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Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

Winter 2026 Committee & Commission Meetings

Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump

4240 Old Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, Virginia

January 12, 2026

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ITINERARY

Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission Winter 2026 Tobacco Commission Meetings

Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Old Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

January 12, 2026

Meeting Schedule

Monday, January 12, 2026

10:15am	Southern Virginia Committee
10:45am	Incentives & Loans Committee
11:30am-12:30pm	Lunch available (working lunch)
11:45am	Rural Accelerator Committee
12:15pm	Energy Ingenuity Committee
1:15pm	Education Committee
1:45pm	Southwest Virginia Committee
3:15pm	Full Commission Meeting
5:30-7:30pm	Reception

Lodging and Reception

Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Old Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060



THE VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION
REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

Cordially invites you to our

WINTER RECEPTION

Monday, January 12, 2026
5:30 - 7:30 PM

Richmond Marriott Short Pump, James River Room
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060

Business Casual

RSVP by December 29, 2025, to rstein@revitalizeva.org

Special thanks to our sponsors!



SOUTHERN VIRGINIA COMMITTEE



▪ In-Person Meeting ▪

AGENDA

SOUTHERN VIRGINIA COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
10:15 A.M.**

If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter **access code: 210 330 008#**.

The Committee will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, please contact: **Warren Bryson** at **(804) 894-9659**, **wbryson@revitalizeva.org** or **Roz Stein** at **(804) 894-9651**.

Welcome and Call to Order

The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird, Chair

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Approval of the 9/23/2025 Minutes
(published on website)

The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird, Chair

Public Comment

Introduction

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Extensions and Modifications

Ms. Sarah Capps, Southern Regional Director

Data Summary Update

Ms. Sarah Capps, Southern Regional Director

Other Business

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Adjournment



Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

FY2026 Southern Virginia Program (2nd Round)

Overview

Application Deadline - The grant application deadline is **Wednesday, February 4, 2026**. Funding decisions will be considered at the Tobacco Commission's meeting in May 2026.

Eligible Applicants – Government entities and nonprofit organizations.

Available Funding --\$4 million is available in the Southern Virginia Program; and \$7.5 million of carryforward balances in county allocations from Southside Economic Development Program.

Match – At least dollar-for-dollar (1:1) Match is required.

Guidelines: Visit TRRC's website, revitalizeva.org, to review the Commission's Strategic Plan, Funding Policies and for a copy of the FY26 Southern Virginia Program Guidelines & RFP.

Submittals – Proposals must be submitted by midnight on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, through the Commission's online Grants Portal: https://vtc.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp.

Economic Development – Eligible Funding Categories & Investment Strategies

1) AGRIBUSINESS

Value-Added Processing, Aggregation, and Marketing Facilities

Support for facilities that add value to agricultural commodities and meet market demand. Priority projects will support producers working in partnerships and providing a regional benefit.

- [Grants for Capital Projects \(Publicly or Non-Profit Owner\)](#) - Up to 50% of capital costs
- [Grants for Start-Up Operations \(Publicly or Non-Profit Owned\)](#) – Support for operating costs will only be considered for new and expanding operations.
- [Grants for Capital Projects \(Private Owner\)](#) – The Tobacco Region Incentive for Agribusiness Development (TRIAD) Grant Program can help attract new or expanding agriculture- and forestry- based businesses. TRIAD is a separate application.

Development of Market Opportunities - Diversify and enhance the region's agribusiness economy with a focus on new or expanded market opportunities are eligible for funding.

- [Wholesale and Retail Cooperative Marketing](#)- Up to \$20,000 to support marketing initiatives focused on new or expanding markets to increase agricultural sales revenue.
- [Crop Demonstrations Projects](#) - Assist producers with development and demonstration of high-value, low acreage crops (high net return per acre).
- [Cost Share Programs](#) - Transition producers to alternative agriculture enterprises or implementation of best practices, directly resulting in an increase to farmer income. Must be regional and benefit a multi-county area. Limited to up to 33% of capital cost.

2) BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Regional Economic Development Marketing Initiatives

Support new regional initiatives that increase economic development capacity.

Business District Redevelopment*

Stimulate downtown redevelopment and business growth with attention to vacant, underutilized buildings and a focus on the creation or expansion of technology and business service sector jobs.

- Planning and capacity building – Feasibility study, market assessment, A&E services.
- Business development centers - Publicly or nonprofit owned buildings
- Small business development incentives – Catalyst Business – Support for a private business, or nonprofit enterprise, which can serve as a catalyst for revitalizing an underdeveloped or underutilized downtown business district. This incentive is designed to stimulate local economy, or to address gaps in community needs that will contribute to economic progress. Limited to up to \$100,000 and no more than 25% of capital costs.
- Small business development incentive – Business Launch – One time funding to support delivery of business planning programming and to provide incentives to private business under a business launch-type of program coordinated for a community.

**Priority in consideration to towns/communities participating in BOOMS Small Town Pilot Project; and for projects in localities that have not been served by Tobacco Commission grant funding within the last 10 years.*

3) SITES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Industrial Sites -- Includes On-Site Utility Infrastructure & Buildings

Support for industrial site development including on-site infrastructure and buildings. Priority for bringing existing properties to a higher level of business ready site certification. Redevelopment of brownfield sites is also a funding interest for TRRC; and a Phase 1 ESA must be provided.

Infrastructure – Off-Site Utility Infrastructure

Off-site utility infrastructure must be to serve a clearly defined economic development site. Grants will be considered for planning, engineering, and design. Funding requests for construction of off-site utility infrastructure will be considered for loan financing.

4) TOURISM

Tourism Destination Infrastructure

Investments in tourism destinations with documented ability to attract national and/or international visitors such as heritage tourism sites and outdoor recreation tourism.

Regional Tourism Marketing Campaigns and Initiatives

Marketing programs that will lead to the attraction of new visitors to the region.

Placemaking Mini-Grants

Mini grants of up to \$25,000 for “placemaking” projects centered around business district revitalization resulting from a community visioning process.

Visit TRRC’s website, revitalizeva.org, to review the Commission’s current Strategic Plan, Funding Policies and for a copy of the **FY26 Southern Virginia Program Guidelines & RFP (2nd Round)**.

**Southern Virginia Committee
January 12, 2026**

OTHER BUSINESS:

Pittsylvania County, Southern Virginia Megasite Natural Gas Gate Engineering and Permitting (#4219) – Request to Reassign

Staff Comments: The Commission approved a \$500,000 grant in May 2024 to support no more than 50% of the required Match for the VBRSP funding for the gas gate engineering necessary to provide natural gas to the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill to address gas requirements for Microporous. VEDP VBRSP approved a \$6 million grant to Pittsylvania County in August 2024 to support the natural gas gate. When this grant was approved, the Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facilities Authority was working with Southwest Virginia Gas for distribution infrastructure for delivery of gas from the Transco pipeline, which was estimated to cost ~ \$25 million. The original award was to Pittsylvania County, and the local government partners in the RIFA are now requesting the grant to be reassigned to the City of Danville.

The new plan for delivery of natural gas is for the City of Danville to assume responsibility for construction of the natural gas line to the Megasite Lots 1 and 2 from an existing gas gate owned by the City. Microporous and all future customers would be transportation customers for the City with Southwest Virginia Gas Company providing the final connection and selling natural gas directly to the customers. Preliminary engineering estimates and routing details are available for the proposed 3.5 gas main extension which will utilize VDOT and City right-of-way. Full engineering is ready to be initiated and is expected to be completed by December 2026, and Microporous has indicated that they will need gas service by March 2027. The City has taken steps to implement this solution including hiring an attorney to draft documents with SWVG Company and Microporous. VEDP has approved this change for their \$6 million. A detailed cost estimate for \$459,000 in engineering, permitting, and surveying costs and \$7.39 million of construction costs was provided for a total project cost of \$7.85 million. The City is requesting a reduction to the original award, for a grant of \$459,000, with a portion of construction costs used for satisfying the 1:1 match requirement.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approving the reassignment of grant #4219, to the City of Danville for an award of \$459,000 to support the engineering costs.

**Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, *Supporting Controlled Environment Agriculture Industry Growth in Southern Virginia (#4166)*
– Current End Date October 12, 2026, Two-Year Extension Requested**

Staff Comments: The Commission approved a \$145,841 grant in October 2023 to support establishing testing services for the CEA industry at IALR's Controlled Environmental Agriculture Innovation Center, which is a partnership with Virginia Tech. The primary use of grant funding is for hiring a research technician, and the focus will be on expanding outreach and providing educational materials to growers based on the data generated from studies conducted on common issues faced by CEA producers. While hiring of the new position was expected to occur in 2023, this has not happened, and IALR is requesting a two-year extension to allow time for the position to support the planned testing services. The delay is due to the 10-year annual renewal of the Virginia Tech and IALR MOU, which took almost 15-months and precluded IALR from hiring the new position. With the new MOU now in place and the need to assure prospective applicants for the position that funding will be available to support their work, additional time is needed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of a two-year extension through October 31, 2028.

INCENTIVES AND LOANS COMMITTEE



• In-Person Meeting •

AGENDA

INCENTIVES AND LOANS COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
10:45 A.M.**

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Welcome and Call to Order

The Honorable Daniel "Danny" Marshall, Chair

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Approval of the 9/24/2025 Minutes
(published on website)

The Honorable Daniel "Danny" Marshall, Chair

Public Comment

Introduction

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

**Grant Opportunities for the Foundation
and Region**

Mr. Danny Vargas

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

VSBA Loan Program Update

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Pending Projects and Loan Negotiations

Closed Session

**Economic Development Workforce
Housing Incentive Pilot Program**

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

**Maritime Advancement & Supply Chain
Transformation (MAST) Fund**

*Mr. Michael Moran, Deputy Secretary of
Commerce and Trade*

TRRC Drone Program

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Other Business

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Adjournment

Incentives and Loans Committee

January 12, 2026

The Incentives and Loans Committee is meeting on January 12, 2026, at 10:45 am to receive updates on programs the committee has created. consider confidential grant and loan requests, and discuss potential new programs. The following summary provides staff overview and comments on each item.

1. Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program

Winter 2026 Staff Report and Recommendations

The program continues to receive strong interest, with Commission staff presenting on the program at events throughout the footprint and involved in multiple calls and meetings around project opportunities. Since May, the Commission has made five grant awards totaling \$2.9M for the creation of 225 new workforce housing units, which are reserved for households earning between 80 and 150% of the Area Median Income. A status report on these projects is below.

The TRRC program is often used in conjunction with Virginia Housing’s new Workforce Housing Incentive Program. Virginia Housing’s program requires projects to deliver the housing units within two years of award, with the opportunity for a one-year extension if circumstances merit, or the award may be withdrawn. Likewise, TRRC’s Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program requires projects to be completed or substantially underway within two years of award, and the Executive Director may grant a one-year extension. Commission approval will be sought for any extensions beyond this.

Commission staff received one complete application since September 2025 from Lee County, which is summarized below.

Western Lee Housing Project

Overview: Lee County is assembling more than \$5.3M in grant funds for site work and water/waste water infrastructure to support 115 new housing units on the campus of Lincoln Memorial University’s DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center to serve students, faculty, and staff. At least 22 units will be reserved for households earning between 120% and 150% AMI.	
Applicant	Lee County
Grant amount requested from TRRC How these funds will be used	\$ 800,000 – site improvements
Other Matching Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC: \$1,000,000 (Awarded) • CDBG: \$2,000,000 (Pending) • AMLER: \$1,500,000 (Awarded)
New Housing Units	115 Units: 55 townhomes, 38 duplexes, 9 triplexes, and 13 cottages. The townhomes will be approximately 1,500 SF, with all other units approximately 1,200 SF.

Total new investment	\$54,570,945
Economic Project Announcement Supported by New Housing	White Rock Truss & Components, LLC (\$1.5M cap ex, 27 new jobs) Announced 6/30/2025
Local support for project	Lee County secured over \$4.5M in grant funds for the project. The project is part of Governor Youngkin's Accelerate Southwest Initiative.
Support of housing community	LMU will be the primary developer of the housing.
Presence of Local Housing Plan	Multiple studies identify this as a target area for housing development that could bring significant benefits to the region.
How will affordability to assured	Affordability will be enforced through a recorded deed restriction requiring compliance for at least fifteen (15) years

Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends the Commission accept staff report on the Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program and make an award of \$800,000 to Lee County to support the Western Lee Housing Project at the DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center as presented.

Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program – Status Report

Project	Applicant	Grant Award	Deliverable(s)	Status
Halifax County Workforce Housing Initiative	Industrial Development Authority of Halifax County	\$ 1,000,000	40 townhomes and 72 apartments for rent at 120-150% AMI	Working through shortfall in total project financing due to low limits on housing payment because of the county's low AMI has been identified, threatening the project's viability
140 South 1st Street, Wytheville	Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe	\$100,000	Two additional apartments on part of the first floor	Finalizing work on earlier stabilization grants before moving to complete housing units
320 Main Street Tazewell Historic Revitalization Project	Town of Tazewell	\$300,000	11 new affordable apartments	Finalizing costs and building code requirements to determine the ultimate construction plan
Project Safe – Scott County	Scott County Economic Development Authority	\$ 1,000,000	50 new workforce housing units	Formal application under development; Virginia Housing awarded \$1M for project 12/18 (a contingency for our award)
Westlake Area Improvement – Franklin County	Franklin County	\$500,000	50 new workforce housing units	Formal application under development; Virginia Housing awarded \$1M for project 12/18 (a contingency for our award)

2. Maritime Advancement & Supply Chain Transformation (MAST) Fund

The Secretariat of Commerce and Trade is supporting a targeted push to attract small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the maritime and shipbuilding supply chain. Because of the significant naval presence at the Port of Virginia, the Commonwealth is well positioned to attract such companies. Additionally, because of its high-quality workforce and favorable business climate for advanced manufacturing, the Tobacco Commission footprint is especially attractive to these companies.

To take advantage of this opportunity, the Secretariat of Commerce and Trade is requesting the Commission create the Maritime Advancement & Supply Chain Transformation (MAST) Fund, an overview of which is below. The Fund is designed to “close capital gaps for Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers, accelerate new investment in Southern and Southwest Virginia, and strengthen Virginia’s position as a national leader in commercial and defense shipbuilding.” The existence of such a program will provide members of Virginia’s economic development community with a new tool and talking point when recruiting new and expanding businesses in this industry to the footprint.

Staff has reviewed this proposal and believes that, if the Commission recommends its adoption, the most efficient way to implement it would be to make a minor change to our existing MOU with the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA) to specify that suppliers to the maritime industry be added to the list of the three other approved recipients of these loans: agribusiness, energy businesses, and economic development organizations. In this way, any opportunity that arises in this industry can be vetted by VSBFA and evaluated by the Commission using established processes. If staff believes that an economic development incentive grant is appropriate for an opportunity, the Commission can consider an award through the Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund or through a custom grant at its next meeting. Additionally, the guidelines allow for flexibility to allow staff to structure deals that are acceptable to the Commission. To accommodate additional lending opportunities, the current \$10M cap on the Commission’s lending partnership with VSBFA should be raised to \$20M. This expansion is needed given that there are currently \$8,975,000 in outstanding and approved loans through the program.

Draft Staff Recommendation: Direct Commission staff to create the program and implement by: 1) updating the Commission’s MOU with VSBFA to make businesses in the maritime supply chain eligible for loans through the MOU; 2) increasing the MOU’s loan cap to \$20M; and 3) coordinating with the Commission’s economic development allies in marketing this program to maximize its impact for the Tobacco Region.

Maritime Advancement & Supply Chain Transformation (MAST) Fund

1. Purpose and Strategic Rationale

The Maritime Advancement & Supply Chain Transformation (MAST) Fund is a targeted financing program to be operated by the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC) to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the maritime and shipbuilding supply chain. The Fund is designed to close capital gaps for Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers, accelerate new investment in Southern and Southwest Virginia, and strengthen Virginia's position as a national leader in commercial and defense shipbuilding.

Virginia's maritime industrial base depends on a dense ecosystem of fabricators, machine shops, component manufacturers, and specialized service providers. These firms may struggle to secure affordable, patient capital for expansion, modernization, and relocation. The MAST Fund directly addresses these challenges by providing below-market loans and grants that unlock private investment and enable strategic growth projects that would not otherwise move forward.

2. Program Objectives

- Stabilize and expand critical maritime and shipbuilding supply chain providers with a focus on Tier 2 and Tier 3 manufacturers
- Catalyze capital investment and job creation in the Tobacco Region
- Enhance Virginia's competitiveness in national security, shipbuilding, and repair markets by increasing domestic capacity and resilience
- Leverage private-sector capital by using flexible public funds to unlock larger volumes of senior debt and equity financing
- Align regional revitalization with statewide economic and workforce strategies, including shipbuilding, port, and advanced manufacturing initiatives

3. Core Program Design

Fund Size and Structure

- Initial Capitalization: A proposed revolving fund up to \$10 million capitalized by TRRC
- Leverage Goal: MAST financing is expected to unlock at least \$25 million in total project financing when combined with private sector loans and equity
- Revolving Structure: Loan repayments can be recycled into new projects, allowing the Fund to function as a long-term industrial growth tool rather than a one-time grant program

Loan Product Features

The core MAST product is a below-market enhancement loan that sits alongside a primary bank loan to improve overall project economics.

- Interest Rate: Target pricing at Prime minus 200 basis points (For example, if Prime is 7.5%, the MAST tranche would be 5.5%.)
- Term: 10–15 years, aligned with the useful life of financed equipment or facilities
- Maximum Loan Amount: Up to \$2M per borrower; MAST Funds may take second lien

- Share of Project Cost: Up to 40% of total eligible project costs may be financed at the preferential rate, with the remainder funded by commercial lenders at market terms
- Flexible: Loan structure can vary to match project needs and risk profile

By blending MAST capital with conventional bank financing, the Fund helps projects clear collateral, cash-flow, and risk hurdles that can block SME expansions and relocations.

Grants and Complementary Support

While loans are the primary tool, the program may provide limited grants or forgivable loans (not exceed \$2M) for project costs such as:

- Site preparation, engineering, and pre-development costs;
- Workforce training tied directly to MAST-financed expansions; or
- Relocation assistance for companies moving maritime manufacturing operations into eligible Tobacco Region localities.

4. Eligible Borrowers, Uses, and Geography

Eligible Borrowers

- Small and medium-sized manufacturers and suppliers in the maritime, shipbuilding, and defense industrial base supply chains
- Fabricators, machine shops, component and systems manufacturers, coating and welding firms, specialty materials providers, and advanced manufacturers that supply naval or commercial shipbuilding and ship repair
- Both existing Virginia firms and new-to-Virginia companies committing to establish operations in the region.

