

# Brownfields

## Success Story

## Common Success at Cooper Commons LLC

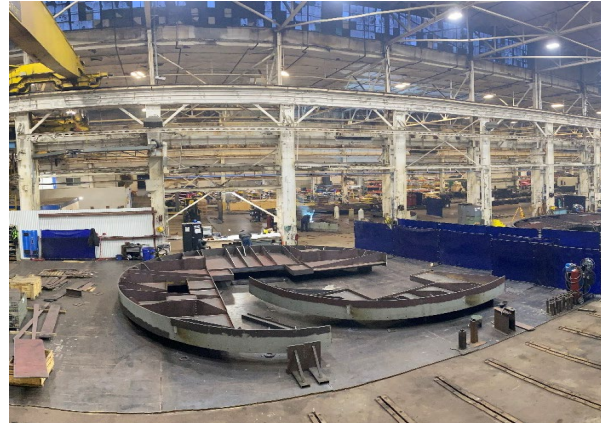
*Grove City, Pennsylvania*

The former Cooper-Bessemer production facility in Grove City, Mercer County, PA, sat underutilized for decades after a long industrial history. The site began manufacturing Bessemer Gas Engine Co. steam engine to gas engine conversion kits in the late 1800s to early 1900s for oil producers. Complex compressor and power engine manufacturing continued at the facility after a series of ownership changes until it operated under Cooper Cameron. At its peak the site employed about 2,000 employees. Cooper Cameron announced it would close the 468,000-square-foot facility in 1999 after selling its natural gas compressor business.

Hall Industries, a regional fabrication company, considered the former Cooper-Bessemer site in 2019 for expansion. However, the company was reluctant to purchase after conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment because of the industrial history and potential contamination at the site.

### Priming the Property for Redevelopment

In 2019, Penn-Northwest Development Corporation (PNDC) received a \$600,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant to perform assessment activities within Mercer County, PA. Working with Hall Industries, PNDC deployed their Brownfields Assessment Grant to complete a comprehensive Phase II Environmental Site Assessment on the 28-acre, five-parcel facility. The activities included over 40 soil samples and 18 monitoring wells. The first two-quarters of testing identified limited contamination of petroleum, lead, and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) above statewide standards. Luckily, this contamination was in a contained area with no exposure pathways. Sampling will continue for eight quarters, consistent with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) requirements for a PA Act 2 Liability Release.



View of renovated production bay occupied by Hall Industries.

**EPA Grant Recipient:**  
Penn-Northwest Development  
Corporation

**Grant Types:**  
FY19 EPA Assessment Grant – \$600,000

**Former Uses:**  
Construction Materials Supplier,  
Other Heavy Industrial Uses

**Former Uses:**  
Manufacturing



Outside view of the redeveloped Cooper Commons facility located in Grove City, PA.



Ribbon cutting in Summer 2021 at the new Hall Industries production facility at Cooper Commons with public officials from Mercer County and Grove City, along with representatives from Hall Industries and PNDC.

**“It is gratifying to see this happening, as we all knew folks that used to work here.”**

Scott Boyd,  
Mercer County Commissioner



Rotary rail car dumpers are an example of what is being manufactured in the redeveloped Cooper Commons.

### For more information:

Visit the EPA Brownfields website at [www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields) or contact Chris Lesniak at (215) 814-5360 or [Lesniak.Christopher@epa.gov](mailto:Lesniak.Christopher@epa.gov)

## Leverage & Job Creation

Comfortable with the limited and contained nature of the contamination assured by the Phase II activities, Hall Industries proceeded with the acquisition and investment in the facility. The total investment exceeds \$11 million to date, which includes leveraging a \$723,000 grant from the PA First Program, a \$2.65 million loan from the PA Industrial Development Authority, and a \$114,000 grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for workforce training. Hall Industries has created over 60 jobs with plans of adding an additional 20 at the former brownfield and has also improved other bays in the facility to attract tenant businesses. Hall Industries and its tenants created over 100 jobs at this facility, a large expansion from the existing 15 employees at the site before redevelopment. The local jobs at Hall Industries pay an average of \$40,000/year, along with full benefits.

## Cooper Commons Today

The former Cooper-Bessemer site has been renamed Cooper Commons LLC to issue in a new era of manufacturing. Now, Hall Industries manufactures large fabricated parts for the railroad, airline, and other industries. As pictured to the left, a rotary rail car dumper turns a railroad car over to quickly unload materials such as grain or coal. Hall Industries continues its 3rd expansion at the site since the acquisition with a continuing partnership between the company and PNDC.

PNDC's expertise in brownfield revitalization has transformed dozens of abandoned industrial properties back into active workplaces, maintaining and expanding the rich manufacturing within Mercer County, PA. Redeveloping the former Cooper-Bessemer site into a job creator brings momentum toward the local manufacturing sector. The Mercer County Commissioner, Scott Boyd, explains the rewarding success of the projects, "It is gratifying to see this happening, as we all knew folks that used to work here." PNDC continues rapid redevelopment with the recent \$500,000 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant awarded in October of 2022.