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# Campbell County Recreation Opportunity Assessment

Proposal prepared by Virginia Tech's  
Center for Economic and Community Engagement

November 2025



DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:  
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## Project Overview

Campbell County is evaluating future uses for land in and around the 136-acre County-owned property in Rustburg that was recently rezoned to accommodate industrial development. The rezoning, approved in early 2025, positions the site near Colonial Highway and Oxford Furnace Road for potential inclusion in a larger mega site initiative aimed at attracting business investment and expanding the County's economic base. While County officials view the site as a catalyst for job creation and long-term growth, the decision has generated community discussion about the balance between industrial expansion and maintaining Rustburg's rural character and quality of life.

In response, Campbell County seeks to explore complementary recreational uses that could coexist with or enhance the industrial development, ensuring the property's full potential serves both economic and community interests.

The Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement (VT CECE) will assist Campbell County through a focused two-and-a-half-month engagement process designed to:

1. Review existing plans, zoning, and development data related to the site and surrounding area;
2. Conduct targeted stakeholder interviews to understand community priorities and potential synergies between industrial and recreational uses; and
3. Facilitate a collaborative workshop to assess feasible recreation options and develop a clear direction for next steps in aligning the site's development with the County's broader economic and quality-of-life goals.

## Proposed Scope of Work and Methods

The duration of the project will be from November 14, 2025 through February 1, 2026. Over this period, the work will be organized around [4] sets of milestones.

### Phase 1: Project Kick-Off and Planning (November 2025)

- VT CECE will convene a kick-off meeting with Campbell County staff to confirm project goals, deliverables, and timeline.
- VT CECE will begin by collecting and reviewing all background materials including economic development impact studies, existing recreation and land-use plans and other relevant studies through Campbell County to establish a comprehensive understanding of the site and surrounding context.
  - VT CECE will identify consistent findings, recurring recreation concepts, and data or information gaps that require further validation.
  - These materials will also serve as helpful tools in identifying an initial list of key stakeholders needed for engagement.
- VT CECE will summarize insights into a "current state" section. A brief project workplan will outline engagement methods, including interview guide and workshop logistics.

### Phase 2: Case Studies and Stakeholder Interviews (December 2025 – January 2026)

- VT CECE will identify and analyze 3–4 co-location examples across Virginia where recreation assets have been successfully integrated alongside industrial or mixed-use developments.

Findings from these case studies will inform a framework of best practices and lessons learned that can be applied to Campbell County's planning context.

- VT CECE will schedule and conduct 8-10 interviews with County officials, recreation advocates, local organizations and other community partners to gather perspectives on feasible recreation options that complement the mega site development.
- Interview analysis will identify shared priorities and emerging opportunities, focusing on feasibility, community benefit, infrastructure alignment, and the potential for recreation to enhance the County's attractiveness for future investment.

### Phase 3: Facilitation Workshop (January 2026)

- VT CECE will design and facilitate an in-person workshop with key stakeholders to present synthesized findings from previous phases to frame discussion and decision-making.
- VT CECE will guide participants through structure prioritization exercises (e.g. ranking, matrix, scenarios) and document areas of consensus, preferred recreation concepts, and agreed upon next steps for advancing 2-4 of the most promising recreation opportunities.

### Phase 4: Summary Report and Recommendations (January - February 2026)

- VT CECE will compile a concise final report integrating findings from all phases highlighting validated recreation opportunities, feasibility considerations, and recommended actions for implementation.
- VT CECE will present findings to project team and other stakeholder bodies, as requested.

## Key Project Personnel and Roles

### Elli Travis, Senior Economic Development Specialist (Lead)

Elli Travis is experienced in leading feasibility studies, strategic planning, and program evaluation projects that help organizations assess impact, plan for growth, and align initiatives with their mission and community goals. A skilled facilitator with a background in agriculture and community development, Travis excels at working alongside communities to build capacity, identify areas of opportunity, and co-develop methods for assessing progress toward impact. Recent examples of her work with the Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement include leading an executive feasibility study for the Octagon House Foundation (2025), which incorporated a market scan, SWOT analysis, projection of visitation impacts using IMPLAN, and actionable recommendations; directing a comprehensive strategic planning process for Spearhead Trails to engage stakeholders, assess organizational strengths and opportunities, and develop a practical implementation guide for the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority; and evaluating outcomes and performance metrics across multiple GO Virginia Region 2 projects and programs.

Travis will serve as lead investigator and primary point of contact, guiding the overall project design, stakeholder engagement, and facilitation of meetings and workshops.

### John Provo, Director (Support to Facilitation)

John Provo provides leadership for Virginia Tech in the design and implementation of its economic and community engagement mission. A "pracademic" with nearly 25 years of experience in higher education

and government, Provo leads a team of research and engagement professionals who build relationships between businesses, communities, and the university to deliver actionable knowledge for strategic initiatives. He serves as principal investigator on the Center's GO Virginia Region 2 and Regional Internship Collaborative projects, providing leadership in regional strategy and program design.

Provo will support facilitation, strategic framing, and the development of recommendations throughout the project.

#### Ashley Posthumus, Economic Development Specialist, (Support to Data Collection)

Ashley Posthumus supports communities across the Commonwealth through projects that emphasize data-driven insight, community engagement, and strategic planning. Her work spans data collection and analysis, facilitation, technical writing, and workforce and economic development analysis. Recent projects include co-leading the Mount Rogers Assets Analysis and Development Plan, which translated past planning efforts into an actionable plan for improving access to and quality of outdoor experiences for visitors and residents, and serving as co-lead for the West Piedmont Planning District Commission Agritourism and Agribusiness Regional Economic Impact Study and Marketing Plan, which examined the region's agricultural economy, developed an agribusiness database, and informed strategies to enhance and market regional assets.

Posthumus will lead secondary data collection and analysis and support primary data collection through stakeholder interviews, the facilitation workshop, and report writing.

#### Makenzie Mann, Graduate Research Assistant (Support to Data Collection)

Makenzie Mann is a second-year student in Virginia Tech's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program. Originally from Aurora, Illinois, she earned dual degrees in Management and Community & Leadership Development from the University of Kentucky. At the Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement, Mann has contributed to a variety of projects including an economic opportunity assessment for the Alleghany Highlands; a study on recovery and re-entry programming feasibility in Tazewell County; an examination of best practices in shared childcare services for southern Virginia; and research into K-12 teacher and administrator retention and professional development needs in Southwest Virginia.

Mann will support secondary data collection and analysis and assist with primary data collection through stakeholder interviews, the facilitation workshop, and report writing.

## Proposed Costs

CECE provides an estimate of costs in the table below. Typically, CECE contracts operate on a payment schedule requiring payment of half the total amount at the initiation of the contract, and the remaining 50% paid at the completion of the project.

Scope of Work	Cost
CECE Faculty Time	\$9,910
CECE Staff Time	\$640
CECE Graduate Assistant Time	\$1,105
Materials and Supplies*	\$200
Travel	\$200
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$12,055</b>
<b>Contractual service fee @ 21%**</b>	<b>\$2,532</b>
<b>Total Project Costs to Client</b>	<b>\$14,590</b>

\* This amount covers CECE's expenditure on proprietary data software, technology, facilitation materials, and other office supplies typically used during a project.

\* This amount reflects the standard REQUIRED fee for contracts with Virginia Tech Continuing and Professional Education (CPE), calculated at 21% of the direct costs (as stated on p. 5 of 'University Pricing Structure for Continuing and Professional Education' document, available on request).