



Case Study:

# CASS AVENUE INDUSTRIAL LAND

6241 CASS AVENUE, DETROIT, MI 48202

## FACTS

Site ID: 12940

Acres: 1.48

SF at Time of Sale: N/A (vacant land)

FMV: \$160,000

Congressional District: MI-13

Date Sold: November 10, 2014

Buyer: Wayne State University

End-User(s): Wayne State University

New Use: Reuse of parking lot for Biosciences Center (iBio) in city's TechTown District

Jobs Pledged: 0

Jobs Actual: 0

Investment Pledged: No pledge made

Est. New Tax Base: \$0

Lead Agency: MDEQ

Regulatory Programs: Part 201 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Envir.

Protection Act

Remedial Activities: Investigations were completed in 2012 through 2014 to characterize and delineate soil impacts. In 2014, approximately 540 tons of material impacted with lead and PAHs that exceeded Part 201 generic nonresidential direct contact cleanup criteria were excavated from two areas and disposed off-site. Soil was placed as an exposure barrier over remaining impacted soil in those two areas. A restrictive covenant was recorded in 2014 to provide for long-term controls on the Property. MDEQ issued a certificate of completion in late 2014.

Est. Cleanup Cost: \$125,925



## THE CHALLENGE:

Before GM owned it, the 1.4-acre lot in midtown Detroit housed a lead smelting building and two fire department structures. Development started as early as 1897. The structures were razed in the early 1940s and the Property was used as a surface parking lot by an auto dealership, but had been vacant since 1977. Subsequent environmental investigations revealed elevated levels of various compounds in the soil beneath the lot, including lead and arsenic. In addition, the Property is adjacent to Detroit's New Amsterdam local historic district, and any new construction, landscaping and fencing would be subject to review by the historic district commission. The city of Detroit's Master Plan Designation for the Property classified it as ideal for medium-to-high density housing developed compatibly with commercial and/or institutional uses, but environmental institutional controls specific to the Property prohibited residential reuse.

## THE OUTCOME:

RACER was aware that Wayne State University was building a \$93 million Integrative Biosciences Center in Detroit's TechTown District, near our Cass Avenue Property, and approached university leaders with a proposal to sell the Property to support the anticipated growth in employment associated with the development. University officials, unaccustomed to owning and managing properties with known environmental impacts, were concerned about the environmental conditions of the Property, but RACER's environmental team, with support from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, demonstrated the effectiveness of the cleanup and the legal protections the university would maintain post-closing. The Property is now a parking lot for the Integrative Biosciences Center, where more than 400 people work, conduct research or attend classes, and is available for potential future development by the university.



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