Eligible Uses of Proceeds

- Acquisition and installation of manufacturing machinery and equipment
- Construction, expansion, or modernization of production facilities
- Automation, digitalization, and process improvements that increase throughput or resilience
- Working capital directly tied to expansion projects, long-lead shipbuilding orders, or large new contracts

Geographic Focus

Projects must be located in, or commit to relocate into, the Tobacco Region. This ensures that MAST strengthens the maritime industrial base while advancing the Commission's mission of revitalizing tobacco-impacted communities.

5. Governance and Performance Metrics

TRRC will administer the MAST Fund, including underwriting (which could be done in conjunction with VSBFA), compliance, and portfolio management.

Key Performance Metrics

To demonstrate impact and support ongoing refinement, the Commission will track and report metrics such as:

- Capital Deployed: Annual and cumulative loan volume, total project costs, and private capital leveraged;
- Jobs Created and Retained: Number, wage levels, and distribution across eligible localities;
- Supply Chain Impact: Number and type of Tier 2 and Tier 3 firms strengthened or attracted, and reduction in key bottlenecks;
- Regional Revitalization: Investment and job growth in distressed and rural communities within the Tobacco Region.

Over time, the MAST Fund is expected to deepen and diversify Virginia’s shipbuilding and maritime supply chains, create high-quality manufacturing jobs in Southern and Southwest Virginia, and reinforce the Commonwealth’s reputation as a premier national security and maritime hub.

Appendix A: Illustrative MAST Fund Financing Examples

The following charts show simplified examples of how MAST Fund loans can blend with private financing to make maritime supply chain projects feasible. Values are illustrative and can be adjusted to reflect specific projects.

Example 1: Equipment Expansion for Tier 2 Fabricator

A Tier 2 fabricator in Southwest Virginia seeks to expand production capacity to fulfill a new multi-year contract with a major shipyard. The total project cost is \$5 million for new machinery, building improvements, and working capital.

Sources of Funds	Amount
MAST Fund Loan (40% of project cost)	\$2,000,000
Senior Bank Loan (50% of project cost)	\$2,500,000
Company Equity (10% of project cost)	\$500,000
Total Sources	\$5,000,000

In this example, the MAST Fund provides a long-term, below-market tranche that reduces overall debt service, allowing the company to meet bank underwriting standards while retaining sufficient working capital.

3. TRRC Drone Fund

Program Purpose and Rationale

The Unmanned Aerial Systems, or Drone, industry is expanding quickly, driven by applications in energy, agriculture, infrastructure inspection, emergency response, and defense. Establishing a program to support this industry positions the region to capture a share of this high-growth market. The Tobacco Region already has companies operating in this industry and communities positioning themselves to capture the growth. The creation of this fund will close capital gaps for these companies, thus accelerating commercialization, strengthening regional clusters, and positioning the region as a leader in this important technology.

If the Commission recommends the adoption of this program, staff believes the most efficient way to implement it would be using the same approach recommended for the MAST Program.

Program Structure

Support UAS/Drone companies through competitive loans and incentive grants, in partnership with our economic development allies. This will include the following.

Lending through VSBFA MOU

- Update TRRC's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA) to add UAS/Drone businesses as eligible recipients.
- Increase the lending cap under the MOU from \$10M to \$20M to accommodate anticipated demand.
- Use established VSBFA underwriting and TRRC vetting processes to evaluate projects, maintain portfolio quality, and ensure performance.

Grants via TROF or Custom Incentives

- For projects requiring discretionary incentives, TRRC may consider awards through the Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund (TROF) or custom grants.
- Grants should be performance-based and include milestones, clawbacks, and reporting that are consistent with Commission practices.

Eligible Applicants

- UAS manufacturers, integrators, and platform developers
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers (propulsion, batteries, sensors, communications, navigation, composites, manufacturing tooling)
- Ground support and infrastructure providers

Draft Staff Recommendation: Direct Commission staff to create the TRRC Drone Fund and implement by: 1) updating the TRRC–VSBFA MOU to include UAS businesses as eligible; 2) increasing the lending cap to \$20M; and 3) coordinating with economic development allies to market the program across the Tobacco Region.

RURAL ACCELERATOR COMMITTEE

(See Appendix at back of book.)



• In-Person Meeting •

AGENDA

RURAL ACCELERATOR COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
11:45 A.M.**

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Welcome and Call to Order

The Honorable William A. Pace

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Public Comment

**Rural Accelerator & Energy Supply
Chain Advanced Manufacturing
Program Overview**

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Projects for Review

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Other Business

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Adjournment

(See Appendix at back of book.)

ENERGY INGENUITY COMMITTEE



▪ In-Person Meeting ▪

AGENDA

ENERGY INGENUITY COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
12:15 P.M.**

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Welcome and Call to Order	<i>The Honorable Thomas A. Garrett, Jr., Chair</i>
Call of the Roll	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
Approval of <u>9/23/25</u> Minutes <i>(published on website)</i>	<i>The Honorable Thomas A. Garrett, Jr., Chair</i>
Public Comment	
Introduction	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
Grant Projects	<i>Mr. Jerry Silva, Director of Regional Energy Development and Innovation</i>
Extensions & Modifications	<i>Mr. Jerry Silva, Director of Regional Energy Development and Innovation</i>
Altavista Project Discussion	<i>Mr. Jerry Silva, Director of Regional Energy Development and Innovation</i>
Other Business	<i>Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director</i>
Adjournment	

**FY26 Energy Ingenuity Program
Staff Summaries and Recommendations
January 12, 2026**

The Commission received 10 pre-applications for the November 17, 2025, pre-application deadline of the FY26 Energy Ingenuity Program. Ten applicants were invited to submit full proposals, and nine (9) proposals were ultimately received by the December 8, 2025, deadline. The Energy Committee will act on these applications at its meeting scheduled for January 12, 2026, at 12:15pm. The applications are grouped by investment category.

Req #	Organization	Project Title	Requested Amount	Recommended Amount
Energy Catalyst – Planning Grants				
4451	A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance	E-3 Assessment for Industrial Training Assessment Center (ITAC) Implementation Grant Qualification Program – Southwest Region	\$65,000	\$50,000
4452	A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance	Southern and Southwest Virginia Grid Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study	\$46,500	\$36,250
4453	A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance	Energy Supply Chain Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study for Southside and Southwest Virginia	\$45,000	Included with #4452
4440	Town of Bedford	Snowden Hydro Project Repowering Old Plant	\$100,000	\$50,000
4438	Buckingham County	Gridiron	\$50,000	\$50,000
4449	Virginia Department of Forestry	Woody Biomass Energy Opportunity Analysis in Southside Virginia Tobacco Region	\$50,000	\$50,000
4448	Virginia Department of Forestry	Woody Biomass Energy Opportunity Analysis in Southwest Virginia Tobacco Region	\$50,000	\$50,000
4446	Virginia Tech (VT) - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University-Office of Sponsored Programs	Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Opportunities in Southern Virginia	\$50,000	No Award

4447	Virginia Tech (VT) - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University-Office of Sponsored Programs	Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Resilience Opportunities in SWVA	\$50,000	No Award
TOTAL NEW (9)			\$506,500	\$286,250

Financial Viability Assessment: The following staff report represents the Financial Viability Assessment completed for all applications considered for funding. Proposals along with the related and required attachments are studied by the grant review team. This information and all correspondence, research and additional information received are incorporated as part of the viability assessment. A recommendation to approve funding for an application by Commission staff represents a determination that the project appears to be financially viable with consideration of all agreed upon terms and conditions of the award

Energy Catalyst – Planning Grants

**A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance
E-3 Assessment for Industrial Training Assessment Center (ITAC) Implementation
Grant Qualification Program – Southwest Region (#4451)
\$65,000.00 Requested**

Project Summary: GENEDGE requests the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission to fund the following effort in support of manufacturers across the Southwest Region of the TRRC footprint to help them qualify to apply for the ITAC Implementation Grant Program:

1. GENEDGE will support three qualified ITAC-equivalent E-3 company assessments to interested manufacturers across the TRRC Southwest service region over the grant period. These assessments will include an initial review, a tour and facility walkthrough with GENEDGE assessment resources to determine equipment needs, systems reviews, and level of effort necessary in completing a qualified ITAC-equivalent E-3 assessment.
2. GENEDGE will provide support for assessment participants as they navigate the DOE Industrial Training Assessment Center Implementation Grant Program application process as requested by the participating company. GENEDGE will also assist companies in identifying other grant programs from public and investor-owned utilities for which the companies may qualify.
3. GENEDGE will provide a market study to develop a list of high energy users in the manufacturing sector across the Southwest TRRC region. This list can be utilized to inform the TRRC Energy Program of specific target opportunities related to the manufacturing community. It is important to note that utility customer and usage information is the exclusive property of the respective utilities. While GENEDGE will make all reasonable efforts to collaborate with utilities to request and obtain relevant data, GENEDGE cannot guarantee that such data will be made available. Accordingly, GENEDGE shall not be held responsible or penalized for any limitations in the completeness, accuracy, or scope of the study resulting from data that utilities choose not to share.

The proposed TRRC project will provide insight on how the energy resilience of Southwest Virginia manufacturing companies can be improved. This outcome will be created by helping companies receive a

qualified ITAC-equivalent E-3 assessment to help minimize their energy consumption, improve their environmental stance, and strengthen company resiliency.

Matching Funds:

- \$47,500 – Cash match from participating companies
- \$17,500 – Genedge (in-kind contribution of staff hours)

Project Outputs:

- An ITAC E-3 assessment to be performed for three selected manufacturers.
- Technical assistance to three manufacturers to access federal funding to implement identified improvements
- Market study to identify additional high energy users in the Southwest region for future expansion of the program

Staff Comments: This request replicates grant #4317 (\$49,250), approved in January 2025, which supported the implementation of the project in the Southern region. Under the scope of that grant, GENEDGE proposed to conduct Industrial Training and Assessment Center (ITAC)-equivalent assessments for three manufacturers. These assessments, otherwise known as E-3 assessments, include facility walkthroughs, equipment, evaluations, and identification of energy-saving opportunities. This information is necessary prior to application to US Department of Energy's ITAC Implementation Grant Program. In addition, a market study will be conducted to identify high energy users in the manufacturing sector across the Southwest TRRC region. The findings will inform potential expansion of the pilot and future TRRC Energy Ingenuity Program proposals.

The current application aligns very closely with the scope proposed under grant #4317; however, the request amount has increased substantially. The application requests a total of \$65,000 to support assessments at three Southwest region manufacturers, DOE ITAC Implementation Program. The budget allocates \$43,500 from TRRC for assessments with \$21,750 to be contributed from the participating companies. The basis for this breakdown was not provided. An additional line item reflecting a \$23,750 contribution from GENEDGE for assessments is also listed in the budget. This amount was not included in the application's budget; however, it is likely that, under TRRC's funding policies, this contribution would be considered in-kind and would exceed the 25% limit on in-kind match. Under a separate line item \$4,000, matched with \$2,000 from participating programs, is requested to support ITAC application development. The budget also allocates \$17,500 of Commission funds, matched by \$17,500 representing GENEDGE staff effort, for the market study. A cost basis for the budgeted amounts was not provided. Under grant #4317 the total project cost for the Southern region market study was only \$3,500. The current application did not explain why the cost to conduct a similar study in the Southwest region is estimated to cost \$35,000.

The Energy Ingenuity Fund Program RFP limits support for planning grants to 50% of third-party professional services. This policy applies to planning activities funded in other Commission programs as well. Because GENEDGE is both the applicant and the intended project consultant, the budget must be adjusted to reflect an appropriate distribution and use for Commission and matching funds. The RFP also limits support for planning projects to \$50,000. To meet the conditions of the RFP, the staff recommendation must reflect only eligible project costs as well as appropriate matching funds. The use of Commission funds will be limited to no more than 50% of each company's fee to support assessments and application assistance. The remaining 50% must be paid by the company or through other cash sources; in-kind support reflecting GENEDGE staff time is not eligible to meet the match requirement. Support for the market study will be limited to 50% of third-party costs. Once again, in-kind support from GENEDGE

is not eligible to meet the match requirement. The staff recommendation will also require the approval of a revised budget reflecting the updated project scope, which must be approved by the Commission's Executive Director prior to disbursement of funds.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the approval of a \$50,000 grant award to support 50% of each manufacturer's contracted cost for assessments and application assistance. The award is contingent upon the Executive Director's approval of a revised budget reflecting the appropriate source, use, and distribution of Commission and matching funds. Pre-approval of professional services, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP, is also required.

A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance
Southern and Southwest Virginia Grid Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study
(#4452)
\$46,500.00 Requested

Project Summary: GENEDGE requests the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission to fund the following effort in support of the manufacturing industry across the TRRC footprint. The project will assess the capacity of the current electrical grid and its ability to support both existing and future industrial growth.

This project proposes a Grid Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study to assess the capacity of the current electrical grid in Southern and Southwest Virginia to support both existing and future industrial growth. The study will analyze high-energy-consuming manufacturers, model their future energy demand under "business-as-usual" and "expansion" scenarios, and evaluate grid capacity constraints that could impact competitiveness or trigger potential business exits from the region.

The outcome will help guide regional stakeholders, utilities, and policymakers in developing a proactive grid expansion and resilience strategy that aligns with economic development goals, supports business retention, and attracts new investment.

Matching Funds:

- \$10,000 – GENEDGE (in-kind staff time associated with the development of the study)
- \$36,500 – GENEDGE (third party contractor expenses)

Project Outputs: The project will result in the completion of a Comprehensive Grid Resiliency Report for the Southern and Southwest Virginia regions, a GIS Mapping Visualization showing grid risk zones and manufacturer locations, a Scenario Analysis Dashboard (Excel or Power BI format), and an executive summary for TRRC and local economic development partners.

Staff Comments: Under the scope of work proposed in this application, GENEDGE will evaluate grid resiliency throughout the Commission's entire service region. The study will align manufacturer energy demand data with available grid capacity and infrastructure reliability. The information will help manufacturers, in particular those looking at potential expansion projects, understand opportunities and constraints related to existing grid capacity. This application meets the Energy Ingenuity Fund's objectives associated with developing additional energy resilience in the region and with encouraging collaboration between partners in energy and economic development.

Despite this proposal's strong alignment with the goals of the Energy Program, the uses of Commission and matching funds described in the budget do not meet the funding requirements for planning projects.

The RFP limits support for planning projects to up to 50% of third-party professional services. The budget requests Commission support (\$46,500) under the Personal Services line item. This appears to support payment of GENEDGE staff time associated with developing the study. GENEDGE will provide \$10,000 under the same line item. As the applicant, GENEDGE does not meet the definition of “third-party professional services” and is not eligible for reimbursement from a TRRC planning grant. Only the expenses described under the Contractual Services line item are eligible for Commission support. Although the entire \$36,000 is currently shown under the match side of the budget, 50% of this amount is eligible for Commission support. This recommendation is conditioned upon the submission of a detailed outline/plan describing how the applicant will identify and develop a roadmap of grid capacity and risks. This plan, which is necessary to address concerns that utilities and co-ops are often hesitant to share regarding information related to transmission capacity or distribution systems, must be approved by the Commission’s Regional Energy Director.

Staff also recommends that the scope of eligible activities proposed under application #4453 be combined with application #4452 which will study energy supply chain resiliency and industrial competitiveness in the Tobacco Region. Combining the two studies under a single grant will allow for project efficiencies and possible cost savings, given that both applications target the same base of manufacturers. Due to this overlap it is likely that data collection for both projects can be achieved through meetings and/or data requests related to both projects. The recommendation reflects a total award of \$36,250 to support 50% of third-party expenses related to application #4452 (\$18,250) and #4453 (\$18,000).

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the approval of a \$36,250 grant award to support 50% of third-party professional services required to develop a Grid Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study. This award is contingent upon the Regional Director’s pre-approval of all third-party professional services to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP.

A. L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership d/b/a GENEDGE Alliance
Energy Supply Chain Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness Study for Southside and Southwest Virginia (#4453)
\$45,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: The Southside and Southwest Virginia Energy Supply Chain Resilience Study will assess the accessibility, distribution, and competitiveness of energy-related equipment and component suppliers serving manufacturers across Southern and Southwest Virginia.

By understanding where gaps exist, TRRC and regional stakeholders can target future investment, supplier attraction, or development incentives to close supply chain gaps, reduce costs, and keep at-risk manufacturers competitive and anchored in the region. Through investments made as a result of this project, regional assets will increase from the capital investments made by participating manufacturing companies, which will drive local revenue and the region’s economic base. Companies will become more efficient and gain the potential for expansion due to the resulting cost reductions, and by creating these efficiencies, additional capacities will be created through cost savings and associated business growth.

Matching Funds: The applicant will provide matching funds totaling \$45,000.

- \$9,000 – GENEDGE (in-kind staff time associated with the development of the study)
- \$36,000 – GENEDGE (third-party contractor expenses)

Project Outputs: Project deliverables will include a final Energy Supply Chain Resilience Report, GIS Mapping of Suppliers and Manufacturers (visual representation of supply proximity), Competitiveness Impact Summary, Regional Investment and Partnership Recommendations, and an Executive Briefing Presentation for TRRC Leadership.

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested to support the development of Energy Supply Chain Resilience and Industrial Competitiveness Study for Southside and Southwest Virginia. This study will evaluate where critical energy-efficiency and energy-saving equipment—such as motors, drives, controls, compressors, and related infrastructure components—are sourced, distributed, and serviced. A comprehensive feasibility level report and supply chain map will be produced identifying critical gaps, vulnerabilities, and opportunities to strengthen the region’s energy equipment supply network.

Similar to application #4452, the budget submitted with this request allocates a majority of Commission funds (\$45,000) to support GENEDGE staff effort to develop the study. Because this expense does not reflect the use of funds for third-party professional services, it is not an allowable use of grant funds. The budget allocates \$36,000 from matching funds to support third-party contractor services. Half of this amount (\$18,000) is eligible for reimbursement under an Energy Program planning grant.

A funding recommendation for this request was provided with #4452. The application notes that this study can begin as soon as the Grid Resiliency and Industrial Competitiveness study is complete. This applicant’s alignment of the two studies is additional documentation that the request should be combined under a single award.

Staff Recommendation: Funding for eligible project costs has been included in the recommendation for application #4452.

Town of Bedford

Snowden Hydro Project Repowering Old Plant (#4440)

\$100,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Bedford's municipal electric utility operates a hydro-electric plant in Big Island, Virginia situated on the James River. This facility provides approximately 10% of the energy delivered to customers in the Town of Bedford and Bedford County. The request is for partial funding of a detailed engineering study to increase the capacity of the Snowden plant from 5,000 kW to 6,000 kW, thus reducing the amount of energy currently sourced from market purchases, which are generated from fossil fuels. A preliminary study indicates the facility has the capability to add one or more hydro turbines that can operate under the low water flow conditions that are normally experienced in the critical peak months of July, August, and September. In addition, co-locating battery storage will allow the storage of low-cost hydro power to be discharged during high-grid cost periods. Solar power can also be located at the site to further enhance its generation capability. This clean energy will replace fossil fuel generation currently purchased on the PJM energy market.

