



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Roanoke  
Program Title: Town on Vinton Business District Revitalization Project  
Program Category: Community & Economic Development

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Dan O'Donnell  
Title: County Administrator  
Signature: 

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**Community & Economic Development Category**

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**BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The Town of Vinton Business District Revitalization Project consists of five (5) public-private partnerships involving two local governments and multiple properties. The Town of Vinton, located in Roanoke County, is a 3-square mile community, home to over 8,000 residents. Though small, the Town of Vinton and Roanoke County have initiated multiple redevelopment projects over the past six years to enhance the Town's economic vitality. The Vinton Business District Revitalization Project is comprised of five separately redeveloped properties: Roland E. Cook School; William Byrd School; Vinton Library; Vinyard Station; and Gish's Mill. The total investment is \$21.7 million in taxable new investment with \$533,500 in annual tax base enhancement, and over 129 jobs created from redeveloped properties.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The goal of the Town of Vinton Business Revitalization project was to preserve and redevelop underutilized historic properties, create new jobs, enhance the tax base, and revitalize the Town's central business district. Redeveloping five properties, which all exist within a 1-mile radius of each other, revitalizes the commercial business district and complements the Town's existing businesses and customer base. Downtown Vinton is home to many successful local businesses, recreational opportunities, and tourism assets with dedicated patrons from the local and surrounding areas. Redeveloping properties within the business district creates momentum and opportunity that respectfully utilizes unique properties in the Town. An additional goal for the redevelopment projects was to preserve the properties' historic character in alignment with community interest, and to qualify for state and federal historic designation and tax credits. Leveraging historic tax credits helped finance challenging projects and attract investors to the community.

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**FULFILLING AWARDS CRITERIA**

**Innovative**

The Town of Vinton Business District Revitalization Project represents five properties, that collectively embody the revitalization of a business district. This project reflects the essence of repositioning underutilized properties for economic benefit, while breathing new life into an underperforming area of the community. Further, the economic impact and multiplier effect from creating new residential and commercial opportunities in the Town is sustainable and significant. Leveraging public resources with private investment is a win-win solution for the Town and County through public-private partnerships. These investments have enhanced the Town's livability, created new jobs, attracted new businesses, and expanded the tax base. Each redeveloped property inspired the next, setting in motion renewed energy, enthusiasm and revitalization. The innovation, vision, and coordination of two participating governments is noteworthy, with an established process that has been replicated numerous times and is generating the desired outcomes.

The target audience for the projects were the residents, businesses, and community stakeholders in the Town of Vinton and Roanoke County. Roanoke County and the Town of Vinton agreed that the community's interests and the responsible use of incentives to facilitate these projects was paramount. The projects also targeted developers, investors and prospective businesses that would continue the momentum in the downtown Vinton area. The Town of Vinton has potential to attract investors, however, initiating these redevelopment projects generated the momentum needed to capitalize on multiple opportunities in Vinton.

These projects were innovative in that the Town of Vinton and Roanoke County partnered to generate momentum and interest in Vinton by utilizing existing public and privately-owned significant properties, all located within one square mile of the Town's central business district. Each project was marketed individually in an open-ended procurement process that allowed for proposals to be accepted until a

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successful agreement was negotiated with a development partner. The properties were each very unique, historically relevant and suitable for specific uses from multi-family residential to commercial. The goal in the community was to create economic opportunity by repositioning underutilized property and returning them to the tax rolls, create new jobs, and improve population density with the needed development of over 100 new residential units. Four of the properties were eligible for historic preservation and tax credits, which made each project unique and viable. Creating more residential opportunities to complement the continually growing business district allows for greater density and growth within the Town of Vinton.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Key participants in these projects included multiple governments - the Town of Vinton (Manager, Council and Town Attorney), Roanoke County (Administrator, Board of Supervisors, Economic Development Director, and County Attorney), as well as multiple private investors. County and Town staff took the lead on marketing and securing appropriate developers for each project, zoning compliance and historic tax designation, and negotiating the incentives and Performance Agreements. The Board of Supervisors, Town Council and the Economic Development Authority (EDA) approved the incentives, Performance Agreements and any necessary rezonings. Aligning interests and resources to form public-private partnerships to meet the mutual development goals of the Town and County allowed for these projects to materialize.

**Model for Other Localities**

The methods used to redevelop these properties can be replicated in other communities by: Utilizing historic tax credits to help finance the projects, repurposing underutilized publicly owned facilities, forming the right partnerships with investors and developers, and providing appropriate development incentives in a responsible way that yields the desired result from the community. While these results can be achieved in any locality, these properties each had their own unique circumstance, which altered

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the process for each project. Understanding the uniqueness of a community, and more specifically the properties to be redeveloped, is extremely important to facilitating redevelopment in an area.

