

MEDIA RELEASE for immediate use



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BY: Merrill Fabricators – A division of Merrill Technologies
2119 River Street
Saginaw, MI 48602

Contact: Randy Yackel, President Merrill Fabricators
Tele: (989) 754-7891
ryackel@merrillfab.com

BY: Greater Gratiot Development Inc.
136 S. Main Street
Ithaca, MI 48847

Contact: Don Schurr, President
Tele: (989) 875-2083
don.schurr@gratiot.org

MERRILL FABRICATORS CHOOSES TO EXPAND IN ALMA

Mr. Gary Yackel, President of Merrill Technologies Group, headquartered in Saginaw, Michigan is pleased to announce that Merrill Fabricators a division of Merrill Technologies intends to purchase a 399,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Alma, Michigan. The facility located on Republic Street is the largest of the four building complex previously owned by Oxford Automotive.

Merrill Fabricators is an industrial fabrication company manufacturing large and complex welded products for the oil and gas, transportation, and related industries. Merrill Fabricators specializes in the manufacture and assembly of sophisticated valves and pressure vessels. Merrill is expanding its existing operation.

Mr. Gary Yackel stated that, “The large facility offered the perfect opportunity to expand operations while staying focused in the mid Michigan region. The excellent condition of the building, the availability of rail, and general market access makes the location ideal. We are very pleased with the coordination assistance provided by Greater Gratiot Development Inc. (GGDI) and all parties in Alma.”

Mr. Randy Yackel, President of Merrill Fabricators explained that, “One of Merrill Technologies Group divisions, is presently located in three locations within the Saginaw area. Recently after building a new 20,000 sq. ft high bay crane building on 25th street which brings the total square footage to 60,000 sq. ft. we find our self in a position where another expansion is necessary. Due to expanded technological advancements within the company, several market opportunities have come up that are requiring more floor space than Merrill Fabricators is currently capable of supplying. With the expanded floor space now at 399,000 sq. ft., Merrill Fabricators should be able to capture several of the new business opportunities. It is imperative that we do this to achieve future expansion goals. This will bring great opportunities to both Merrill Fabricators and the communities within the Gratiot area. Merrill Technologies is extremely excited with this great opportunity and looks forward to being a valued employer in Alma.”

Merrill Fabricators has a goal of being in the facility by mid summer with production to begin as soon as possible. Mr. Randy Yackel anticipates up to 60 production and 12 office employees at the new location by the end of the 1st year of operation. “Most of our production employees will be high skilled welders that will need to possess several certifications and be able to read and interpret technical drawings. We are very pleased that Alma Schools is home to the Alma Career and Technical Welding Center. We are looking forward to having a close and continuing working relationship.”

Mr. Don Schurr, GGDI President, stated that, “Merrill Fabricators is a perfect match for the building and the Gratiot community. The company is a great fit within our diversification strategy. It is always a pleasure to help a Michigan company expand.” He explained that GGDI is now working through the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of the County of Gratiot to complete the necessary environmental analysis of the facility so that the sale may be finalized.

Mr. Phil Moore, Alma City Manager stated that, “The city is very pleased to welcome Merrill Fabricators.” He further remarked that, “The City Commission has recently discussed its willingness to consider a redevelopment plan for the property and assist in infrastructure modifications as may be necessary. Merrill Fabricators will be a fine addition to the Alma and Gratiot community.”

Schurr said, “GGDI has been working two years with the current owner of the facility JLJB, LLC Real Estate Investment Company to market the facility. JLJB, LLC purchased the three manufacturing buildings with the intention of providing space for new or expanding business in the mid Michigan region. JLJB, LLC was flexible in their willingness to sell all three buildings or split them up for individual sale. Merrill Fabricators is now the corner stone of the redevelopment of that entire section of Alma’s industrial area.”