Matching Funds:

- \$100,000 – Town of Bedford

Project Outputs:

- Engineering and economic feasibility study for repowering the low flow turbine (the “old” plant) at Snowden Hydro Electric Plant

Staff Comments: This request is the next step in the planning for increasing energy production at an existing hydro power plant in the Town of Bedford. The feasibility study will show if additional capacity can be added to the existing system to accommodate more energy generation. The study will also outline the estimated costs associated with project implementation, including the purchase of battery storage to allow Bedford to store low-cost hydro power that can be discharged during periods when grid costs are high. Additional financial information, illustrating the project's anticipated ROI, will also be provided.

The initial conceptual analysis is already completed. The Town believes the project can be competitive in the PJM energy market, providing a hedge against future energy price increases, especially during peak demands. The PJM is a regional transmission organization (RTO) that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity in all or parts of Washington, DC, and Virginia. The scope of the study will include not only the retrofit of the older turbine, but also: evaluation for building a new machine shop outside of the floodplain; studying canal and infrastructure integrity and the need for dredging; addition of more efficient trash racks; and other ways to improve efficiency and production. Preliminary estimates suggest the site could produce an additional 200,000 kWh or more annually (equivalent to \$110K in current purchased energy costs). Staff notes that the request for \$100,000 exceeds the \$50,000 limit for Energy planning grants and therefore is recommended at a reduced amount. Recognizing that hydro plants can have a 100-year or more useful life, completing the next step of planning and evaluation makes sense. No cost estimate was provided to document the basis for the funding request and as such the funding recommendation is contingent on staff approval of the final budget.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a \$50,000 grant for up to 50% of third-party costs, contingent on the final budget being approved by the Commission's Executive Director. Pre-approval of all third-party professional services, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP, will also be required.

Buckingham County

Gridiron (#4438)

\$50,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Buckingham County seeks support from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission to complete a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) Feasibility and Site Readiness Study. The project will identify and evaluate potential SMR sites to determine technical, environmental, and regulatory suitability for future energy development. Funds will support professional assessments and will produce a feasibility report and roadmap that position the County and the region to attract investment in advanced nuclear energy. The initiative aligns with the Commission's goals to diversify the regional economy, strengthen the energy supply chain, and create lasting economic opportunity in Southern Virginia.

Matching Funds:

- \$50,000 – Buckingham County

Project Outputs:

- Feasibility study with identification of suitable SMR sites, detailed technical and regulatory assessment, providing a roadmap for future project implementation

Staff Comments: The initiative aligns with the Commission's goals to diversify the regional economy, strengthen the site inventory opportunities for large energy users, and create lasting economic opportunity

in Southern Virginia, especially for energy generation. Buckingham County has taken a leadership role in pursuing a site readiness study for Small Modular Reactor technology.

This study to provide a comprehensive technical evaluation of potential SMR sites is the top priority of the County in terms of strategic energy initiatives. It will provide the initial foundational data and partnerships required to attract a private capital investment commitment and federal support for advancing long-term nuclear energy production in Buckingham County. Virginia Department of Energy has been involved in development of this project. Funding is requested for 50% of the third-party professional service contracts for nuclear engineering assessments, environmental studies, and legal and title research costs that will be needed to determine site viability. While no cost estimates were provided, the budget appears reasonable. A contingency requiring the TRRC Regional Energy Director's approval of the Site Readiness Plan/checklist has been added to the funding recommendation. This condition will ensure that the study uses information sources that are appropriate for SMR technology.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of a \$50,000 grant for up to 50% of third-party professional service contracts. This funding is contingent upon the Regional Energy Director's approval of the Site Readiness Plan/checklist to ensure SMR appropriate information and industry sources are used. Pre-approval of all third-party professional services, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP, will also be required.

Virginia Department of Forestry

Woody Biomass Energy Opportunity Analysis in Southwest Virginia Tobacco Region (#4448)

\$50,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Virginia's Wood Energy Opportunity Project in the Southwest Tobacco Commission region aims to utilize the state's 16 million acres of forest resources to expand renewable energy through the utilization of abundant woody biomass resources in the area. Timber harvesting supports over 1,500 manufacturers and funds forest management, yet residual wood materials often lack viable markets. The Virginia Clean Economy Act recognizes biomass as a renewable energy source, and with five biomass power plants already in operation, the state seeks to reduce its energy deficit by exploring new opportunities. Led by the Virginia Department of Forestry, the project will educate stakeholders, conduct at least seven detailed feasibility studies for high-energy using facilities (schools, hospitals, industrial plants, correctional facilities, etc.), and develop a guide to support decision making. Expected outcomes include identifying biomass availability, costs, incentives, and financial viability; leveraging federal funding; and installing at least two new wood energy systems to strengthen Virginia's energy independence and economic sustainability.

Matching Funds:

- \$13,000 – Virginia Department of Forestry staff time to manage project (in-kind)
- \$37,000 – AFID Planning grant (VDACS) (application to be submitted)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of feasibility studies at seven high energy using facilities. Expected outcomes include identifying biomass availability costs, incentives, and financial viability; leveraging federal funding; and installing at least two new wood energy systems.

Staff Comments: *Along with this funding request, a companion application (#4449) was also submitted to this funding round. That application focuses on the Southern region. These Staff Comments reference both applications.*

The Virginia Department of Forestry will partner with Wilson Engineering Services to produce feasibility studies exploring the installation of smaller, efficient, wood energy systems in the Tobacco Region. High energy demand facilities such as greenhouses, hospitals, industrial operations, and schools will be the focus of these studies. At least fourteen facilities (seven under #4448 and 7 under #4449) that are interested in installing wood energy systems will receive detailed engineering analyses. The project will allow VDOF to take advantage of biomass resources for use as a renewable energy source. Expected outcomes for VDOF include information about biomass availability, costs of energy, financial viability, and leveraging of resources. The initiative aligns with the Commission's goals to diversify the regional economy, strengthen the energy generation opportunities, and create lasting economic opportunity in Southwest Virginia especially for energy generation.

Commission funds (\$50,000 under each grant) will support engineering contractual services related to the feasibility studies. Under the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP, planning grants are eligible for 50% of third-party professional services. The budgets for each application indicate that matching funds, \$36,000 for each region, will be requested from the AFID Planning Grant program. The exact use of this funding was not described; however, because the AFID Planning Grant program requires participation and matching funds from the localities receiving the award, it is reasonable to expect participating localities will have identified a prospective project to benefit from the feasibility study. This active local partnership will help ensure project success. The in-kind match provided from VDOF for staff time to manage the project is not eligible under the scope of the planning grant. To align with the funding conditions described in the Energy RFP, Commission funds can only be used to support 50% of the contracted cost (Wilson Engineering Services) for each feasibility study. Matching funds, from the intended AFID application or other sources, such as contributions from the selected facilities, must be used to fund the remaining 50% of engineering costs.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of a \$50,000 grant award to support 50% of contracted, third-party professional services to conduct feasibility studies at each of the selected facilities. This award is contingent upon the Regional Director's pre-approval of professional services to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP.

Virginia Department of Forestry

Woody Biomass Energy Opportunity Analysis in Southside Virginia Tobacco Region (#4449)

\$50,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Virginia's Wood Energy Opportunity Project in the Southside Tobacco Commission region aims to utilize the state's 16 million acres of forest resources to expand renewable energy through the utilization of abundant woody biomass resources in the area. Timber harvesting supports over 1,500 manufacturers and funds forest management, yet residual wood materials often lack viable markets. The Virginia Clean Economy Act recognizes biomass as a renewable energy source, and with five biomass power plants already in operation, the state seeks to reduce its energy deficit by exploring new opportunities. Led by the Virginia Department of Forestry, the project will educate stakeholders, conduct at least seven detailed feasibility studies for high-energy using facilities (schools, hospitals, industrial plants, correctional facilities, etc.), and develop a guide to support decision making. Expected outcomes

include identifying biomass availability, costs, incentives, and financial viability; leveraging federal funding; and installing at least two new wood energy systems to strengthen Virginia's energy independence and economic sustainability.

Matching Funds:

- \$13,000 – Virginia Department of Forestry staff time to manage project (in-kind)
- \$37,000 – AFID Planning grant (VDACS) (application to be submitted)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of feasibility studies at seven high energy using facilities. Expected outcomes include identifying biomass availability costs, incentives, and financial viability; leveraging federal funding; and installing at least two new wood energy systems.

Staff Comments: *The basis for the funding recommendation for this proposal is discussed in the Staff Comments section for application #4448.*

Because the Energy Program RFP limits support for planning grants to up to 50% of third-party professional services, Commission funds can only be used to support 50% of the contracted cost (Wilson Engineering Services) for each feasibility study. Matching funds, from the intended AFID application or other sources, such as contributions from the selected facilities, must be used to fund the remaining 50% of engineering costs.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of a \$50,000 grant award to support 50% of contracted, third-party professional services to conduct feasibility studies at each of the selected facilities. This award is contingent upon the Regional Director's pre-approval of professional services to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP.

Virginia Tech (VT) - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University-Office of Sponsored Programs

Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Opportunities in Southern Virginia (#4446)

\$50,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: The Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Opportunities in Southern Virginia project, led by Virginia Tech Transportation Institute's Dock to Door Coalition (D2D) with key partners, aims to develop a strategic plan for alternative fueling and charging infrastructure along Route 58. This corridor is vital for freight movement from the Port of Virginia, yet the Tobacco Region lacks facilities for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles despite rapid growth in electric, CNG, and other alternative fuel truck adoption. The project will convene stakeholders, assess energy assets, and produce a roadmap for investments in electricity, CNG, biodiesel, and hydrogen infrastructure. TRRC funding will be used for staff time and subject matter expertise. The initiative will strengthen regional energy resilience, support economic diversification, and position Southern Virginia as a hub for sustainable freight movement.

Matching Funds:

- \$25,000 – Virginia Tech Transportation Institute – (in-kind) This amount represents a portion of staff salary/effort for project. Under TRRC's definition, this match is classified as in-kind.
- \$20,000 – Dominion (in-kind)
- \$10,000 – Virginia Clean Cities (in-kind)

Project Outputs:

- A strategic plan will be produced to identify energy infrastructure assets required for expanding alternative fuel energy infrastructure (electrical charging, compressed natural gas, biodiesel, and hydrogen).

Staff Comments: *Along with this funding request, a companion application (#4447) was also submitted to this funding round. That application focuses on the Southwest region (I-81 corridor). These Staff Comments reference both applications.*

The proposed strategic plan will explore alternative fueling and charging infrastructure along Route 58. The project is focused on use by medium- and heavy-duty sized vehicle usage, likely hauling freight from the Port of Virginia. The Southside Planning District Commission localities of Halifax, Mecklenburg, and Brunswick will be prioritized. The use of alternative fuel for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles is increasing each year. The application states that the annual compound growth rate of electric vehicles of this size is over 18%; the rate is 6% for compressed natural gas (CNG) users. There are currently no alternative fuel stations capable of serving medium- and heavy-duty sized customers within the TRRC footprint. Although a fully developed plan examining infrastructure requirements within the footprint will provide good information, some data may already be available.

While the scope of the proposed projects generally aligns with the goals of the Energy Ingenuity Fund, the proposed use of Commission funding does not meet the requirements of the program. The program RFP states that support for planning grants is limited to up to 50% of third-party professional services. Each application requests \$29,242 to support salary and fringe representing a portion of the Research Associate Team Leader and Research Associate's effort for the projects. The staff members are the same for both applications. According to information provided in the application budgets, the Commission has been asked to pay \$27,978 (\$13,989 from each grant) of the Research Associate's \$82,260 annual salary (34%). This does not align with the 11% effort for each project (22% total) shown in the budget. For the Research Associate and Team Leader, who the application shows will contribute 4% to application #4446 and 5% to application #4447, the Commission has been asked to reimburse \$15,286 (\$7,643 per grant) of a \$99,028 annual salary (15%). These calculations do not include fringe benefits which were requested under a separate line item. Each application/budget also includes \$25,000 of match for staff salaries and fringe. Although the applications categorize these funds a cash match, under TRRC's definition (provided in the Funding Policies document), this contribution would be classified as "in-kind". More importantly, applicant staff time is not an eligible use of Commission or matching funds due to the RFPs limit of supporting only third-party professional services for planning grants.

Funding for Virginia Clean Cities was also included in each application (\$10,000 from #4446 and \$10,000 from #4447) to support an outreach and community subject matter expert. A letter from VCC states that they will provide \$10,000 of in-kind support for the project. Because VCC is an existing project partner, this expense also cannot be considered "third-party". Dominion Energy will provide utility Service Matter Expert contributions. The application notes that this is in-kind support and that Dominion is not a subcontractor.

Ultimately these applications are not eligible for support under the Energy Ingenuity Fund Program. All matching funds identified in each application's budget are, under TRRC's definition, "in-kind". Commission policy limits in-kind support to no more than 25% of total match. Additionally, the proposed use of funds, which is almost entirely budgeted to support applicant staff and existing project partners rather than third-party expenses, cannot be allowed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends no award.

Virginia Tech (VT) - Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University-Office of Sponsored Programs
Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Resilience Opportunities in SWVA (#4447)
\$50,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: The Transportation Energy Innovation and Community Opportunities in SWVA project, led by Virginia Tech Transportation Institute's Dock to Door Coalition (D2D) with key partners, aims to develop a strategic plan for alternative fueling and charging infrastructure along I-81. This corridor is vital for freight movement along the eastern seaboard, yet the Tobacco Region lacks facilities for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles despite rapid growth in electric, CNG, and other alternative fuel truck adoption. The project will convene stakeholders, assess energy assets, and produce a roadmap for investments in electricity, CNG, biodiesel, and hydrogen infrastructure. TRRC funding will be used for staff time and subject matter expertise. The initiative will strengthen regional energy resilience, support economic diversification, and position SWVA as a hub for sustainable freight movement.

Matching Funds:

- \$25,000 - Virginia Tech Transportation Institute – (in-kind)
This amount represents a portion of staff salary/effort for project. Under TRRC's definition, this match is classified as in-kind.
- \$20,000 - Dominion (in-kind)
- \$10,000 - Virginia Clean Cities (in-kind)

Project Outputs:

- A strategic plan will be produced to identify energy infrastructure assets required for expanding alternative fuel energy infrastructure (electrical charging, compressed natural gas, biodiesel, and hydrogen).

Staff Comments: *The basis for the funding recommendation for this proposal is discussed in the Staff Comments section for application #4446.*

The scope of this planning grant will focus on the Southwest region localities of Smyth, Wythe, and Washington, along the I-81 corridor. There are currently no alternative fuel stations capable of serving medium- and heavy-duty customers within the TRRC footprint

Due to the large amount of in-kind match, the application has not met the Commission's 1:1 match requirement which limits in-kind support to no more than 24% of total match. Additionally, the proposed use of funds, allocated primarily for applicant staff time and support from existing project partners, does not meet the requirements of the Energy Ingenuity Fund RFP, which limits support for planning grants to up to 50% of third-party professional services.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends no award.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE



• In-Person Meeting •

AGENDA
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060

Monday, January 12, 2026
1:15 P.M.

If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter **access code: 210 330 008#**.

The Committee will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, please contact: **Warren Bryson** at **(804) 894-9659**, **wbryson@revitalizeva.org** or **Roz Stein** at **(804) 894-9651**.

Welcome and Call to Order

Ms. Amanda Cox, Chair

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Approval of 9/23/2025 Minutes
(published on website)

Ms. Amanda Cox, Chair

Public Comment

Introduction

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

**Update: Large Animal Veterinary
Incentive Program**

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

**Workforce Financial Aid Policy
Discussion**

Ms. Sarah Capps, Southern Regional Director
Ms. Emily Van Pelt, Southern Regional Grants Specialist

Other Business

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Adjournment

TRRC Education Committee – Workforce Financial Aid Discussion

January 12, 2026

Background – G3 Funding and Impact on WFA

- In FY22 Virginia introduced the G3 funding program for the 2021-2022 school year. G3 provides state funding for tuition and support services. There are hundreds of G3 eligible programs with the majority being in STEM-H fields. Students must be full-time and must meet family income limits.
- January 6, 2022 - Commission staff provided an assessment on the impact of G3 funding on the 2021-2022 Tobacco Commission scholarship grants. Approximately 70% of Workforce Credential programs were covered by the new G3 program; and 75% of for-credit STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing programs previously approved for TRRC funding support were now covered by G3.
- The purpose of that discussion was to initiate reducing the Commission's long-term commitments to WFA, recognizing that the state funding would be meeting a majority of the funding needs previously covered by the Commission. The May 2022 Education committee materials are provided as reference.
- Policies were adopted by the Education committee and by the Commission based on trends and future reductions in total available funding from the Commission. Limitations were placed on dual enrollment program support; and income thresholds were established to target funding to students with the highest need limiting scholarships based on up to 500% of poverty level.

