



## **Augusta County**

*Office of Economic Development*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LifeCore Drive Opens | Dennis O. Burnett Memorial Bridge Named**

Fishersville VA-Fishersville's newest road, Route 636, also known as Lifecore Drive, is now open to drivers. The thoroughfare, including the Dennis O. Burnett Memorial Bridge over the CSX railroad tracks, connects Route 250 near the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center and the Wilson Memorial Complex to Tinkling Springs Road (Route 285). The new road extension provides additional access to Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences and Augusta Health.

The road project, financed through a partnership between Augusta County, Virginia Department of Transportation and private developers, began in January 2013 and now offers citizens an alternative connection to a busy area. "The 636 project is a great example of a public-private partnership benefitting all," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Mike Shull. "Route 636 provides an additional needed connection to our community's hospital and paves the way for future development."

"This project will offer improved safety and smoother traffic flow for the people who live or work in this part of Augusta County," said Don Komara, VDOT Harrisonburg Residency Administrator. "VDOT is proud to be a part of this innovative and successful partnership."

Private partners involved in the project included Crescent Development Group and Branch Highways. “As a representative of Branch Highways, we are proud to be a part of the team that has engineered and constructed this roadway. Working with our team members and VDOT, we were able to complete the State’s first Local Administrated PPTA for Augusta County,” said Michael Freeman with Project Development for Branch Highways.

Along Route 636, the Dennis O. Burnett Memorial Bridge is also now unveiled. The Memorial Bridge is in honor of Augusta County’s first-ever Economic Development Director, Dennis Burnett, who passed away unexpectedly in the fall of 2014. Mr. Burnett played an integral role in several Augusta County projects including Shamrock Farms, DASCOM Americas and the initiation of the Route 636/LifeCore Drive development.

“Dennis Burnett believed in Augusta County and saw the potential in every corner of this County,” said Jeff Moore, who represents the Wayne Magisterial District and this portion of Fishersville. “He worked tirelessly for the region, and we are privileged to be able to honor him.”

With the completed road construction, future growth is expected throughout LifeCore Drive and in the Myers Corner development, a 139-acre mixed-use real estate development. Fishersville Family Pharmacy, Brumbaugh Pediatric Dentistry, Parrott Orthodontics and Shenandoah Settlement Services are all open for business within the development, and Farmers and Merchants Bank has just purchased a lot. Over its ten-year, phased growth, Myers Corner will have a diverse mixture of uses, including businesses, apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and single-family homes, with a significant amount of the site devoted to open space.

New construction includes a 7-Eleven in Myers Corner and The Apartments at Goose Creek adjacent to the Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences. “Myers Corner will be a pedestrian- and bike-friendly community with sidewalks and trails linking these new neighborhoods and open space to the connector roads and the businesses in the area,” said Scott Williams, Manager with Crescent Development. “We can already see the positive impact the new road construction is having on both of our projects at either end of Lifecore Drive (Rt. 636),” Williams said.

“The Route 636 road project combined with the Exit 91 project, Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences, and Augusta Health’s new Heart Center, continues to build on the Board’s vision for Fishersville as a growth area for medical and health target sectors,” said David Karaffa, Vice Chair of the Board of Supervisors. “Fishersville is on track to be a robust life sciences corridor,” Karaffa added.

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About Augusta County, Virginia:

Located in the center of Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley and at the intersection of I-64 and I-81, the area offers easy access to transportation networks and global markets. With household names such as Hershey Chocolate of Virginia, McKee Foods, Target Distribution, Daikin, and Hollister serving as the five largest manufacturing/distribution companies in Augusta County, the area enjoys a rich and diversified business base. More information at [www.AugustaVABusiness.com](http://www.AugustaVABusiness.com).