Leveraging appropriate resources and partners is key to the success of the project. This is demonstrated by the five projects that have been redeveloped in the Town of Vinton over the past six years.

**CHALLENGES**

Obstacles encountered included the age of the properties, cost and complexity of development, community compatibility, attracting suitable investor partners, getting community buy-in, and overcoming zoning and regulatory barriers. These barriers were overcome by holding community meetings and receiving public input to ensure the community accepted the redevelopment plans.

Rezoning when necessary was very important, which included creating a special zoning designation, MUD (Mixed-Use Development), to allow the projects to move forward. We also overcame barriers by providing appropriate incentives for each project in alignment with the specific and unique needs of the properties and the development partners. Finally, historic tax credits were secured by creating a historic district and receiving state and federal historic status designation, which paved the way for investors to align with the projects.

**PROGRAM RESULTS**

The impact of this project has been effective in furthering economic development in the Town of Vinton.

The total investment for the projects is \$21.7 million in taxable new investment, with over 129 new jobs created and \$533,500 in new annual tax revenues.

Roland Cook School - redeveloped into 21 loft apartments with an investment of \$3.2 million, creating two jobs and generating \$22,300 in annual tax revenue.

William Byrd School - redeveloped into an 82-unit multi-family residential property (1,2 & 3-bedroom apartments) with an investment of \$12 million, two new jobs and \$45,200 in annual tax revenue.

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Vinton Library - redeveloped into a full-service restaurant with an investment of \$1 million, 50-60 new jobs and more than \$142,000 in annual tax revenue.

Vinyard Station - redeveloped into a multi-tenant commercial facility (4 new businesses), with a \$2.7M+ investment, more than 24 new jobs and \$159,000 in annual tax revenue.

Gish's Mill - redevelopment in process for a mixed-use commercial space for lodging/hospitality, seasonal market and restaurant. This redevelopment project will create 42 new jobs with \$165,000 in annual tax revenue.

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**Before and After Photos**

Roland E. Cook School



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Former William Byrd High School





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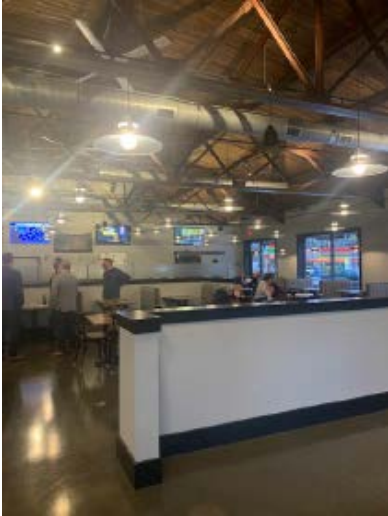
Former Vinton Library



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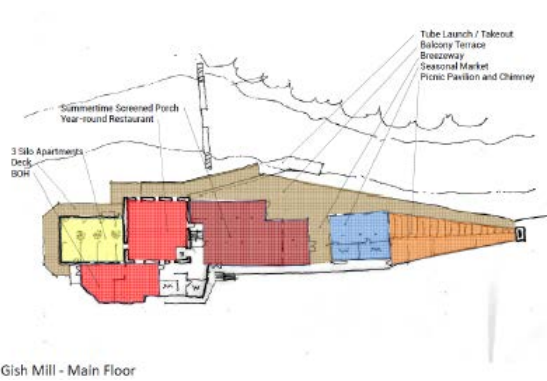
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Vinyard Station

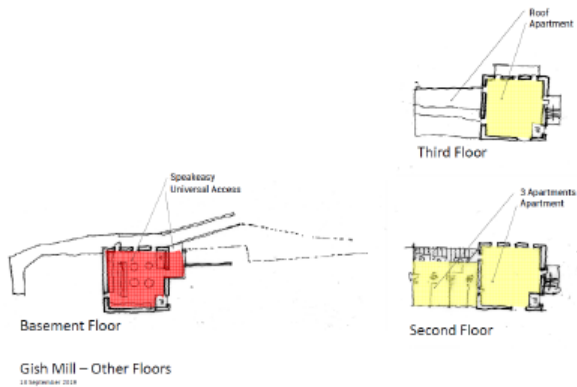


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Gish's Mill (in process)



Gish Mill - Main Floor



Gish Mill – Other Floors