Education Program Budget

- TRRC's FY25 WFA grants for 2025-2026 school year were approved May 21, 2025, with a maximum grant funding request for Tier I institutions of \$240,000, and \$100,000 for Tier 2. A total of \$2,110,000 was approved for five categories and testing fees. TRRC Workforce Financial Aid for the 2025-26 Academic Year's Guidelines and Call for Proposals are provided as a reference.
- All FY WFA grants in FY24, FY23, and FY22 allowed for maximum request of \$240,000 for Tier 1, and \$100,000 for Tier 2 eligible education institutions. A total of **\$2.19 million** was awarded each year.
- Reductions to the total amount available and the maximum requests amounts for Tier 1 and Tier 2 institutions were not previously made due to the inability to forecast each college's demand for scholarship funding. Instead, the Education committee elected to establish policies to target the available funding to the most critical needs, recognizing that unused funds would be deobligated.
- The Commission's Strategic Plan adopted in September 2025 (and the previous Strategic Plan) emphasized the need to reduce annual budgets for the Commission based on the declining corpus.
- The Commission's FY26 budget allocated an additional \$2 million in funding to support Workforce Financial Aid grants for 2026-2027 academic year with any balance being available to be allocated to future academic program year grant awards. The purpose of today's policy discussion is to provide staff with guidance on WFA funding limitations for applications to be accepted in early 2026, and awards that will be made in May 2026, for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Review of Data

WFA Deobligations	FY22	FY23	FY24
Southern			
Patrick & Henry	8%	6%	7%
Southside	0%	1%	0%
Danville	66%	74%	69%
Virginia Western	1%	37%	53%
Central Virginia	11%	10%	11%
Brightpoint	59%	43%	16%
Southern Deobligation %	24%	29%	26%
Southwest			
Mountain Empire	66%	26%	30%
New River	73%	81%	74%
Southwest	78%	39%	35%
Virginia Highlands	53%	23%	20%
Wytheville	17%	33%	26%
Southwest Deobligation %	57%	40%	37%
Total Deobligation %	39%	35%	32%
Red indicates Grant is Open, Vouchers in Process, etc			

WFA Disbursements	FY22	FY23	FY24
Southern			
Patrick & Henry	\$ 220,512.60	\$ 224,604.83	\$ 223,354.36
Southside	\$ 240,000.00	\$ 237,718.65	\$ 238,859.61
Danville	\$ 80,507.26	\$ 61,866.83	\$ 73,872.10
Virginia Western	\$ 99,238.28	\$ 63,400.20	\$ 47,341.25
Central Virginia	\$ 209,376.92	\$ 214,853.03	\$ 213,747.37
Brightpoint	\$ 41,260.00	\$ 43,765.60	\$ 71,148.00
Southern Disbursed	\$ 890,895.06	\$ 846,209.14	\$ 868,322.69
Southwest			
Mountain Empire	\$ 80,932.50	\$ 177,666.75	\$ 167,419.32
New River	\$ 20,312.85	\$ 18,545.88	\$ 23,283.90
Southwest	\$ 52,853.21	\$ 145,617.67	\$ 156,909.93
Virginia Highlands	\$ 113,127.50	\$ 184,797.60	\$ 191,883.48
Wytheville	\$ 198,343.47	\$ 161,418.58	\$ 178,328.00
Southwest Disbursed	\$ 465,569.53	\$ 688,046.48	\$ 717,824.63
Total Disbursed	\$ 1,356,464.59	\$ 1,534,255.62	\$ 1,586,147.32
Red indicates Grant is Open, Vouchers in Process, etc			

Population by VCCS Service Area			
Southern			
	Total	Counties	Cities
Patrick & Henry	108,345	3	1
Southside	168,253	9.5	1
Danville	118,127	1.5	1
Virginia Western	68,909	1	0
Central Virginia	154,481	3.0	0
Brightpoint	53,045	3	0
Southern Subtotal	671,160		
Southwest			
Mountain Empire	88,324	3.5	1
New River	15,658	1	0
Southwest	89,632	3.5	0
Virginia Highlands	84,982	1.5	1
Wytheville	100,100	4.5	1
Southwest Subtotal	378,696		
Total Population in Region	1,049,856		
Southern Percentage	64%		
Southwest Percentage	36%		

Enrollment Spring 2025		
Southern		
	FTE Students	Fast Forward Students
Patrick & Henry	1,234	224
Southside	1,721	169
Danville	1,238	95
Virginia Western	2,965	264
Central Virginia	1,904	428
Brightpoint	4,450	752
Southern Subtotal	13,512	1,932
Southwest		
Mountain Empire	1,180	793
New River	2,124	110
Southwest	1,362	147
Virginia Highlands	1,178	634
Wytheville	1,306	141
Southwest Subtotal	7,150	1,825
Total Students	20,662	3,757
https://www.vccs.edu/statistics/		

Analysis for Staff Recommendation

	Community College Service Area Population	Percentage of Population	3-Year Average	Percentage of Average Reimbursement	Recommended Request Maximum	Percentage of Recommended Amount
Southside	168,253	17%	\$ 238,859	16%	\$ 230,000	15%
Central Virginia	154,481	15%	\$ 212,659	14%	\$ 230,000	15%
Danville	118,127	12%	\$ 72,082	5%	\$ 170,000	11%
Patrick & Henry	108,345	11%	\$ 222,824	15%	\$ 170,000	11%
Wytheville	100,100	10%	\$ 179,363	12%	\$ 170,000	11%
Southwest	89,632	9%	\$ 118,460	8%	\$ 130,000	9%
Mountain Empire	88,324	9%	\$ 142,006	10%	\$ 130,000	9%
Virginia Highlands	84,982	8%	\$ 163,270	11%	\$ 130,000	9%
Brightpoint	53,045	5%	\$ 52,058	3%	\$ 50,000	3%
Virginia Western	27,818	3%	\$ 69,993	5%	\$ 50,000	3%
New River	15,658	2%	\$ 20,714	1%	\$ 50,000	3%
Totals	1,008,765	100%	\$1,492,289	100%	\$1,510,000	100%

Policy Recommendation:

1) Staff recommends the Education committee support the following plan for implementing a reduction to Workforce Financial Aid funding for the 2026-2027 academic year.

- Reduce total available to support higher education institutions currently served by the Commission's Workforce Financial Aid program to **\$1,510,000 total**. (Staff notes this amount is in line with total of average amounts actually disbursed during the FY23, FY24 and FY25 school years.)
- Establish the maximum amounts that can be requested per education institution based on the assessment of both the community college service area population and the average amounts that were actually needed over the last two-three school years. These maximum limits include:
 - Tier 1 Community Colleges - \$230,000 maximum request – Southside Virginia, Central Virginia
 - Tier 2 Community Colleges - \$170,000 maximum request – Danville, Patrick & Henry, Wytheville
 - Tier 3 Community Colleges - \$130,000 maximum request – Southwest, Mountain Empire, Virginia Highlands
 - Tier 4 Community Colleges and Higher Education Institutions- \$50,000 maximum request – Brightpoint, Virginia Western, New River; New College Institute, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, and Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center

2) Category #5 – High-demand occupations – Recognizing that the G3 program was new, starting in the 2023-24 academic year the Commission allowed colleges to request scholarship funding for high demand occupations not included in G3 funding. These requests were limited to no more than two program areas and required TRRC's approval for funding. Colleges were required to document employer demand.

Whereas the G3 program initially covered over 60 program areas, since it was initiated, it has now been expanded to includes hundreds of programs across the VCCS service area. Colleges can propose to VCCS for high-demand fields that align with state workforce needs to be added. Many of the critical occupations previously allowed for support under Category #5, are now included in the G3 program.

Staff recommends eliminating category #5 – High-demand occupations from the eligible funding categories starting with the 2026-2027 WFA academic year.

3) Endorse a plan for the Commission to continue to reduce Workforce Financial Aid in FY27 and FY28, and to eliminate having a separate Workforce Financial Aid program as it is currently structured by FY29. This includes discussing if/how WFA may be supported going forward, with a goal to have a plan decided on at the September 2026 meeting, to be enacted beginning in January 2027.

TRRC Education Committee – Workforce Financial Aid

May 12, 2022

Overview – Impact of G3 Funding

Education Program Budget

- TRRC's WFA grants for 2021-2022 school year were approved January 8, 2021, with the maximum/standard grant amount of \$315,000. A total of \$3,009,000 in grants were approved.
- TRRC's FY22 Budget approved by the Full Commission May 27, 2021, allocated **\$2 million** for Workforce Financial Aid. This \$2 million was combined with \$280,576 of carryforward funding to provide for the **\$2.28 million** of available funding for the 2022-2023 WFA grant applications.
- Available funding for the 2022-2023 WFA was not clarified at the January 6, 2022 Education meeting. With \$2.2 million available staff suggested the eight community colleges with a primary service area in the Tobacco Region to limit requests to up to \$240,000 each (a 24% reduction from \$315,000), and for three colleges with smaller areas in region to limit requests to up to \$100,000 each.

G3 Funding and Tobacco Commission Programs

- In FY22 Virginia introduced the G3 funding program with the 2021-2022 school year. G3 provides state funding for tuition and support services for students enrolled in approved programs. There are ~ 50 approved G3 programs, with the majority being in STEM-H fields. Students must be full time and must meet family income limits.
- January 6, 2022 – Commission staff provided the Education Committee with a report on the impact of G3 funding on the 2021-2022 Tobacco Commission scholarship grants.
 - Priority #1, ~**70% of the Workforce Credentials** programs submitted by community colleges for Tobacco Commission funding **are covered by the G3 program**.
 - Priority #2 and #3, ~**75% of for-credit STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing programs are supported by G3**. This amount varies significantly among the individual colleges. Some schools have no programs that are not supported by G3, while others may have as much as 36% of programs that are not eligible. The average percentage of TRRC priority programs not eligible for G3 appears to be approximately 25%.
- VCCS Office of Research and Reporting – G3 funding reports as of March 7, 2022

More than \$4.5 million awarded for credit Financial Aid for 2021-2022 school year to the community colleges serving the Tobacco Region. Amount per college ranges from \$265K to \$1.2 million.

More than \$550K awarded for 2021-2022 school year for Workforce Credential Grant programs to community colleges serving the Tobacco Region. Amount per college ranges from \$4K to \$144K.

POLICY DISCUSSION – Impact on TRRC WFA Applications

The availability of G3 funding has resulted in three trends for Tobacco Commission scholarship applications. The first is an increase in funding requests for dual enrollment programs. The second involves scholarships for G3 Eligible Programs to middle income families and other students needing assistance. Both of these topics are discussed below. The third trend is for Education associates programs under priorities #4 and #5.

Topic 1 - Dual Enrollment (Priority #2 and #3)

Previous WFA grant awards provided scholarship funding to support concurrent Dual Enrollment programs at two community colleges (SsVCC and JTCC). Eligible programs were limited to Advanced Manufacturing (precision machining, industrial maintenance, mechatronics, and welding) and Information Technology. A trend is observed where there is an expansion of the number of colleges requesting support for Dual Enrollment programs, as well as an expansion of the programs requested for support.

The 2022-2023 WFA applications resulted in an increase to four colleges requesting support for dual enrollment programs (CVCC, P&HCC, SsVCC, and JTCC). The requested dual enrollment programs include Advanced Manufacturing at all four colleges and continues the Information Technology offering by ScVCC, and adds this at CVCC. Other programs initially requested for dual enrollment support included Motorsports Technician (P&HCC) and HVAC, Emergency Medical Services, and Automotive (SsVCC).

Staff suggests Dual Enrollment support be limited to traded sector career pathways. This includes the two current eligible program areas for Advanced Manufacturing and Information Technology.

Committee recommendation: Committee recommends the approval of a policy limiting support for Dual Enrollment programs to: 1) concurrent programs at community college sites taught by college faculty and offered in partnership with high schools in the region; 2) eligible programs will be limited to Advanced Manufacturing and Information Technology career programs; and 3) at least 50% match must be provided toward Dual Enrollment tuition and fees.

Topic #2 – Funding for G3 Eligible Programs (Priorities #1, #2 & #3)

For the 2021-2022 Academic Year, a student's family must earn less than 400% of the poverty level for their household size in order to be eligible for G3 funding. The 400% of poverty family income level changes based on the number in the household. A majority of community colleges are requesting some level of support for G3 Eligible Programs. The following audiences are identified as targeted for these scholarships.

- Middle income families – For example, this includes students from families with two working parents that exceed expected family contributions guidelines of 400% and who do not have savings to provide for full cost of college attendance, or who have multiple children enrolled in college.
- Exceeds completed credit hours for eligibility – For example, a student who previously earned a phlebotomy CSC and then completed licensed practical nursing certificate program, who is now a full-time registered nursing student. Due to this individual previously completing more than 150% of the number of credit hours required for her program, she is considered not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress, leaving her ineligible for financial aid including G3 funding.
- Part-time students – Individuals not enrolled full time who do not qualify for G3 funding.
- Drug convictions – Students with prior drug conviction who do not qualify for G3 funding.

This chart provides income limits at 400% of poverty for G3 eligibility and presents 500% poverty levels.

2022-23 Poverty Guidelines		
Family Size	400%	500%
3	\$86,800.00	\$108,600.00
4	\$104,800.00	\$131,000.00
5	\$122,720.00	\$153,400.00
<i>Each additional member add</i>	\$17,920.00	\$22,400.00

Committee recommendation: Committee recommends that the Commission's Workforce Financial Aid funding for G3 Eligible and Non-G3 Eligible, for-credit programs be limited to students with family incomes of up to 500% of Poverty Level for their family size.

Topic #3 – WFA Budget for FY23

The Commission will approve the FY23 budget at its May 2022 meeting. This budget will include the allocation of funding for Workforce Financial Aid grants for the 2023-24 school year.

Committee recommendation: The Committee recommends to Executive Committee the allocation of level funding at \$2.2 million for Workforce Financial Aid in the Commission's FY23 budget.



TRRC Workforce Financial Aid for the 2025-26 Academic Year

Guidelines & Call for Proposals – Due Date March 6, 2025

The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission's (TRRC) Workforce Financial Aid Program (WFA) is open to Community Colleges and Higher Education Centers and New College Institute serving the Tobacco Region. Funding is intended to remove financial barriers for Tobacco Region residents working to obtain nationally recognized workforce and post-secondary credentials required for employment in in-demand careers with Tobacco Region employers.

Due Date: The Commission will accept proposals submitted through TRRC's online application portal through **Thursday, March 6, 2025**, for WFA funding to serve permanent residents of Tobacco Region localities in the **2025-26 academic year**. The current FY25 Commission budget allocates \$2.2 million to support Workforce Financial Aid proposals. The Commission intends to act on proposals submitted by the March 6, 2025, deadline at its meeting in May 2025. For assistance or questions about program objectives and requirements, please contact the TRRC Grants Staff.

Funding Categories & Application Requirements: The Commission's eligible funding categories for the WFA Program are listed below.

Category	Program	Definition	Required for Submission
1	Workforce Credentials*	Short term, non-credit certificates approved by VCCS under Fast Forward Training Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of all short-term, noncredit workforce credential training requested for scholarship support under Category 1
2	Non-G3 Eligible Programs in STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing	For Credit Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees in STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing fields not eligible for G3 program. DO NOT INCLUDE DUAL ENROLLMENT HERE (see Category #4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of all Non-G3 STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing, requested for scholarship support under Category 2 Total amount of scholarship funding requested for Non G3-Eligible Programs that are for non-dual enrollment students.
3	G3 Eligible Programs in STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing	For Credit Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees in STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing fields eligible for G3 program. DO NOT INCLUDE DUAL ENROLLMENT HERE (see Category #4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of all G3-Eligible programs requested for scholarship support under Category 3 Total amount of scholarship funding requested for G3-Eligible Programs for non-dual enrollment students.
4	Dual Enrollment Programs in IT and Advanced Manufacturing	For Credit Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees in IT and Advanced Manufacturing fields targeted to high school students in 9 th -12 th grade who meet the admissions requirements of the college.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of all Information Technology and Advanced Manufacturing programs requested for scholarship support under Category 4 Total amount of scholarship funding requested for programs that are for dual enrollment students.
5	High-demand occupations (to be approved by TRRC)	For Credit Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees. Non STEM-H or Advanced Manufacturing. Limited to two (2) specific areas of study (General Studies degrees not eligible).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of programs under Category 5 Total amount of scholarship funding requested for specified high demand programs. Must include documentation of employer demand.
6	Testing Fees	50% of fees for first time credential certification testing administered by a third party for Students in for-credit programs for STEM-H or Advanced Manufacturing fields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of credential tests to be supported under Category 6 Total amount of scholarship funding requested for defined students. Limited to total of \$24,000 for Tier I/ \$10,000 Tier II

*For Students receiving FastForward Workforce Credential funding, TRRC will support one-sixth of the cost of training program and certification (half of one-third share the student is responsible for), with the remainder to be covered by FFWC and potentially state FANTIC funds or other sources. However, TRRC will allow up to 50% tuition reimbursement for FFWC-eligible training cohorts conducted during periods when FFWC funding is not available due to state funding limitations. When requesting reimbursement, documentation should include the date FFWC funds were exhausted or limited by Virginia Community College System.

Eligible uses of WFA: WFA support shall be used only for tuition and mandatory fees. WFA may also be used to cover 50% of testing fees for industry-related credentials in eligible pre-approved by the TRRC (see Grant Conditions section for more information). WFA funds may not be used for books, transportation and other expenses.

Funding Requests: The current FY24 Commission budget has \$2.2 million available to support Workforce Financial Aid grants in the 2025-2026 school year. *Tier I Requests:* Community Colleges where the majority of the student population is from TRRC localities may apply for up to \$240,000. *Tier II Requests:* Community Colleges without a majority of TRRC localities in service area, and Higher Education Centers in the region may apply for up to \$100,000.

- ***Tier I Community Colleges:*** Central Virginia, Danville, Mountain Empire, Patrick & Henry, Southside Virginia, Southwest Virginia, Virginia Highlands, Wytheville
- ***Tier II Community Colleges and Higher Education Centers:*** Brightpoint, New River, Virginia Western; New College Institute, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center

Grant Conditions:

- **Matching Funds:** Grantees must provide at least dollar-for-dollar matching funds.
- **Documentation Requirements:**
 - Grantees must report, on an individual student basis, the full distribution of all financial aid and/or other funding used to meet that student's financial responsibility for tuition and mandatory fees. This documentation may be marked "confidential" to protect student privacy, and the Commission asks that any other sensitive data (such as security numbers, student health or disability status, etc.) be redacted. Grantees are expected to work with the college's financial aid office to track scholarship commitments through the People Soft system.
 - Support for testing fees for individual students must be authenticated via third party expense documentation.
 - Grantees must report the program/major for each scholarship recipient in order for TRRC staff to validate eligibility under the approved category.
- **Dual Enrollment:** Dual Enrollment funding will be limited to regional high school program offerings at community college facilities. These scholarship funds will be limited to Advanced Manufacturing and Information Technology career programs. At least fifty percent 50% match must be provided toward Dual Enrollment tuition and fees.
- **Credential Testing Fees:** Support is limited to students in for-credit STEM-H and Advanced Manufacturing programs who qualify at or below the 500% poverty level (see next page for chart), or have a Student Aid Index (SAI) number at or below the ranges as specified in the chart on the next page. This funding will support 50% of the fees for the first testing attempt for the student, and for one attempt per student per credential. Support is limited to third-party certifications that are required for the student to be eligible for employment in their field. Total support for this purpose is limited to \$24,000 for Tier I institutions, and \$10,000 for Tier II.
- **Poverty Level Income Requirements:** Grantees will limit scholarships for G3 Eligible and Non-G3 Eligible for credit programs to students with family income up to 500% of Poverty Level for their family size (see next page for chart), or have a Student Aid Index (SAI) number at or below the ranges as specified in the chart on the next page. Grantees must work with the college's financial aid office in order to verify income eligibility and to track scholarship commitments through the People Soft system.
- **Final Reimbursement:** Grantees must submit final reimbursement request no later than October 31st following the end of the academic year.

Federal Poverty Guidelines:

For colleges utilizing the U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines issued annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to determine financial eligibility for its financial aid programs, DHHS Poverty Guidelines for 2025 are below.

