



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 26, 2012**

Contact: Christianne Parker
Director of Economic Development
Washington County
Email: cparker@washcova.com
Office: (276) 525-1305

Stacey Richardson
Executive Assistant
Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and
Revitalization Commission
Email: Stacey.richardson@tic.virginia.gov
Office: (804) 225-2027

WASHINGTON COUNTY DEDICATES OAK PARK, WELCOMES BUSINESS (\$11 Million in Grant Funds from Virginia Tobacco Commission)

ABINGDON, VA: Today, the Washington County Board of Supervisors and Industrial Development Authority dedicated *Oak Park: Center for Business and Industry – Phase III and IV*, announced a new business for Oak Park, and acknowledged over \$11 million dollars in grant funds provided by the Virginia Tobacco Commission. These funds have been used to help create over 327 additional acres of industrial land, grade 150 acres of shovel ready pads, construct a new access road off US Rt. 11, and add 500,000 gallons per day of reserved sewer capacity for Oak Park.

Washington County announces that Blue Ridge Beverage Company, Inc. will locate its new and expanded Southwest Division distribution center on the new access road into Oak Park creating \$4.8 million in new private investment and 48 jobs in Washington County over the next 36 months. Blue Ridge Beverage Company, Inc is one of the largest, full-service wholesale beverage distributors in Virginia. Family owned and operated and headquartered in Salem, Virginia, Blue Ridge Beverage distributes beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages throughout a 49-county, 17-city region from five operating divisions with other facilities located in Salem, Waynesboro, Lynchburg, South Boston. The Washington County facility will consolidate their Marion and Norton facilities.

The Virginia Tobacco Commission funding came through the Southwest Economic Development Grant and Megasites Grant Programs which were created to advance the readiness of large sites so that communities can successfully compete for significant private industry investment. These Tobacco Commission grants are awarded on a competitive basis in which local commitment and matching funds are recognized.

“The Virginia Tobacco Commission is pleased to partner with Washington County to create sites that are ready to compete successfully for significant private investment,” says Delegate Terry Kilgore, Chairman of the Virginia Tobacco Commission. “We look forward to announcing many new jobs at this location in the years to come.”

These improvements at Oak Park, more specifically the new access road, made it possible for Washington County to assist Blue Ridge Beverage Inc in locating their new Southwest Virginia operation in Oak Park, creating \$4.8 million in new private investment and bringing 48 jobs to Washington County.

“As the largest wine distributor in Southwest Virginia with four operations in the Commonwealth, Blue Ridge Beverage is an important corporate partner to the region and to Virginia,” said Governor McDonnell. “The new distribution operation in Washington County will retain important Virginia jobs and allow the company to expand to support Virginia’s growing wine industry. BRB is a great addition to the Oak Park Center for Business and Industry and represents the first company to locate on the new access road in the park. I look forward to the company’s continued growth and success in the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

The Board of Supervisors and the Washington County Industrial Development Authority have been developing Oak Park since 2001 in phases, as local and grant funds became available. Oak Park Phases I and II have already successfully attracted six companies totaling 440 jobs and \$45 million in private investment. Phase III and Phase IV will add a total of 327 acres to the Park to accommodate future development.

“This is a proud day for Washington County,” says Joe Straten, Chairman of the Washington County Board of Supervisors. “Our Board of Supervisors and Industrial Development Authority are to be commended for their diligence in developing two additional phases of Oak Park and for seeking partnerships and grant funding whenever possible to reduce the tax burden on our citizens. Oak Park has already proven to be a success and will continue to create jobs for generations to come!”

“The Washington County Industrial Development Authority has shown responsiveness to past concerns of prospective industry and has systematically addressed each one,” says Henry Snodgrass, Chairman of the Industrial Development Authority. “Today, we have an industrial park which will compete globally, allow companies to start quickly, operate safely and economically and grow to their maximum potential. Washington County welcomes Blue Ridge Beverage Company to Oak Park and sends a message to other prospective industry – we’re definitely open for business!”