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CONTACT: Len Stevens 434-856-8176 (office)  
[Len.Stevens@VDOT.Virginia.Gov](mailto:Len.Stevens@VDOT.Virginia.Gov)

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## **ROUTE 311 (HARVILLE-SAUNDERS PARKWAY) NOW OPEN IN PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY** *New highway to serve Berry Hill Mega Site, providing major boost to Southside's economy*



LYNCHBURG — Today, Virginia's Secretary of Transportation, W. Sheppard "Shep" Miller, III, along with various state and local officials held a ribbon cutting to celebrate completion of Route 311 in Pittsylvania County.

Senator Tammy Mulchi, who serves on the House Transportation Committee and Delegate Eric Phillips joined Secretary Miller in celebrating the road completion and the well-deserved recognition for the leaders who pioneered the megasite development.

The highway, 2.4 miles of new road, will be a major access route into the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill, the largest in Virginia and the southeast United States.

The megasite covers more than 35-hundred acres, is ready for industrial users, and is capable of supporting several thousand jobs.

"You can build the best possible facility for industry," said Secretary Miller. "You can have all the bells and whistles. But if you don't have access to the transportation necessary to support it, it will wither on the vine. We will now have not only a great facility, but a robust transportation network to support it."

“The completion of the connector road, the Harville-Saunders Parkway, marks another milestone in the development of the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill. It provides another example of our community’s comeback story and the anticipated future economic growth and prosperity of Pittsylvania County and Danville,” said Darrell Dalton, Chairman of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors.

This crucial access route to the megasite has been named as the Harville-Saunders Parkway in honor of the late Coy Harville and Danville City Councilman Sherman Saunders. Harville served 16 years on the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors. Saunders has served for over 25 years on the City Council. Both have served as leaders of the Regional Industrial Facilities Authority, which oversees the megasite.

“These two men were visionaries willing to take a chance on a dream and someday soon we all will see the fruits of their labor,” said Vic Ingram, RIFA Chairman. “As of today, this new connector road, the Harville-Saunders Parkway, will forever honor these two devoted public servants.”

“By naming this connector road in their honor, we ensure that their legacies endure, inspiring others to continue the work they started,” Danville Mayor Alonzo Jones said. “This roadway will not only serve as a pathway to economic opportunity but will also stand as a permanent reminder of Mr. Harville’s and Mr. Saunders’ lasting impact on our region.”

Realizing its importance, VDOT prioritized the new highway. Such a project could take upwards of 54 months to complete. Working closely with contractor Branch Civil, they were able to complete the \$33.5 Million highway in just 36.

VDOT Chief Deputy Commissioner Catherine McGhee discussed the new road's anticipated impact.

"Route 311 is a designated industrial roadway with no weight restrictions. We're looking at a future traffic level from the site to handle upwards of 5,250 jobs. That requires robust roads."

VDOT Lynchburg District Engineer Chris Winstead spoke of the specific goals VDOT had for the project.

"A construction contract had to be developed that tied what was important to VDOT to what was important to the contractor: a safe, quality project completed with a sense of urgency in an environmentally sound manner."

The next phase of the project, the Berry Hill Connector Road extension will add an additional two lanes deeper into the mega site, to help address capacity needs. The fully funded \$38 Million project is planned for construction advertisement in May of 2025.

"The future is very bright," said Secretary Miller. "I welcome it with open arms."

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*VDOT's Lynchburg District covers the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, and Nelson. as well as the cities of Lynchburg and Danville*