2025 Poverty Guidelines: 48 Contiguous States (for Virginia):

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline	500% of Poverty Guideline
1	\$ 15,650	\$ 78,250
2	\$ 21,150	\$ 105,750
3	\$ 26,650	\$ 133,240
4	\$ 32,150	\$ 160,750
5	\$ 37,650	\$ 188,250
6	\$ 43,150	\$ 215,750
7	\$ 48,650	\$ 243,250
8	\$ 54,150	\$ 270,750
Each additional person	\$ 5,500	\$ 27,750

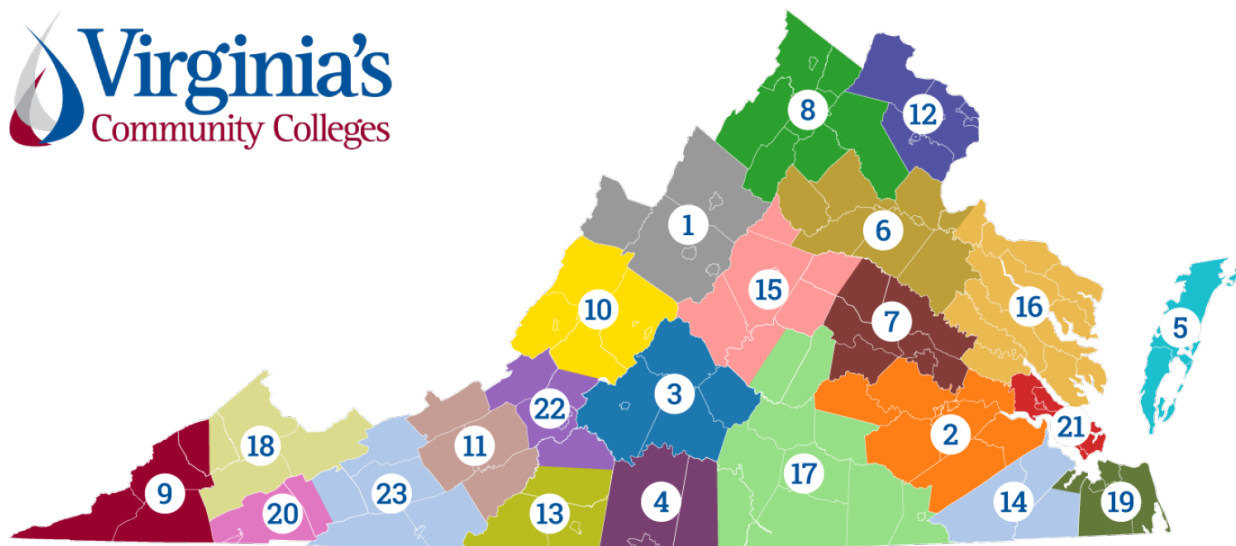
2025 - 2026 SAI Chart

Student Aid Index:

For colleges utilizing the FAFSA's Student Aid Index numbers to determine financial eligibility, SAI eligibility thresholds for most financial aid are to the right.

Keep in mind that these figures are estimates. This chart assumes that assets are zero, and student income is zero.

AGI	SAI Number			
	1 Dependent	2 Dependents	3 Dependents	4 Dependents
\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$32,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$37,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$42,500	\$1,680	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$45,000	\$2,122	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$47,500	\$2,564	\$0	\$0	\$0
\$50,000	\$3,066	\$1,504	\$0	\$0
\$52,500	\$3,448	\$2,387	\$0	\$0
\$55,000	\$3,890	\$2,387	\$0	\$0
\$57,500	\$4,332	\$2,829	\$1,410	\$0
\$60,000	\$4,774	\$3,271	\$1,852	\$0
\$62,500	\$5,216	\$3,713	\$2,294	\$0
\$65,000	\$5,703	\$4,155	\$2,736	\$0
\$67,500	\$6,205	\$4,597	\$3,178	\$1,598
\$70,000	\$6,752	\$5,039	\$3,620	\$2,040
\$72,500	\$7,334	\$5,502	\$4,062	\$2,482
\$75,000	\$7,953	\$6,004	\$4,504	\$2,924
\$80,000	\$9,334	\$7,101	\$5,396	\$3,808
\$85,000	\$10,883	\$8,314	\$6,364	\$4,660
\$90,000	\$12,517	\$9,558	\$7,374	\$5,448
\$95,000	\$14,170	\$10,965	\$8,513	\$6,328
\$100,000	\$15,824	\$12,614	\$9,792	\$7,332
\$105,000	\$17,477	\$14,267	\$11,235	\$8,463
\$110,000	\$19,130	\$15,920	\$12,889	\$9,734
\$115,000	\$20,783	\$17,573	\$14,542	\$11,167
\$120,000	\$22,437	\$19,227	\$16,195	\$12,820
\$125,000	\$24,090	\$20,880	\$17,848	\$14,474
\$130,000	\$25,743	\$22,533	\$19,501	\$16,127
\$135,000	\$27,396	\$24,186	\$21,155	\$17,780
\$140,000		\$25,839	\$22,808	\$19,433
\$145,000		\$27,493	\$24,461	\$21,087
\$150,000			\$26,114	\$22,740
\$155,000			\$27,768	\$24,393
\$160,000				\$26,046
\$165,000				\$27,699



Community College Service Areas

Updated: May 2023

1. **Blue Ridge Community College**
COUNTIES: Augusta, Highland, Rockingham; CITIES: Harrisonburg, Staunton, Waynesboro
2. **Brightpoint Community College**
COUNTIES: Amelia, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Surry, Sussex; CITIES: Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg
3. **Central Virginia Community College**
COUNTIES: Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell; CITIES: Bedford, Lynchburg
4. **Danville Community College**
COUNTIES: Halifax, Pittsylvania; CITIES: Danville
5. **Eastern Shore Community College**
COUNTIES: Accomack, Northampton
6. **Germanna Community College**
COUNTIES: Caroline, Culpeper, King George, Madison, Orange, Spotsylvania, Stafford; CITIES: Fredericksburg
7. **J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College**
COUNTIES: Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Louisa, Powhatan; CITIES: Richmond
8. **Laurel Ridge Community College**
COUNTIES: Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Warren; CITIES: Winchester
9. **Mountain Empire Community College**
COUNTIES: Dickenson, Lee, Scott, Wise; CITIES: Norton
10. **Mountain Gateway Community College**
COUNTIES: Alleghany, Bath, Botetourt, Rock Bridge; CITIES: Buena Vista, Clifton Forge, Covington, Lexington
11. **New River Community College**
COUNTIES: Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski; CITIES: Radford
12. **Northern Virginia Community College**
COUNTIES: Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William; CITIES: Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park
13. **Patrick & Henry Community College**
COUNTIES: Franklin, Henry, Patrick; CITIES: Martinsville
14. **Paul D. Camp Community College**
COUNTIES: Isle of Wight, Southampton; CITIES: Franklin, Suffolk
15. **Piedmont Virginia Community College**
COUNTIES: Albemarle, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson; CITIES: Charlottesville
16. **Rappahannock Community College**
COUNTIES: Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland
17. **Southside Virginia Community College**
COUNTIES: Buckingham, Brunswick, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward; CITIES: Emporia
18. **Southwest Virginia Community College**
COUNTIES: Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Tazewell
19. **Tidewater Community College**
CITIES: Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach
20. **Virginia Highlands Community College**
COUNTIES: Smyth, Washington; CITIES: Bristol
21. **Virginia Peninsula Community College**
COUNTIES: James City, York; CITIES: Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Williamsburg
22. **Virginia Western Community College**
COUNTIES: Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, Roanoke; CITIES: Roanoke, Salem
23. **Wytheville Community College**
COUNTIES: Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe; CITIES: Galax

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA COMMITTEE



▪ *In-Person Meeting* ▪

AGENDA

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
1:45 P.M.**

If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter access code: **210 330 008#**.

The Committee will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, please contact: **Warren Bryson at (804) 894-9659, wbryson@revitalizeva.org or Roz Stein at (804) 894-9651.**

Welcome and Call to Order

The Honorable T. Travis Hackworth, Chair

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Approval of the 9/23/2025 Minutes
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The Honorable T. Travis Hackworth, Chair

Public Comment

Introduction

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Grant Projects

Ms. Sara Williams, Southwest Regional Director

Extensions and Modifications

Ms. Sara Williams, Southwest Regional Director

Other Business

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Adjournment

FY26 Southwest Virginia Program - 1st Round

Pending Applications

The Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission received sixteen applications for the September 25, 2025, application deadline for the FY26 Southwest Virginia Program, two of which were later withdrawn and will not be considered at this time. The applications are grouped according to investment category. The Tobacco Commission's Southwest Virginia Committee will act on these funding requests at its meeting on January 12, 2026, at 1:45 pm.

The Commission's FY26 budget allocated \$4 million for the Southwest Virginia Program. The RFP stated that approximately \$2 million would be made available for this first funding round. The remainder of the FY26 funds will be made available for a second funding round in spring 2026. An additional \$1,377,775 of carryover funds are also available.

Req #	Organization	Project Title	Request Amount	Staff Recommends
Agribusiness				
4416	Lee County Livestock Association	Forage Production Initiative for Southwest Virginia: Round III	\$101,000	\$101,000
Business Development				
4418	Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners	HOMEWorks: Housing Opportunity & Modular Education Works in Russell County, VA	\$472,000	\$409,233
4415	Appalachian School Of Law	Sustainability of Medical-Legal Partnership in Southwest Virginia	\$250,000	No award
4420	Town of Bluefield	Revitalizing Downtown Bluefield	\$250,000	\$250,000
4419	Recovery Soldiers Ministries	Wise County Recovery to-Work Business Redevelopment Initiative	Withdrawn	Withdrawn
4417	Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA	140 S. 1st Street	\$400,000	table

Sites and Infrastructure				
4423	Town of Abingdon	Critical Infrastructure for Community Revitalization - Trigg Street Sewer Extension	\$118,239	No award
4422	Economic Development Authority of Floyd County, VA	Floyd Regional Commerce Center Phase 2: Developing Business Ready Sites	\$500,000	\$500,000
4421	Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA	Advancing Progress Park Site Readiness	\$133,810	\$121,650
Tourism				
4426	Friends of Southwest Virginia	Southwest Virginia Creative Economy Planning & Outdoor Recreation Business Recruitment Initiative	\$215,000 \$127,000	\$127,000
4429	Octagon House Foundation Inc.	Octagon House Restoration Project	Withdrawn	Withdrawn
4430	Russell County Board of Supervisors	Three Rivers Destination Center – Planning Grant for A&E and Construction Readiness	\$260,000	\$260,000
4428	Scott County Economic Development Authority	Carter Family Fold 2027 and Beyond	\$500,000 212,125	212,125
4427	Smyth County Economic Development Authority	Salt Trail Master Plan for Impact and Sustainability	\$45,000	\$40,000
4425	Theatre Guild of Buchanan County	Renovations and Improvements at The CAM Part 2	\$132,702	\$132,702
4424	Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road	The Crooked Road: Assessing Impacts of Cultural Tourism	\$75,000 \$45,000	No award
Total (16 requests)			\$3,046,876	\$2,153,710

Financial Viability Assessment: The following staff report represents the Financial Viability Assessment completed for all applications considered for funding. Proposals along with related and required attachments are studied by the grant review team. This information and all correspondence, research, and additional information received are incorporated as part of the viability assessment. A recommendation to approve funding for an application by Commission staff represents a determination that the project appears to be financially viable with consideration of all agreed-upon terms and conditions of the award.

Lee County Livestock Association (#4416)
Forage Production Initiative for Southwest Virginia: Round III
\$101,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission support is requested to continue a cost-share program serving farmers in Lee, Scott, Wise, Dickenson, Buchanan, Russell, Tazewell, Washington, Smyth, Wythe, Grayson, Carroll, and Bland Counties. This will be the third, and final, funding round. The program assists participants with the purchase of eligible forage production equipment such as no-till drills, fertilizer spreaders, hay wrappers, testing equipment, etc. Additionally, the application will provide reimbursement for hay storage and permanent and temporary fencing. These programs will result in improved forage quality and storage capability for regional producers. Cost-share payments will be limited to 33% of eligible expenses up to a maximum \$5,000 payment.

Matching Funds:

- \$10,000 – Virginia Cooperative Extension (In-Kind)
- \$440,000 – Program participant contribution (66% of purchases)

Project Outputs:

- 20 producers will be served by the program
- \$7,000 average new revenue per participant

Staff Comments:

Since January 2024, the Commission has provided a total of \$502,000 to support the implementation of this cost-share program. The current application will be used to serve applicants on the program's waiting list. This will be the final request for this particular cost-share program. The strong demand for this program is an indication that cost-share funding is an important resource for regional producers.

The Commission has funded multiple agricultural cost-share programs over the years including those that provided reimbursement for many of the elements included in the scope of the current application. Despite this, there continues to be a need for producers to make improvements to their practices to allow for greater efficiencies and to increase farm revenues. The equipment and infrastructure improvements associated with this cost-share program result in increased profitability while increasing soil health and animal nutrition. The application estimates that the economic benefit for a farmer who increases grazing by 60 days and increases hay storage is approximately \$15,000 annually.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$101,000.

Business Development

Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners (#4418)

HOMEWorks: Housing Opportunity & Modular Education Works in Russell County, VA

\$472,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to renovate a 92,000-square-foot vacant industrial building located in Russell County into a Modular Training and Production Facility. This dual-purpose facility will manufacture affordable modular homes for moderate-income families (80-120% AMI) by combining workforce development with small-scale housing manufacturing.

Matching Funds:

- \$472,000 – Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners (approved)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of A&E and facility upgrades for 92,000-square-foot industrial building.
- Creation of 81 new jobs
- Creation of 50 new internships and 20 new apprenticeships
- 140 workforce credentials
- Production of 750+ housing units (within 5 years)

Staff Comments: This application requests support to assist with the development of a multidimensional project that will increase the supply of affordable housing in the region. HOMEWorks will renovate a recently acquired 92,000-square-foot industrial building located in Russell County into a modular home training and production facility. The development of the proposed facility will result in increases to the supply of housing units, as well as to the workforce required for manufacturing. Once operational, the facility will produce modular homes that are targeted to households earning 80-120% of the Area Median Income (AMI). An aggressive and diverse fundraising effort is underway for the \$18M+ initiative. The Wellspring Foundation, the lead philanthropic investor, has committed almost \$6M, and VCEDA approved a \$3M loan. Funding requests have been submitted to GOVA and ARC. Future funding requests include Virginia Housing, New Market Tax Credits, and an ARC ARISE application.

Budget information provided with the application focused only on the immediate project scope covered under the grant request and required to meet the Commission's 1:1 match requirement. The \$944,000 project cost cited in the pending application represents only a portion of a much larger initiative. The majority of Commission funds are requested for A&E (\$200,000) and building renovation (\$218,548). Matching funds will be provided by the applicant for the same line items, \$181,371 for A&E and \$218,233 for building renovation expenses. This is an appropriate use of matching funds; however a relatively minor adjustment is required. The Southwest Virginia Program RFP limits support for planning activities such as A&E to no more than 50% of third party contractual services. The cost estimate included in the application shows an estimated cost of \$381,371 for A&E. To comply with the program RFP this amount must be

split equally between TRRC and match. The maximum allowed under the grant is \$190,685. Renovation activities supported under the scope of this request will focus on plumbing, sprinkler system, and electrical system upgrades required to ready the facility for further development.

Funding is also requested to support 50% of the cost of a feasibility study (\$53,452) to examine the housing demand outside the immediate project area of Grayson, Russell, Smyth, and Washington Counties. The proposed feasibility study will be focused on a large multistate region largely outside of the Commission's footprint. A proposal from a potential consultant stated that, based on recent discussions with the applicant, the study area was refined to include localities within the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) footprint. The proposal defines this area as 44 counties in Kentucky, 31 in North Carolina, 6 in Ohio, 7 in South Carolina, 24 in Tennessee, 27 in West Virginia, and 32 counties and independent cities in Virginia. The Commission's Funding Policies require funds to be spent to benefit only localities within the footprint. Given the large geographic region covered by the proposed study, this is not an appropriate use of TRRC funds and should not be included in the recommended funding amount.

Although unable to recommend funding for the full request amount, staff is very supportive of this project and recognizes its tremendous potential to positively impact both housing and workforce deficits in the region. This was the highest scoring application submitted to this funding round.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$409,233 for 50% of A&E expenses; the remainder of this amount will support renovation costs.

Appalachian School Of Law (#4415) ***Sustainability of Medical-Legal Partnership in Southwest Virginia*** **\$250,000.00 Requested**

Project Summary: This application supports the Medical-Legal Partnership that includes Ballard Health, the Appalachian School of Law, and Virginia Tech, which brings legal support directly into healthcare for low-income patients. With this funding, the program will continue to help patients resolve legal challenges that affect their health by providing free legal services that secure insurance coverage, disability benefits, and housing stability. Funds will support one year of these operating costs.

Matching Funds:

- Ballard Health - \$2,000,000 for 2025-2028 (committed)

Project Outputs:

- Continuation of the Medical-Legal Partnership program

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested for a variety of operating expenses including salary support for the program's executive director, intake coordinator, faculty advisors at both VT and ASL, and supervising attorneys. Funds will also be used to provide stipends to PhD and Master's level VT students who lead data compilation and analytics for the program. The application also requests tuition for two VT students. The budget allocates funding for a variety of travel expenses including conference attendance. Funding will be split equally between

Virginia Tech (\$125,000) and Appalachian School of Law (\$125,000). The program, created approximately 5 years ago, has previously been supported by Ballard Health. Information received during the review of the proposal stated that, during the program's first four years, Ballard provided \$2M which was split between VT and ASL. Ballard has renewed the funding, also at \$2M, to cover years 2025-2028.

This project, whose outcomes are primarily related to healthcare and legal services, does not align with the SWVA Program's investment categories or funding priorities. Commission funds typically provide start-up operating support for new programs or initiatives during the first three years. The application does not document why the already committed funding from Ballard is not sufficient or why Commission funds are now required. Virginia Tech provided an operating budget for the portion of the program it administers. That budget shows that \$240,000 is required for each of the 4 years covered by the 2025-2028 timeframe. The funding committed by Ballard for the 2025-2028 timeframe appears to be sufficient to sustain the program. An operating budget was not provided for the ASL portion of the project.

The application states that the grant is needed to sustain the program when Ballard Health funding is no longer available. The application also indicates that all Commission funds will be spent during the 2026 calendar year. Considering the \$2M already committed by Ballard to support the program through 2028, and without documentation showing that this funding is insufficient to fully support the program, there is no evidence that Commission funds are needed at this time.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends no award.

