%** are **visitors from another state**. The Center on average has 500 to 700 visitors with average sales of \$10,000 to \$16,000 per month.

The Center currently has four historic buildings on its property. The largest building is the retail shop and is the most frequently used. The next largest one was vacated at the end of February. After a review of both buildings, we have found that there is a need for some unmet maintenance and repairs. The following are estimates for the need maintenance and repairs issues:

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| • Exterior painting      | \$30,000        |
| • New roofing            | \$20,000        |
| • Interior painting      | \$15,000        |
| • Repairing of rot found | <u>\$10,000</u> |
|                          | \$75,000        |

This requested funding are needed repairs to the historic building to use as a multipurpose event space. The Center will be celebrating thirty (30) years of operations in 2024 and we would like to be presented in the best shape possible and continue to make an economic impact for Colleton County and throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration of our funding request. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



David M. Smalls  
Executive Director