

520 REPUBLIC

Gratiot County, MI
Assessment Grant

Property Assessment Leads to Industrial Development

ADDRESS: 520 Republic Ave., Alma, MI, 48801	
PROPERTY SIZE: 18.5 acres	
FORMER USES: Residential and Industrial manufacturing	
CURRENT USE: Industrial Manufacturing	
EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:	PROJECT PARTNERS:
In 2006, The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of the County of Gratiot (BRACG) received a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant for petroleum and a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant for hazardous materials.	Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of the County of Gratiot, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Merrill Fabricators



The completed Merrill Fabricators facility.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The 520 Republic Ave. property in Alma, Michigan has a long history of industrial and commercial use beginning in the early 1900s. The facilities built on this property have manufactured trucks, vehicle parts, and specialized products for a wide range of industrial use. During the 1990s, operations at this property ceased and the facilities lay dormant. In 2006, the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of the County of Gratiot (BRACG) was awarded two EPA Brownfields Assessment grants worth \$400,000: \$200,000 for petroleum contamination and \$200,000 for hazardous materials contamination. BRACG spent about \$96,000 in 2007 conducting environmental site assessments at the property that revealed soil and ground water contamination requiring cleanup. Contaminants found included petroleum, lead, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and formaldehyde; as well as metals such as arsenic, magnesium and selenium. The approximately \$204,000 required for cleanup was provided by Merrill Fabricators, which purchased the 400,000 square foot facility and property from a non-labile private owner after the site assessments were completed. Cleanup was completed in August of 2007.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- EPA funded environmental site assessments led to privately funded site cleanup
- Leveraged over \$11 million in private sector funding to date for cleanup, redevelopment and reuse of this property
- Leveraged 111 jobs through redevelopment and reuse
- Removal of the site from the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) list

OUTCOME:

Merrill Fabricators began redevelopment of this property in 2007 and continues to invest in and update its facilities. The redevelopment of this landmark property will be the cornerstone for revitalizing Alma's major industrial area, and has already served as a catalyst for the redevelopment of neighboring properties. Merrill Fabricators has invested over \$11 million for the cleanup, redevelopment and reuse of this property to expand their Michigan operations; the company currently employs 111 people at their new Alma manufacturing facility. In addition to heavy-duty welded products and metal fabrication services for the aerospace and defense sectors, Merrill Fabricators is heavily involved in the alternative energy industry—manufacturing components and equipment for wind and solar applications. As an added benefit of this project, this site was removed from the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) list after a review by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality at the request of EPA Region 5.