Town of Bluefield (#4420) ***Revitalizing Downtown Bluefield*** **\$250,000.00 Requested**

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to renovate the former Graham Jewelry building in the town of Bluefield to attract new businesses. The IDA will restore this 4,000-square-foot building to full operability, transforming it into a modern commercial space that can support two new business activities. The Town of Bluefield has also engaged in preliminary discussions with Bluefield University, which has expressed interest in utilizing the upstairs space of the building to support institutional needs.

Matching Funds:

- \$245,000 – DHCD Industrial Revitalization Fund (approved)
- \$42,000 – Town of Bluefield IDA (committed)
- \$25,000 - Town of Bluefield (committed)

Project Outputs:

- Renovation of 4,000 square feet of commercial space
- Attraction of 2 new businesses
- Creation of 10-15 new jobs

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested to support the redevelopment of a building in downtown Bluefield. The property, a former jewelry store, will be renovated to provide space for retail or dining on the first floor. Bluefield University has expressed interest in developing the second floor into a communications lab suitable for recording podcasts. If successful, the partnership between the Town and the University will provide an opportunity to draw more students into the downtown area.

The Town completed acquisition of the property in November 2025 using local funds (\$35,000) and a portion of the IRF grant (\$35,000). Local funds have been used to complete a Phase 1 environmental assessment and preliminary engineering report (PER) for the property. The remainder of the IRF grant (\$210,000), along with Commission funds (\$235,000), will be used for renovation activities. A small amount (\$15,000) of TRRC funds will support additional A&E activities. The Town will use a design-build approach for the project in order to allow it to be completed within budget. Cost estimates provided during the review process indicate a total project cost of over \$1.3M. The estimated cost to complete renovation of the first floor is approximately \$600K not including additional A&E and supplemental services which are estimated at approximately \$100K for the entire project. The Town of Bluefield will commit additional funding, if needed to ensure the completion of the first floor.

A Master Plan for the Town, completed in 2022, documents a need for additional development in the downtown area. The need to increase connectivity between downtown and Bluefield University is also noted. The proposed project addresses both themes. Two potential businesses have already expressed interest in the property although, at this time, neither have committed to signing a lease. Interest is expected to grow as renovations are completed. The property will be managed by Bluefield's IDA who will lease the property to tenants at market value.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$250,000.

Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA (#4417)
140 S 1st Street
\$400,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to rehabilitate a building in downtown Wytheville for commercial space. The building rehabilitation will restore ten residential units to Wythe County's housing market and return over 3,000 sqft of street level commercial space to inventory in downtown Wytheville.

Matching Funds:

- \$750,000 – Department of Housing and Community Development (committed)
- \$400,000 – Virginia Housing (approved)
- \$150,000 – Virginia Housing (approved)
- \$100,000 – Tobacco Commission (approved)
- \$1,282,000 – Locus – (application intended)

Project Outputs:

- Creation of 10 residential units
- Creation of space for 2 new businesses
- Creation of 6 new jobs

Staff Comments: This application supports the development of one of the last significantly blighted properties in downtown Wytheville. The IDA acquired the building and plans to develop ten residential apartments and two commercial spaces that can be subdivided into four units. The commercial units will be marketed at below market rates to support the growth of new small businesses. The Commission has previously supported this project through a planning grant, as well as with \$100,000 from the Workforce Housing Incentive Program.

Although staff is supportive of the project, the application did not indicate that additional funds are required. The 2023 cost estimate provided in the application indicates a total project cost of \$2,681,321.89 which aligns with the total project cost reflected in the budget information. The budget information shows that, including the intended \$1,282,000 loan application to LOCUS, all necessary funding has been identified. Additionally, the financial information provided in the application indicates that despite the potential debt payments, the project will have a positive cash flow and is sustainable. A clear need for additional grant support from TRRC was not apparent. Through conversations with the applicant during the review period Staff learned that the original contractor has been released and project will need to be re-bid. The project cost is expected to increase which is likely to require additional funding. Staff suggests that this project should be tabled until updated cost estimates, and associated funding gap, can be provided.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends this project be tabled for reconsideration after updated cost estimates can be provided.

Sites & Infrastructure

Town of Abingdon (#4423)

Critical Infrastructure for Community Revitalization - Trigg Street Sewer Extension

\$118,238.50 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to support engineering design services associated with the installation of a new gravity sewer line and a sewer lift station with a force main to extend service along Trigg Street. The sewer system serving the adjacent area is undersized and in poor condition, and no sewer service is available within the problem area. The area has potential for future housing and commercial development, but these opportunities cannot move forward without sewer service.

Matching Funds:

- \$118,238.50 – The Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia (application intended)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of engineering and design

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested to support 50% of the cost to complete engineering and design required for a future sewer line extension. The extension will provide service to approximately 60 residences while providing infrastructure required for future residential and commercial development. A PER was completed using funds provided by Mount Rogers Planning District Commission and estimated a total project cost of \$2.3M. Of this amount, \$236,477 is required for engineering and design. This application was submitted under the Sites and Infrastructure investment category which is only intended to support the development of industrial sites and properties. The project, which serves only residential and commercial users, does not meet the qualifications of this investment category.

The application describes the need to address an existing public health concern associated with failing septic systems in the service area. While the application states that the Town has been approached by developers interested in developing multifamily housing in the area, no specific opportunities were described. A letter of support provided by the Wellspring Foundation describes two projects located within the Wolf Creek Water Reclamation Facility; however it is not clear if either of these is along the proposed extension route. The Town plans to submit an application to Wellspring for funding to support the remainder of the cost of engineering and design.

This project appears to be a high priority for the Town and is clearly needed before additional development of the area can proceed. The critical need for additional housing is a well-documented regional issue, and while the goal of this project is to prepare the service area for development, the scope of the application does not fit the eligible funding categories described in the SWVA Program RFP. Due to the highly competitive nature of this funding round and the limited funding available, positive funding recommendations must be limited to only projects which clearly meet the criteria of the program. Providing support for this application, despite the good intentions of the project, is likely to result in a precedent that encourages similar applications to future funding rounds.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends no award.

Economic Development Authority of Floyd County, Virginia (#4422)
Floyd Regional Commerce Center Phase 2: Developing Business Ready Sites
\$500,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funding is requested for contractual services and property improvements to develop 20-24 acres of business ready sites in Floyd County in Phase 2 of the Floyd Regional Commerce Center. This includes adding a second public water line for redundancy and to connect a potential new PSA well as well as add conduit for 3-phase power.

Matching Funds:

- \$772,034 – Floyd County (committed)
- \$100,000 – Economic Development Authority of Floyd County (committed)
- \$5,488,137 – US Economic Development Administration (application intended)

Project Outputs:

- Development of new 20-24 acre industrial site
- \$168 million in new private investment
- Creation of 110 new jobs

Staff Comments:

The funds requested in this application will be combined with nearly \$900,000 of local funds to meet a 20% match requirement for a planned US-EDA application. US-EDA requires that matching funds are committed prior to the submission of the application. The planned \$5,488,137 request will support 80% of the cost to complete Phase 2, Stage 2. This is an excellent opportunity to leverage significant federal funds for the project and is a strategy that has been very successful for Floyd during the development of Phase 2, Stage 1. In 2017 the Commission approved grant #3191 for Phase 2, Stage 1 of the Commerce Center Development. The \$420,696 grant leveraged over \$4M of federal including ARC as well as two grants from US-EDA. The second US-EDA grant was required to address cost increases. Stage 1 is now on track for completion in 2026.

The continued development of the Commerce Center is a high priority for Floyd. Currently there are only 5 acres of business-ready sites available in the county. This project will develop 20-24 acres. While small in scale, these sites align with the types of industries targeted by the EDA. The application notes that there are two local businesses interested in expanding into larger sites. Additionally, there were nine external prospects over the past two years who were looking for locations in the region for sites under 25 acres. Due to the small size of the site, it does not qualify for VEDP's Virginia Business Ready Sites Program.

Staff is very supportive of this request, representing approximately 8% of the estimated total project cost. The approval of this application will position the Floyd to immediately submit the application to US-EDA for the remainder (and majority) of funds needed for the project. Floyd EDA's history of successfully securing US-EDA funding for the Stage 1 project provides confidence in the locality's ability to obtain additional federal support. The Commission's standard grant agreement contains language requiring that all matching funds are in place within a year of the TRRC award date. This award should be made contingent upon the approval of the US-EDA application. If that application is not successful, the Commission grant should be deobligated.

Staff Recommendation: \$500,000 contingent upon the approval of the intended US-EDA application. If that application is unsuccessful, TRRC funds will be deobligated.

Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA (#4421)
Advancing Progress Park Site Readiness
\$133,810.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested for due diligence, design, and permitting needed to construct graded pads for Lots 1 and 32 at Progress Park in Wythe County. These sites are 105 and 70 (+/-) acres, respectively, and are the next suitable targets for development in the park. Lots 1 and 32 could each support a facility of at least 1 million square feet.

Matching Funds:

- \$133,815 – Virginia Economic Development Partnership (intended)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of due diligence for Lots 1 and 32
- Tier 5 certification for both sites

Staff Comments:

This is a reasonable request for funds to support due diligence work at one of the premier industrial sites in the region. The 1,210-acre industrial park has approximately 450 developable acres remaining with Lots 1 and 32 being the highest priority for development. Lot 1 is 105 acres and is currently rough graded. Lot 32 is 70 acres and offers rail access. Lot 1 is currently classified as Tier 4 under VEDP's Virginia Business Ready Sites Program assessment, while Lot 32 has never been characterized. The completion of this project will allow both sites to advance to Tier 5 certification.

The Commission has supported due diligence work at multiple industrial sites across the region. The program RFP limits support for planning activities to 50% of third party contractual expenses. A cost estimate provided in the application documents an anticipated cost of \$267,630 (\$108,460 for Lot 1 and \$159,170 for Lot 32); however this amount contains a 10% contingency. It is very unusual to see a contingency included in a cost estimate for contractual services. Although supportive of this project, staff's recommendation is for a reduced award reflecting 50% of the estimated cost without the contingency (\$243,300).

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$121,650 for 50% of due diligence contractual services.

Tourism

Friends of Southwest Virginia (#4426)

Southwest Virginia Creative Economy Planning & Outdoor Recreation Business Recruitment Initiative

~~\$215,000.00~~ \$127,000 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to develop a creative economy dashboard, creative economy plan, strategic plan, and marketing for Friends of Southwest Virginia. The creative economy dashboard will provide decision-makers, funders, and communities with real-time insights into visitation, spending, job creation, and private investment, and it will publish quarterly reports for stakeholders. The creative economy plan will establish a 10-year roadmap for tourism and creative economic development, guiding public and private investment decisions.

Matching Funds:

- \$480,000 – Appalachian Regional Commission (approved)

Project Outputs:

- Completion of four plans: 1) Creative Economy Dashboard; 2) Creative Economy Plan; 3) Friends of Southwest Virginia Strategic Plan; and 4) Outdoor Recreation Business Recruitment Framework

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested to support the development of four separate plans intended to guide future tourism investment throughout the region. Friends has recently completed several multiyear initiatives and is focused on identifying new focus areas. The original request amount was \$215,000 to support a portion of each of the plans. During the review period, the total request amount was reduced to \$127,000, a reduction that reflects the removal of implementation activities and a focus only on initial planning. It is likely that a follow-up application that focuses on implementation will be submitted to a future funding round. Commission funds will leverage already approved ARC funding. The following four plans will be produced:

1. Creative Economy Dashboard (\$20,000) – A web-based data platform that integrates outdoor recreation, tourism, and creative economy assets. The dashboard will provide stakeholders with real-time tourism economic impact data and insights.
2. Creative Economy Plan (\$32,000) – A comprehensive roadmap to accelerate growth in arts, culture, and outdoor sectors. The plan will align regional assets with national trends in entrepreneurship and tourism.
3. Friends of Southwest Virginia Strategic Plan (\$25,000) – An organizational plan to guide staffing and other operational decisions and ensure that Friends maintains the capacity to continue to serve regional needs and future development.
4. Economic Development Marketing Campaign (\$50,000) – A targeted plan focused on the recruitment and growth of outdoor recreation manufacturers.

The SWVA Program RFP allows applicants to request up to 50% of the cost of third-party contractual services for planning activities. Under the revised budget, TRRC funds will pay significantly less of the applicant's estimated cost, ranging from 13% of the cost of the Creative Economy Dashboard to a maximum of 25% for the Strategic Plan. The estimated cost of each study was based on the applicant's experience with similar projects rather than on third party estimates. The applicant noted concerns with adhering to the federal procurement guidelines required by ARC. Once funds are in place, the applicant will proceed with a competitive procurement process to select appropriate vendors. This process, along with the relatively modest amount requested from TRRC, provides assurance that actual project costs are reasonable.

The Commission has supported numerous planning projects for Friends of SWVA throughout the years. Because plans do not directly result in any new tourism-related outcomes (i.e., increased visitation and related spending), these projects tend to be of lower priority for funding. Despite this, staff recognizes the important role that Friends of SWVA plays in coordinating and implementing tourism-related projects throughout the region. This capacity is critical to ensure ongoing development. The completion of the proposed planning activities will guide future development and ensure that Friends, and related stakeholders, understand the roles, responsibilities, and resources required to implement new projects.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$127,000.

Russell County Board of Supervisors (#4430)
Three Rivers Destination Center – Planning Grant for A&E and Construction Readiness
\$260,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to complete planning and design work for the Three Rivers Destination Center in St. Paul. This request will fund all tasks necessary to make the project construction ready, including property survey and subsurface investigations, architectural and engineering design, site preparation plans, landscape and gateway design, exhibit and interior schematics, permitting, and final construction cost estimates. The Three Rivers Destination Center will provide space for visitor services, workforce training, and outfitter certification, while also linking guests to the Clinch River State Park and nearby trails, rivers, and downtowns.

Matching Funds:

- \$209,590 - Appalachian Regional Commission
- \$64,200 – Russell County (Site Prep and Development) – in-kind

Project Outputs:

- Completion of Planning and Design of The Three Rivers Destination Center
- 9,125 new visitors to the region
- Creation of 75 new jobs (indirect)
- \$875,000 increase in visitor spending

Staff Comments: This request replaces the existing grant (#3464) approved in September 2018 under the Special Projects Committee. Since that time the project has required multiple extensions due to numerous delays and changes to the project. The most significant change is that the original grantee, Heart of Appalachia, is no longer involved in the project. This is problematic because the Letter of Agreement, which describes the Commission's security interest in the project, was signed by HOA. Rather than pursue an extension for #3464, staff worked with the current project contacts (Russell County) to facilitate the submission of a new grant request. This will allow the existing grant, which expired in September 2025, to be closed.

Russell County will now own, operate, and maintain the facility. A brief operating plan was provided which describes the general governance and staffing plan for the Center. Russell County is in the process of hiring a full-time Tourism Director who will be responsible for oversight and management of the facility. The Center will offer professional office space for organizations supporting tourism development, outdoor recreation access, business growth, and regional collaboration. These include the Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI), Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority (HOA), and Friends of Southwest Virginia. The ownership structure described in the operating plan provides improved project stability and increased sustainability for the facility.

Commission funds, which are required to match committed ARC funding, will be used to complete A&E activities. A portion of the funding provided by TRRC is also required to complete the match requirements for a \$1.5M ARC POWER grant intended for construction. Failure to approve this application would have an immediate negative impact on the stability of the ARC funds. For this reason it is imperative that Commission funds remain committed to the project. Matching funds for this application are committed from the existing ARC grant as well as in-kind contributions from Russell County related to site preparation and development activities. The County also incurred additional expenses directly related to planning and design during the previous phase of the project. These expenses were used to meet the match requirement for grant #3464. Commission staff (Southwest Regional Director) will closely monitor the use of TRRC and matching funds to ensure that activities occur concurrently. At no time will Commission disbursements exceed documented match. An updated construction budget will be developed when design is completed, however the cost is expected to increase. It is likely that a second application supporting construction will be submitted to a future TRRC funding round.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$260,000. Matching funds are required to be spent concurrently with Commission funds.

Scott County Economic Development Authority (#4428)
Carter Family Fold 2027 and Beyond
~~\$500,000.00~~ \$212,125 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to support operational expenses associated with the hiring of a new Executive Director, development of a comprehensive website, and creation of a strategic marketing plan for the Carter Family Fold in Scott County. The requested funding will provide for three years of staffing for the Executive Director position and the development of a targeted marketing strategy designed to expand audiences and strengthen long-term financial sustainability.

Matching Funds:

- Scott County – support for Executive Director position
- Ann and Gene Worrell – Amount unknown – (Application submitted)
- Virginia Tourism Corporation Marketing Leverage Program (applications intended in 2026 and 2027)
- Additional Public/Private/Grants - as needed to meet match requirements

Project Outputs:

- Creation of Executive Director Position
- 10% increase in visitors to the region
- \$114,330 increase in ticket sales
- \$1,825,160 increase in visitor spending

Staff Comments: The Carter Family Fold is one of the most well-known music venues in the region. Over the past 50+ years the venue has grown both its facility, which now seats over 800 attendees, and its popularity. Thousands of visitors, including those from multiple states and countries, have attended performances at the venue. In January 2024 the Commission provided an \$80,000 grant to support performance fees and related marketing expenses to celebrate the venue's 50th anniversary. The current request builds upon the momentum of the anniversary celebration and focuses on securing future sustainability. The scope of this application will provide additional operating capacity for the venue which, to date, has operated using largely volunteer labor.

Once again, the Fold is preparing to celebrate a major milestone, the 100th anniversary of the Carter Family. With only a year to prepare, the scope of this application will provide funding to ensure the venue is ready for the occasion. During review of this application, the applicant worked with Commission staff to refine the budget to focus on the most time sensitive activities.

Funding is requested for the following activities.

- Personal Services – \$112,5000 to support 50% of salary/fringe for the newly created Executive Director position. The County will contribute fringe for the position.
- Contractual Services – A total of \$35,000 is allocated to support 50% of costs associated with website development, online ticket sales platform, and marketing.

- Plant and Improvements – \$61,500 requested for 50% of costs for a variety of facility improvements including exhibit refresh, asset inventory/archive, green room improvements, and signage.
- Supplies and Materials, Continuous Charges, and Equipment – The remainder of the funding requested in the updated budget will be used to support 50% of various operating expenses associated with the Executive Director position. These include office supplies, laptop, printer, software, and cell phone reimbursement.

Scott County will contribute fringe benefits for the Executive Director position. An application is pending with the Ann & Gene Worrell Foundation for the remainder of funds to support the Executive Director position. The County will assume responsibility for the position at the end of the grant period and will contribute funding, as needed, to supplement matching funds required for the salary and other expenses. An application will be submitted to the Virginia Tourism Marketing Leverage Program Grant to support the activities under Contractual Services. Additional funding, to fully meet TRRC's 1:1 match requirement, will be requested from a variety of public and private funding sources.

