

# MARKET STUDY FOR THE **REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SMOOT TANNERY SITE**

## **OBJECTIVE**

Evaluate the feasibility of redeveloping the Smoot Tannery Site in North Wilkesboro as a cornerstone of the town's outdoor recreation economy, in alignment with the town's strategic vision and regional development plans.

## **KEY STUDY AREAS**



**RECREATION &  
ENTERTAINMENT  
VENUE**



**"CULINARY COLLECTIVE"  
MODEL (Food Hall &  
Restaurant Incubator)**



**LIGHT-MANUFACTURING  
FOR OUTDOOR  
RECREATION EQUIPMENT**

## **ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING PLANS**

**Strategic Vision:** Each of the identified key study areas aligns with the regional commitment of North Wilkesboro, Wilkesboro, and Wilkes County to support and grow the outdoor recreation economy, as outlined in the recently adopted Outdoor Economy Plan. The redevelopment of the former Smoot Tannery Site is central to realizing the regional vision for the Boros River District, linking Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro through greenway and trail connections, and contributing to a vibrant, sustainable economy centered around outdoor activities and tourism.

**Economic Development:** The market-supported reuse of the Smoot Tannery Site will support the town's goals to diversify the economy, enhance local business growth, and attract new residents and visitors through targeted investments in outdoor recreation and related industries. The redevelopment of this site will leverage the Town's 4 million-dollar investment in its flagship "Smoot Park" and the 9+ miles of greenway linkages and state and federally-funded Overmountain Victory Trail. Alignment with these strategic goals can transform the former Smoot Tannery Site into a catalyst for long-term economic growth and neighborhood revitalization.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

**Market Demand:** The study reveals strong market support for development initiatives that cater to substantial consumer interest in outdoor activities, dining, and recreation. Such projects would attract both local residents and visitors, further establishing North Wilkesboro as a key destination within the outdoor recreation economy.

**Economic Impact:** The redevelopment of the former Smoot Tannery Site would reactivate a 3-acre commercial site, putting vacant underutilized land back into productive use and generating significant economic benefits, including job creation, increased consumer spending, enhanced property values, and additional tax revenues for the town and county.

**Community Benefits:** Market-supported reuse of this site would provide new recreational opportunities, foster community engagement, and support local businesses, all while aligning with the community's vision for a thriving outdoor economy.



## CHALLENGES & CONSIDERATIONS

**Financial Viability:** Addressing funding and investment needs is critical to success. Accessing targeted resources for brownfield revitalization and exploring public-private partnerships, grants, and incentives aligned with project-specific programming will be critical for successful implementation.

**Community Engagement:** Ensuring broad community support through active engagement with stakeholders is essential for the project's success and long-term sustainability.

**Property Rehabilitation & Revenue Generation:** While transforming the former Smoot Tannery Site from a derelict property into a productive, income-generating asset presents challenges, it represents a pivotal opportunity to revitalize the area and catalyze additional developments that will support economic growth.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

### TOURISM GROWTH

The facility would draw tourists from across the region, particularly those interested in outdoor recreation, thereby boosting tourism-related spending on accommodations, dining, and entertainment.

### REGIONAL COLLABORATION

This project offers the opportunity for regional cooperation, enhancing the area's overall attractiveness as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts and leveraging investment in shared infrastructure.

### ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

The project would diversify the local economy by expanding the service sector and reducing dependence on traditional industries like manufacturing and agriculture.