

## County rail line extension nears completion

By: Royce Armstrong

[roycearmstrong1219@att.net](mailto:roycearmstrong1219@att.net)

Release Date: November 11, 2021



With an eye to the future, work is nearly complete on nearly 3,000 feet of new George County rail line, bringing the total to more than 5,500 feet of county-owned railroad.

“This project has been a real collaboration with local industries and the County. Almost a year of design and engineering work went into this project along with 11 months for construction,” Supervisor Frankie Massey, Dist. One explains. “This is the County’s first new railroad track expansion in more than a decade. This rail will not only serve the new Enviva plant, but it also improves rail services for exciting businesses in the Industrial Park.”

County-owned rail line? Most residents likely do not realize the county owns a rail line in the Industrial Park connecting businesses there with the Mississippi Export Railroad (MSE) and

ultimately the Canadian National, CSX, Kansas City Southern and Norfolk Southern roads. The railroad is maintained by MSE.

The new track, which includes two No. 10 turnouts, five high-strength rail crossings, and is built using 115-pound rail is designed to carry heavier trains at higher speeds than the existing track. It also provides the link between Enviva and the MSE.

In addition to providing rail access to the Port of Pascagoula for the Enviva wood pellet mill, the new track is built so it may be extended to other areas of the Industrial Park to meet future business requirements, according to county Economic Development Director Ken Flanagan.

The 2,500 linear feet of new line was built using 7,500 tons of limestone, the 115-pound track and 9,000 spikes and is parallel to 1,050 linear feet of drainage on Evanston Road. The project cost nearly \$1.7 million. Most of that cost was paid using a \$1.5 million state appropriation and grant funding. Only about \$50,000 was direct county funding, Flanagan said.