The SWVA Program RFP requires several pieces of information that were not provided with this application. Cost estimates were not provided for the majority of contractual and property and improvement activities. This information is important during the review of the application because it establishes the basis for the request amount. Additionally, an operating agreement between project partners is required with there being multiple beneficiaries of a grant. Other than the expenses associated with the Director position, all other line items directly support Carter Fold venue improvements and related expenses. This relationship, and the expectations and responsibilities of each party, should be formalized through an agreement. The lack of committed match is another area of concern. Due to the time sensitive nature of this project, which must be underway as soon as possible to accommodate the upcoming 2027 celebration, delaying a funding decision is likely to have a negative impact. Staff suggests that concerns can be addressed through the addition of contingencies to the funding recommendation. These contingencies are:

1. The execution of a formal agreement between Scott County and the Carter Fold.
2. The applicant must follow a competitive bidding process to select all vendors and/or contractors.
3. Reimbursement for all expenses will be limited to 50% of each eligible invoice.

These conditions will ensure that matching funds sufficient to meet TRRC's 1:1 match requirement are spent concurrently with grant funds. A competitive bidding process will document that the cost of contractual and renovation expenses is fair and reasonable. The Southwest Regional Director will continue to work closely with Scott County to obtain supplementary information as needed and to monitor the availability of matching funds.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a \$212,125 grant award contingent upon: 1) the execution of a formal agreement between Scott County and the Carter Fold; 2) the solicitation of contractors/vendors through a competitive bidding process; and 3) reimbursement of all expenses being limited to no more than 50% of each eligible invoice.

Smyth County Economic Development Authority (#4427)
Salt Trail Master Plan for Impact and Sustainability
\$45,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to develop a Master Plan for the 8.5 mile Salt Trail that runs through both Smyth and Washington Counties. The Master Plan will identify critical capital improvements to be accomplished as well as future phases that will connect the trail to other assets such as Downtown Glade Springs, Emory & Henry University, and Downtown Meadowview. The proposed planning project will design a promotional infrastructure to develop and sustain awareness of the Salt Trail's importance to the regional outdoor recreational cluster, as well as address long-term maintenance of the trail.

Matching Funds:

- \$20,000 – Virginia Outdoors Foundation (committed)
- \$20,000 – Smyth County EDA (intended)
- \$5,000 – Smyth County Tourism Association (in-hand)

Project Outputs:

- Creation of a Master Plan

Staff Comments: Commission funds are requested to support 50% of contractual services associated with the development of a master plan required to guide future development of the Salt Trail. This relatively new trail system is a regional tourism priority for Smyth and Washington Counties. The Salt Trail was listed among the area's Regional Featured Projects in the Virginia Outdoors Plan (2024) and is also a priority according to the Mount Rogers PDC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

The master plan will identify and generate engineering documents (Preliminary Engineering and Architectural Reports) outlining critical capital improvements and related cost estimates. A prioritized implementation timeline will also be provided. The scope will include the identification of trailheads, inspection of three main train trestles along the 8.5 mile trail route, and a proposed realignment of the trail that is needed to eliminate the existing on-road section and address other safety concerns. Future phases of development, including the connection of the trail to downtown Glade Springs, Emory & Henry University, and downtown Meadowview will also be outlined. In addition to the development of the master plan, the application contains a request for \$5,000 to support 50% of the cost of marketing materials to be used for immediate promotion of the trail.

The RFP limits support for planning activities to third party contractual services. Cost estimates provided during the review of the proposal show that the master plan can be completed for approximately \$60,000, which is lower than the \$80,000 total provided in the budget. When questioned about the discrepancy, additional information was provided to document that the cost estimate did not include two key activities, the unified management strategy, which will design a promotional infrastructure and management plan to market and maintain the trail, and the inspection and cost estimates associated with the three train trestles. The applicant team believes that the inclusion of these activities will add \$20,000 to the project cost. The project consultant will be selected through a competitive RFP process, which will ensure that actual project costs

are reasonable. Matching funds are partially committed from a Virginia Outdoors Foundation grant. The Smyth County EDA will be asked to provide the remainder of the required match. The funding requested for marketing materials is outside the scope of the planning project. No cost estimates were provided for these expenses, and it is unclear how these funds will be used or why this activity should be completed prior to the completion of the master plan. For this reason, the funding recommendation reflects only 50% of the cost of the master plan which is the primary deliverable of the application.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$40,000 to support 50% of the cost of third party contractual services for the development of the master plan.

Theatre Guild of Buchanan County (#4425)

Renovations and Improvements at The CAM Part 2

\$132,701.85 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to continue renovations at the Community Arts Mainstage (CAM) Theater in Grundy, VA. The theater, which opened in 2021 in a repurposed industrial building, requires additional work to complete necessary facility improvements. Funds will be used for materials and labor to refurbish the main stage floor, install exterior industrial guttering, and complete drainage and parking lot ditch work.

Matching Funds:

- \$37,645 – Buchanan County Board of Supervisors (Fall 2025)
- \$82,550 – The Thompson Charitable Foundation (approved)
- \$49,000 – Street-Goff Foundation (pending)

Project Outputs:

- Unduplicated attendance will increase from 323 to 565 (242 new)
- \$130,000 increase in visitor spending
- Creation of 2 new jobs

Staff Comments: The Commission previously supported the development of the CAM through grant #4184 (\$317,000) approved in January 2024. This grant was fully expended and closed in November 2025. The project has documented strong potential to produce outcomes related to both TRRC's Tourism and Business Development investment categories. In 2024 the theatre offered 35 performances, attended by nearly 6,500 visitors. This visitation, which is expected to continue to increase by 20% by the end of the grant period, continues to have a positive impact on the Town of Grundy and Buchanan County. The facility utilizes local businesses for program supplies, catering, and other needs. The CAM continues to collaborate with the eight existing tourism businesses in the County to increase cross visitation opportunities. These opportunities will continue to increase through lodging expansions at Breaks Interstate Park as well as the 3-5 ATV-related tourism businesses under development in the area.

The funding requested in the current application will continue a multi-year effort to transform the former industrial space into a fully functioning theater. The majority of the grant will be used to replace the stage floor, which sustained water damage. Additional work to improve drainage and

guttering will also be paid with TRRC funds. Matching funds are committed from a variety of sources, including the funding provided by the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors. These funds were used to replace windows and doors in fall 2025. Although this work was performed slightly outside the TRRC grant period, staff is comfortable allowing it as cash match for the request. The sources of matching funds, along with the significant cash commitments provided by the Theatre Guild to date, will be more than sufficient to ensure TRRC's match requirements are fully met.

The continued growth provides exciting opportunities both for residents and visitors to the Buchanan County region. As the facility, and its related programming, grows in popularity, the organizational capacity is also increasing. A part-time Executive Director will be hired in late 2025 and two additional employees, a groundskeeper/maintenance manager and another part-time employee will be added by the end of the grant period. These staffing additions are further evidence of an organization that continues to grow into a sustainable regional tourism venue.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a grant award of \$132,701.85.

Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road (#4424)
The Crooked Road: Assessing Impacts of Cultural Tourism
~~\$75,000.00~~ \$45,000 Requested

Project Summary: Commission funds are requested to support the development of an economic impact study for The Crooked Road. The study will evaluate the organization's brand performance and market reach, providing data to better understand audience demographics and engagement. The results will also serve as a shared resource for partner organizations and marketing agencies, including the Heart of Appalachia, Virginia Tourism, and the Blue Ridge Parkway Association.

Matching Funds:

- Anne & Gene Worell Foundation – application submitted

Project Outputs:

- Creation of economic impact study

Staff Comments: During the organization's 20 year existence, only one economic impact study has been performed to assess its impact. The Commission provided funding for that study through grant # 2739, approved in September 2013. Since that time, the only impact data has been limited to information provided by Virginia Tourism; however, that information is based on tourism spending on a regional level and is not specific to any particular organization or tourism initiative. The Crooked Road believes that the information provided as a result of the economic impact study will be helpful in directing future marketing and growth opportunities. A 6% increase in Crooked Road visitation is estimated; however, it is unclear how much of this growth can be attributed to the study rather than through ongoing marketing efforts of the organization and its related venues/partners. It appears that information is already collected from venues to report on attendance and ticket sales.

When submitted, the application did not contain cost estimates, which are required in the program RFP. Without this information it was not possible to determine how the \$75,000 request amount (representing 50% of a total \$150,000 cost) would be used. Staff requested and received this information during the application review period. These estimates indicate that the study can be completed for significantly less than the amount requested in the application. Based on these estimates, the maximum cost to complete this study is approximately \$90,000. The applicant requested that the request amount be reduced to \$45,000 to support 50% of this amount.

Although the impact The Crooked Road and other cultural arts related visitation have had on regional tourism over the past 20 years is undeniable, the development of an economic impact study is difficult to align with direct new tourism outcomes. As a result, this project is a lower funding priority. Although Virginia Tourism data is based on overall tourism spending in the region (rather than data specific to the Crooked Road's impact), the information, along with data collected by individual venues, could be sufficient to meet the objectives of the project. Additionally Friends of Southwest Virginia, through funding provided by ARC, will soon begin the process to develop an economic impact study focused on the regional creative economy, and the organization has agreed to include The Crooked Road in the scope of that effort. This partnership will help to produce the information needed to substantiate The Crooked Road's impact in the region without the need for additional funding.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends no award.

OTHER BUSINESS

Blue Ridge Discovery Center, Inc.

Blue Ridge Discover Center Visitor Center (#3696)

Approved for \$175,000 in January 2021 (\$175,000 balance)

Request for one-year extension

Staff Overview & Comments:

Commission funds are approved to support the renovation of the Visitors Center located at the Blue Ridge Discovery Center. The project has been delayed because of additional requirements associated with federal funding however the project update provided in November, 2025 stated that all requirements have now been met. A contractor has been selected, and construction is expected to begin in early 2026. The project is estimated to take 200 days to complete.

Staff recommends the approval of a one-year extension through January 2027.

Floyd County EDA

Floyd Regional Commerce Center Phase II Development (#3191)

Approved for \$420,696 in September 2017 (\$334,451 balance)

Request for final extension

Staff Overview & Comments: The balance of this grant will be used for construction of utilities to serve the additional building pads that are under development at the Commerce Center. The project was put out to bid in early 2023 with the lowest bid more than \$1M over budget. The EDA applied to US-EDA for additional funding and, in March 2024, received notification of a \$2.7M award. Since that time the grantee has been working through updated construction approvals required from VDOT, Federal Highways, and the US-EDA along with authorization to bid the project. Construction began in February 2025 with estimated completion in January 2026. The project update expressed concern that cold weather could delay paving until spring. The extension approved a year ago expired on December 31, 2025. A one-year extension, covering the January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026 time period, is recommended.

Staff recommends the approval of a one-year extension until December 31, 2026.

FULL COMMISSION



▪ *In-Person Meeting* ▪

AGENDA

FULL COMMISSION

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
3:15 P.M.**

If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter **access code: 210 330 008#**.

The Commission will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, contact: **Warren Bryson** at **(804) 894-9659**, **wbryson@revitalizeva.org** or **Roz Stein** at **(804) 894-9651**.

Welcome and Call to Order	<i>The Honorable James “Will” Morefield, Chair</i>
Call of the Roll	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
Approval of the <u>9/24/2025</u> Minutes <i>(published on website)</i>	<i>The Honorable James “Will” Morefield, Chair</i>
Public Comment	
Executive Director’s Report	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
Virginia Tech Project Presentation	<i>Ms. Chelsea Jenkins, Virginia Tech Mr. Paul Ehmer, LEDTEXS Corp.</i>
SMR Development Opportunities	<i>Jeffrey Miller, TerraPower</i>
Federal Funding Opportunities	<i>Ms. Michele Christian, Federal Consultant The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
Update Foundation for the Advancement of Southern and Southwest Virginia	<i>Mr. Jeff Haley, Chairman of the Board of Trustees</i>
Southern Virginia Committee	<i>The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird, Chair</i>
Incentives & Loans Committee	<i>The Honorable Daniel “Danny” Marshall, Chair</i>
Rural Accelerator Committee	<i>The Honorable William “Will” Pace, Chair</i>
Energy Ingenuity Committee	<i>The Honorable Thomas A. Garrett, Jr., Chair</i>
Education Committee	<i>Ms. Amanda Cox, Chair</i>
Southwest Virginia Committee	<i>The Honorable T. Travis Hackworth, Chair</i>
Other Business	<i>Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director</i>
Adjournment	

Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

Financial Summary
As of November 30, 2025

TICR Fund Balance	\$ 227,863,077
Restricted Endowment Balance	\$ 57,663,578
Unrestricted Endowment Balance	\$ 46,109,311
Restricted Endowment Accum Interest	\$ 1,569,573
Unrestricted Endowment Accum Interest	\$ 4,476,047
Total Cash & Investments	\$ 337,681,586

Cash Disbursements - this month	\$ 1,600,238
Cash Disbursements - FYTD	\$ 9,534,465

Fund	Unobligated Balances
Education	\$ 5,754,833
Education-Workforce Training	\$ 4,992,260
Education-TAP	\$ 664,850
TROF (Deal Closing)	\$ 15,195,637
Southside Economic Development	\$ 7,531,112
Southern Va Committee	\$ 20,558,141
Southwest Va Committee	\$ 5,377,775
Agribusiness	\$ 3,112,648
Energy Ingenuity	\$ 12,174,958
Housing Pilot Project	\$ 2,100,000
Rural Investment Accelerator	\$ 10,000,000
Megasite Development	\$ 11,675,889
Lending Program	\$ 23,392,877
Administration	\$ 1,886,918
TICRC General Account	\$ 22,350,436
FY2026 Budget Balance	\$ 146,768,335

Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance (Cash Basis)
As of November 30, 2025

	<u>FY26 Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Actual as % of Budget</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>				
Other Revenue (all cost codes)	\$ -	\$ 735,362.45		735,362.45
Total Revenues	\$ -	\$ 735,362.45		\$ 735,362.45
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>				
Administration				
Salaries, Fringe Benefits, Per Diems	\$ 1,964,950	\$ 756,207.41	38.5%	\$ 1,208,742.59
Contractual Services	360,400	152,968.74	42.4%	207,431.26
Supplies and Materials	9,000	3,160.00	35.1%	5,840.00
Transfer Payments	263,800	33,500.00	12.7%	230,300.00
Rent, Insurance, Agency Svc Charges	296,750	128,534.18	43.3%	168,215.82
Furniture and Equipment	4,500	8,113.69	180.3%	(3,613.69)
Subtotal - Administration	\$ 2,899,400	\$ 1,082,484.02	37.3%	\$ 1,816,915.98
Community Revitalization	20,831,513	8,451,980.83		
Total Expenditures	\$ 23,730,913	\$ 9,534,464.85		
Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	\$ (23,730,913)	\$ (8,799,102.40)		
<u>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)</u>				
Transfers In (endowment and earnings)	\$ -	\$ -		
CASH BALANCE, June 30, 2025	\$ 236,662,179	\$ 236,662,179.42		
CASH BALANCE, November 30, 2025	\$ 212,931,266	\$ 227,863,077.02		

TROF Awards FY 2019 - FY 2025

Project #	Date Approved	Status	Organization	Project Title	Jobs Promised	Capital Investment Promised	Approved Grant Amount	Approved Loan Amount	Total Approved Amount
4330	5/20/2025	Pending Award Docs	Pittsylvania County	Green Recycle USA, LLC	28	\$4,300,000	\$26,500	\$0	\$26,500
4263	5/20/2025	Pending Award Docs	Pittsylvania County	Evend, LLC	169	\$10,003,600	\$145,500	\$0	\$145,500
4247	2/25/2025	Approved - active	Russell County IDA	Simmons Equipment Co. Inc	75	\$7,490,000	\$66,500	\$66,500	\$133,000
4333	1/7/2025	Approved - active	Lee County EDA	Project Maggie	27	\$1,505,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
4280	10/22/2024	Pending Award Docs	Franklin County	Traditional Medicinals Virginia, LLC	57	\$47,000,000	\$245,000	\$0	\$245,000
	FY 2025		# of Projects	5	356	\$70,298,600	\$533,500	\$66,500	\$600,000
4228	3/25/2024	Approved - active	Town of Blackstone	JKOZ Engineering/ Proj. J.E.T.	16	\$1,300,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
4182	10/25/2023	Approved - active	Russell County IDA	Tate Access Floors Inc	170	\$11,300,000	\$146,000	\$0	\$146,000
	FY 2024		# of Projects	2	186	\$12,600,000	\$156,000	\$10,000	\$166,000
4078	9/24/2022	Approved - active	Halifax County IDA	IperionX Technology LLC	108	\$82,135,431	\$570,000	\$0	\$570,000
3965	9/19/2022	Approved - active	Halifax County IDA	Skip Barber Racing School	24	\$8,900,000	\$32,500	\$0	\$32,500
3976	8/11/2022	Approved - active	Dinwiddie County	DroneUp, LLC	145	\$18,850	\$111,000	\$0	\$111,000
3943	7/18/2022	Approved - active	Halifax County IDA	Hitachi Energy USA	165	\$37,000,000	\$220,000	\$0	\$220,000
	FY 2023		# of Projects	4	442	\$128,054,281	\$933,500	\$0	\$933,500
3912	9/22/2021	Approved - active	Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority	Tyson Foods, Inc.	376	\$295,452,718	\$707,500	\$0	\$707,500
3734	7/28/2021	Approved - active	City of Danville	Kegerreis Digital Marketing, LLC	62	\$1,500,000	\$44,500	\$44,500	\$89,000
	FY 2022		# of Projects	2	438	\$296,952,718	\$752,000	\$44,500	\$796,500
	FY 2021		# of Projects	11	892	\$174,242,825	\$1,146,000	\$450,000	\$1,596,000
	FY 2020		# of Projects	9	1,809	\$245,184,219	\$4,106,000	\$2,516,000	\$6,622,000
	FY 2019		# of Projects	20	1,334	\$215,915,399	\$4,490,000	\$2,665,000	\$7,155,000

TROF Loans January 2026

Project #	Date Approved	Organization	Project Title	Status	Loan Amount Approved	Remaining Loan Amount to be Repaid	% Loan Repaid	Notes
4247	2/25/2025	Russell County Industrial Development Authority	Simmons Equipment Company, Inc.	Disbursed 3/27/25	\$66,500	\$66,500	0%	First payment due 2/1/26
4228	3/25/2024	Town of Blackstone	JKOZ Engineering Inc./Proj. J.E.T.	Disbursed 10/23/24	\$10,000	\$10,000	0%	8/1/25 payment overdue. Staff following up to secure payment.
3754	4/30/2021	Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority	Walraven, Inc.	Working to deobligate	\$48,000	\$0	0%	Loan has not been disbursed, looking to deobligate.
3734	7/28/2021	Danville, City of	Kegerreis Digital Marketing, LLC	Working to deobligate	\$45,500	\$0	0%	Loan has not been disbursed, looking to deobligate.
3674	5/3/2021	Blackstone, Town of	Blackstone Hotel Partners, LLC	Disbursed - 8/27/21	\$44,500	\$13,350	70%	Next payment due 2/1/26.
3556	8/6/2019	Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority	MEP, Ltd.	Disbursed - 9/28/21	\$270,000	\$270,000	0%	Payments overdue. Staff following up to secure payment.
3544	4/30/2019	Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA	Seven Sisters Brewery, LLC	Disbursed - 4/1/20	\$15,000	\$1,500	90%	8/1/25 payment overdue. Staff following up to secure payment.
3507	6/6/2019	Russell County Industrial Development Authority	Polycap LLC	Disbursed - 8/30/19	\$140,000	\$84,000	40%	8/1/23 & subsequent payments - overdue - staff following up to secure payment.
3482	10/15/2018	Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority	Harlow Fastech LLC	Disbursed - 9/17/2019	\$630,000	\$567,000	10%	Loan terms modified via Commission action at May '25 meeting. Interest payment due.
3448	6/6/2018	Nottoway County	UAV Pro, Inc.	Disbursed - 7/6/22	\$144,000	\$64,052	56%	7/1/25 payment overdue. Staff following up to secure payment.
3340	9/12/2017	Appomattox County EDA	Innovatio Sealing Technologies, LLC.	Disbursed - 2/16/18	\$40,000	\$4,800	88%	Next loan payment due 1/1/26
TOTALS					\$1,453,500	\$1,081,202		

Active TROFs with Concluded Performance Periods January 2026

Project Number	Date Approved	Start Date	End Date	Organization	Project Title	Performance Period Status	Status 1	Status 2	Clawback Amount	Clawback Remaining	Notes
2845	1/14/2014	12/31/2013	12/31/2017	Scott	Secure Mountain LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Revenue Sharing Only	\$460,000.00	\$29,550.00	Staff is working to collect final clawback payments and close.
2850	2/25/2014	12/31/2013	12/31/2021	Bristol	CBH Bristol, LLC.(aka Creative Boutique Hotels/The Sessions Hotel)	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	TBD		Reviewing final performance data. Need updated data from locality. Staff following up to close.
2889	3/27/2014	7/1/2020	6/30/2025	Tazewell IDA	Dominion Aquaculture/Proj. Jona	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	TBD		Working to determine performance and next steps with locality.
2941	8/1/2014	6/30/2014	6/30/2017	Russell	APPALACHIAN BIOFUELS, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Negotiated repayment plan - monitoring performance of negotiated revised performance terms	TBD		Under an agreement with Appomattox County the remaining grant portion of this project (\$210,000) will be used for another project to be determined. Staff is working to determine if the requirements of this agreement have been met and close the file.
2999	1/15/2015	12/31/2014	6/30/2024	Grayson County Economic Development Authority	Oak Hall Industries (Oak Hall Cap & Gown)	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	\$80,850.00	\$80,850.00	Negotiating repayment terms with locality.
3266	3/6/2017	12/31/2016	12/31/2020	Wise	DP Facilities, Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	TBD		Working with locality to gather data and determine performance.
3295	6/8/2017	3/31/2017	6/30/2024	Greensville County	Oran Safety Glass, Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data			Gathering performance data and working to close.
3296	4/27/2017	3/31/2017	3/31/2020	Tazewell	Trina Health of Pounding Mill, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	TBD		Gathering info from locality to determine final performance and close file.
3340	9/12/2017	6/30/2017	6/30/2020	Appomattox	Innovatio Sealing Technologies, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	\$80,000.00	\$0.00	Receiving remaining loan payments and will close. Clawback satisfied.
3375	12/7/2017	9/30/2017	9/30/2022	St. Paul, Town of	Willis LLC c/o St. Paul IDA	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	TBD		Have requested further data from the locality to establish performance.
3393	12/7/2017	9/30/2017	9/30/2020	Buchanan	Trina Health of Pounding Mill, LLC DBA Trina Health Town Center	Performance Period Ended	Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00	Clawback due. Working with locality to set up clawback arrangements.
3448	6/6/2018	3/31/2018	3/31/2021	Nottoway County	UAV Pro	Performance Period Ended	Loan Payments Only	Loan Payments Only	n/a	n/a	Earned portion of grant disbursed. Loan payment due 7/1/25. Staff working to collect.
3481	10/9/2018	9/30/2018	9/30/2022	Franklin County	Empire Bakery Commissary	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	\$79,800	\$79,800	Working with locality on clawback arrangements.
3482	10/15/2018	9/30/2018	9/30/2023	Danville-Pittsylvania RIFA	Harlow Fastech LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data			Loan modification granted at May '25 meeting. Gathering signatures as well as performance data to close out grant portion.
3485	11/1/2018	9/30/2018	9/30/2023	Smyth County Economic Development Authority	Smyth County Machine and Fabrication LLC	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	\$53,500	\$53,500	Repayment agreement negotiated. 3 payments/3 yrs. Gathering signatures.
3502	12/12/2018	9/30/2018	9/30/2023	Franklin County	McAirlaids, Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data			Gathering info from locality to determine final performance and close file.
3507	6/6/2019	3/31/2019	3/31/2023	Russell County IDA	PolyCap	Performance Period Ended	Full Performance Not Met	Repayment Due	TBD	TBD	Working to arrange clawback payments with locality.
3544	4/30/2019	9/30/2019	9/30/2022	Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA	Seven Sisters Brewery, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	TBD		Working with locality on performance data. 8/1/25 loan payment overdue. Staff working to collect.
3545	4/30/2019	03/31/19	3/31/2022	Carroll IDA	Blue Ridge Designs, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	\$0.00	\$0.00	Loan fully repaid. Working to gather data and close.
3546	4/30/2019	03/31/19	3/31/2022	Galax, City of	MOOG Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	TBD		Gathering performance data.
3550	5/22/2019	03/31/19	3/31/2022	Danville, City of	Litehouse Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Disburse post-performance - only receive what is earned. Reviewing performance data to determine performance.

Active TROFs with Concluded Performance Periods January 2026

Project Number	Date Approved	Start Date	End Date	Organization	Project Title	Performance Period Status	Status 1	Status 2	Clawback Amount	Clawback Remaining	Notes
3556	8/6/2019	12/31/20	12/31/2025	Danville-Pittsylvania RIFA	MEP, Ltd.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Reviewing Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Working to gather performance data and collect on overdue loan payments.
3612	12/9/2019	09/30/19	9/30/2022	Pittsylvania County	Just Greens, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Extension granted at May '25 meeting. Reviewing performance data and working to close.
3672	9/11/2020	6/30/2020	6/30/2023	Washington County	SPIG Industry LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Will be closed under "Did Not Materialize".
3674	5/3/2021	5/3/2021	5/3/2024	Town of Blackstone	Blackstone Hotel Partners, LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering performance data and working to determine if an extension request is appropriate.
3685	12/21/2020	5/1/2021	5/1/2025	Smyth County EDA	Woodgrain Millwork, Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering performance data to determine final performance.
3701	12/21/2020	12/21/2020	12/21/2023	Pittsylvania County	Intertape Polymer Corporation	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering performance data. Jobs met, establishing CapEx.
3734	7/28/2021	7/28/2021	7/28/2024	City of Danville	Kegerreis Digital Marketing, LLC	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Working to close as DNM.
3754	6/1/2021	6/1/2021	6/2/2025	Danville-Pittsylvania RIFA	Walraven, Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering performance data.
3774	6/15/2021	6/15/2021	6/15/2024	Pittsylvania County	Staunton River Plastics, LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering performance data and working to determine if an extension request is appropriate.
3892	9/22/2021	9/22/2021	9/22/2024	Joint IDA of Wythe County, VA	Blue Star NBR, LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Performance Period Ended	Reaching out to locality. Working to close as DNM.	n/a	n/a	Will be closed under "Did Not Materialize".
3912	9/22/2021	9/22/2021	9/22/2024	Danville-Pittsylvania RIFA	Tyson Food Inc.	Performance Period Ended	Performance Period Ended	Disbursement Request Received	n/a	n/a	Moving to Dibusse Funds
3943	7/18/2022	7/18/2022	7/18/2025	Halifax IDA	Hitachi Energy USA	Performance Period Ended	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Gathering data to determine final performance.
3976	8/11/2022	8/11/2022	8/11/2025	Dinwiddie County	DroneUp, LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Performance Not Met	Performance Not Met	n/a	n/a	Locality is not pursuing TROF grant. Will go down as "Did Not Materialize".
3965	9/19/2022	9/19/2022	9/19/2025	Halifax IDA	Skip Barber Racing School	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Working to gather performance data and determine if an admin extension is needed/appropriate.
4078	9/26/2022	9/26/2022	9/26/2025	Halifax IDA	IperionX Technology, LLC.	Performance Period Ended	Gathering Performance Data	Gathering Performance Data	n/a	n/a	Working to gather performance data and determine if an admin extension is needed/appropriate.
TOTALS									\$809,150.00	\$298,700.00	

January '26 TRRC/VSBA Lending Partnership Update

Borrower:	Contact	Use of Funds	Amount:	Loan Term*:	Interest Rate:	VSBA Recommendation	Commission Action	Status
Brunswick County IDA	April Beaty, abeaty@bcida.org, phone: 434-848-0248	construct produce processing facility	\$2,000,000	10 years	5%	Approve	I&L Vote to approve 5/21/24	Awaiting final construction pricing before moving to close
City of Danville	Jason Grey (City of Danville Director of Utilities) 434-857-3372 greyjc@danvilleva.gov	Battery storage project for City utility	\$750,000	10 years	5.50%	Approve	I&L Consent 1/6/25	Approved, waiting for fund request.
Town of Richlands	Town Manager, 276-964-2568	Install 5MW Gas Turbine to supply town electricity	\$2,000,000	10 years	5.50%	Approve	I&L Vote to approve 1/6/25	Closed, all funds released
Summerfield Heritage Farm, LLC	John Fant, 276-768-9466, Jsfant64@gmail.com	Hurricane debris removal from farm; Fence Repair,	\$200,000	5 years	1.50%	Approve	I&L Consent 1/6/25	Closed, all funds released
Town of Chase City IDA	Dusty Forbes, Town Manager, (434) 372-5136, cc.townmanager@gmail.com	Rehab historic Lee Elementary into 17 new apartments	\$4,000,000	10 years	3.50%	Approve	Commission Vote to approve with contingencies 9/24/25	Approved, contingencies met. Expecting project to begin Q1 2026
Grayson Natural Farms	Austin C. Phipps General Manager/ Chief Financial Officer Office: 1 (276) 773-3712 Mobile 1 (276) 768-9481 Grayson Natural Farms, LLC / austin@graysonnatural.com	working capital for meat stick production	\$600,000	5 years	5.50%	Approve	I&L Consent 4/11/24	Company sold. Loan repaid in full.
Roses Creek Farm, LLC	Angus McCaffrey: +44 759 9654 843 e-mail : am@saturnbioponics.com	new hydroponic greenhouse	\$2,300,000	10 years	5%	Decline	I&L Consent 5/21/24	Company working to secure needed equity for deal
IALR	Telly Tucker IALR President T: 434.766.6725 M: 434.203.9442 telly.tucker@ialr.org	Purchase Kyocera Building in Cyber Park	\$5,900,000	10 years	5%	Decline	I&L Consent 5/21/24	Strong commercially lending options available
Harris Ranch, Inc.	Greg Harris Harris Ranch, Inc harrisfarmandranch@gmail.com m: 540-263-0117	Purchase building & equipment for hay processing	\$1,000,000	10 years	5.50%	Decline	I&L Consent 1/6/25	Declined due to insufficient cash flow. Invited to reapply when 2024 tax returns complete.

Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

Commission Committees

rev. 1/3/2026

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The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird, Vice Chair
Ms. Amanda Cox
The Honorable Thomas A. Garrett, Jr.
The Honorable T. Travis Hackworth
The Honorable Terry G. Kilgore
The Honorable L. Louise Lucas
The Honorable Daniel W. "Danny" Marshall, III
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Mr. Arthur "Dale" Moore
The Honorable William A. Pace
The Honorable Todd E. Pillion
The Honorable Juan Pablo Segura

RURAL ACCELERATOR COMMITTEE



• In-Person Meeting •

AGENDA

RURAL ACCELERATOR COMMITTEE

**Commonwealth Ballroom, Richmond Marriott Short Pump
4240 Dominion Blvd, Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**Monday, January 12, 2026
11:45 A.M.**

If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter access code: **210 330 008#**.

The Committee will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, please contact: **Warren Bryson** at **(804) 894-9659**, **wbryson@revitalizeva.org** or **Roz Stein** at **(804) 894-9651**.

Welcome and Call to Order

The Honorable William A. Pace

Call of the Roll

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Public Comment

**Rural Accelerator & Energy Supply
Chain Advanced Manufacturing
Program Overview**

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Projects for Review

Mr. Stephen Versen, Deputy Director

Other Business

The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director

Adjournment

Rural Accelerator Committee January 12, 2026

The Rural Accelerator Committee is meeting on January 12, 2026, at 11:45am to discuss potential new projects. The following summary provides staff overview and comments on each item.

Tazewell County IDA (in partnership with Bland County) *Wolf Creek Resort & Lodge (#4455)* \$1,500,000.00 Requested

Project Summary: Based on information provided by the applicant, the Wolf Creek Resort and Lodge will be a transformational, ecotourism-based development designed to serve as a premier outdoor recreation and luxury hospitality destination in Tazewell and Bland Counties, Virginia. Anchored by a full-service lodge, trout outfitter operations, a five-star restaurant, and event venues, the project will also include a vineyard, boutique winery, and equestrian trail network extending into the Jefferson National Forest and the Burke's Garden region.

The primary objective of the Wolf Creek Resort and Lodge project is to establish a sustainable, ecotourism-based destination that leverages the region's natural assets—trout streams, mountain vistas, and forested landscapes—to create a high-quality tourism and residential experience while driving economic growth in Tazewell and Bland Counties, Virginia.

The funding requested in this application will support Phase 1 development of the Wolf Creek Resort. This phase, which is estimated to cost \$7M, involves property acquisition, surveying, and engineering activities. Full development of the Resort will occur through eight phases over an estimated nine-year period.

- Phase 1: Land acquisition, surveying, engineering, and comprehensive economic impact studies.
- Phase 2: Permitting, regulatory approvals, and environmental reviews; followed by a formal investment decision.
- Phase 3: Launch of initial construction; lot sales anticipated by end of phase.
- Phases 4–8: Expansion of hospitality, residential, and recreation amenities.

Each phase incorporates performance reviews and decision gates, ensuring that outcomes and market conditions are evaluated before advancing. From Phase 3 forward, cash flows generated from early operations will help fund subsequent phases, reducing reliance on additional public capital and enhancing financial self-sufficiency.

Investment Structure and Financing Approach: The proposed investment strategy is designed to minimize the amount of public capital required while prudently mitigating financial and execution risk and maximizing long-term economic and fiscal returns for the region.

- **Public–Private Partnership:** The project will be financed through a balanced 50/50 funding model—half from private investors and half from public sources.
- **Private Commitment:** Ag America, an experienced real estate and investment firm, and other private investors, will provide 50% of the total capital, validating the project’s financial viability and market attractiveness through independent analysis.
- **Public Investment Efficiency:** TRRC support will leverage private capital to reduce the funding burden on the Commission while enhancing overall project credibility and investor confidence.

Phase 1 Details:

- Bland and Tazewell Counties will create a new investment entity with an Operating Agreement, which will be the entity investing the TRRC and AMLER funds into the project and holding a 50% share of the property.
- Ag America, and other private investors, will create a new investment vehicle for this project to invest their funds and hold its 50% share of the property.
- These two entities will enter into an Operating Agreement, to be approved by Bland, Tazewell, TRRC, and the investor group, spelling out how the property will be purchased and managed, and how decisions to spend due diligence funds will be approved, among other things.
- Once the property is secured and the due diligence complete, the entities will determine if they will move on to Phase 2. If the decision is no, then the property will be sold with the proceeds paying back all parties proportionally. If the decision is to proceed to Phase 2, a second round of grant and private funding will be secured to proceed.

Matching Funds: Matching funds for this phase of the project will be contributed from the following sources:

- \$2M – AMLER
- \$3.5M – private sector investment (Ag America and others)

Project Outputs: The application shows that an initial total investment of approximately \$24.5 million—split equally between public and private investors—is projected to catalyze over \$70 million in total development investment within the region, and that the project has the following Expected Outcomes:

- Creation of over 250 permanent and construction-related jobs.
- Substantial increases in property, sales, and lodging tax revenues.
- Attraction of new residents and visitors to the region, supporting population stabilization and growth.
- Long-term economic diversification across multiple counties, including Tazewell, Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Smyth, and Wythe.

Staff Comments: The development of the Wolf Creek Resort is expected to result in significant increase in tourism visitation, and related spending, in Tazewell and Bland Counties as well as the greater SWVA region. The application states that overnight stays are expected to impact up to a 60 mile radius.

The multiphase development plan, implemented through a creative public/private funding and ownership model, has the potential to result in a significant ROI for project partners. Although considerable effort has already been made to develop the project structure described in the application, key details have yet to be formalized. Specifically, operating agreements between project partners, detailing decision making and risk management criteria, have not been developed. This information is critical to protecting the Commission's investment, and that of other stakeholders, in the project. The proposed motion, provided under Staff Recommendation, contains conditions requiring the execution of these agreements prior to disbursement of Commission funds.

Draft Motion: If the Commission decides to approve the project, staff suggests the following motion:

I move that the Rural Accelerator Committee approve Grant request #4455 for \$1.5M from the Industrial Development Authority of Tazewell County to support Phase 1 of the Wolf Creek Resort & Lodge project, with the following conditions:

- A joint Bland-Tazewell investment entity is created and executes an Operating Agreement that is reviewed and deemed acceptable by the Commission.
- The new joint Bland-Tazewell investment entity executes an Operating Agreement with the Ag America-related investment entity that is reviewed and deemed acceptable by the Commission.
- This agreement will detail how decisions will be made to ensure all expenditures related to purchasing the property and due diligence will be approved by the project's investors, and how the localities and Commission can recoup their investment if the project does proceed beyond Phase 1.
- The Commission authorizes the Rural Accelerator Committee, with the input of Commission staff, to determine if these Operating Agreements are acceptable and whether the investment of Commission funds into the project can proceed.
- Grant approval expires June 30, 2026.