

# ON POINT

CONTRACTOR EXCELS AT COMPLEX WORK, WINS MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROJECTS



In just their second full year of operation, Atlanta-based Centerpoint Sitework and Utilities, Inc. is on track to reach \$18 million in volume and has grown from just three to 35 employees with 25 machines.

Owner Brent Benson and his two co-owners, Charles Allender and David Studstill, combined their complementary skills and 50-plus years of cumulative experience in late 2017.

Together, they have achieved meteoric growth over the last 16 months by successfully tackling multiple residential and commercial site development projects, and consistently completing the work on budget and on time.



“We want to be known for mobilizing to the site, getting the job done quickly, very efficiently, and making sure that our client can get to the next phase of their project and we’re not holding them up,”

says Benson, who is a constant presence in the field as he stays on top of all working jobs. “We want to be known as a site work contractor that moves into the site and gets the job done ahead of schedule, so our client can start their building ahead of schedule and finish early.”

Centerpoint’s most current project is designed to become a “livable destination” situated on a 7.9-acre hilltop site a little more than an hour and one-half northeast of Atlanta.

When completed, the Broadstone Sugar Hill development will feature 315 residential units that will house perhaps 1,600 residents, 4,500 square feet of street-level retail, spaces for the Sugar Hill Arts Commission gallery, Sugar Hill Historic Preservation Society museum and a 453-space, two-story parking deck. Broadstone will also have indoor and outdoor activity areas, a resort-style pool, a package center, a dog park, multiple club rooms, gathering spaces, bike storage and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

As is typical for the company, Centerpoint is performing turnkey site preparation at Broadstone Sugar Hill, including land clearing, excavation of



roughly 50,000 cubic yards of dirt, installing a 144-inch underground detention system approximately 600 feet in length, plus several other utilities that

connect to that underground system's storm lines, and then about 2,500 feet of sewer with three penetrations in the adjacent road.

buckets of gravel out a transfer box and precisely spreads it on both sides of the 54-inch diameter drainage pipe that stretches into the retention pond.



On one side of the jobsite, parking is being built on top of the underground detention pond. Centerpoint excavated about 15,000 cubic yards of dirt to install it and then backfilled it with 2,000 tons of #57 gravel stone and dirt fill the rest of the way up.

A wheel loader rolls quickly back and forth between loading gravel from a storage pile and carrying it to the transfer box located within easy reach of the gravel-spreading excavator. While yet another smaller excavator unloads manhole covers from a truck and positions them on the parallel road and a mini-hex is unloaded on site from a flatbed. Compacting the fill are a Cat compactor and track loader.

"We sub out all paving, curb and flat concrete work, but we manage the project from start to finish for quality assurance," Benson says.

### **Machinery fleet**

Throughout the bustling jobsite, Cat machines are hard at work. The site is a blur of Cat machines working at full capacity.

### **Technology driven**

When he first started in the business, Benson was an equipment manager and says that the fuel consumption on a typical job has probably decreased by 25 percent over the past 10 years.

Large excavators rapidly swing full bucketloads from the cut to load the constant cycle of trucks transporting dirt fill to another part of the site.

"Now, you're doing things once instead of twice and in the older days you used to do stuff twice because there was a lot more manual work which is now done with precise lasers," he says. "Being technology driven, today's machines are

Another medium-size excavator scoops



# Centerpoint Sitework and Utilities, Inc.



“We want to be known as a site work contractor that moves into the site and gets the job done ahead of schedule, so our client can start their building ahead of schedule and finish early,” says **Centerpoint owner Brent Benson**.

**Employees:** 35

**Location:** Atlanta, Ga.

**Cat® equipment:** 289D Compact Track Loader, 308E CR Mini Excavator; *Hydraulic Excavators:* 321D LCR, 336D, 336E L (2); *Dozers:* D4K2 LGP, D5K. D5K2, D5K2 LGP; *Integrated Tool Carriers:* IT28G, IT38G (2), IT38G II; *Track Loaders:* 953C (3); *Vibratory Compactors:* CP433C (2), CP563C, CP563E

equipped with GPS and everything is a lot more accurate and efficient than it was 10 to 15 years ago.”

Technology plays a major role in the operation of the business.

David Studstill, one of the owners, does most of the estimating work for Centerpoint, bidding \$250 to \$300 million dollars’ worth of work a year.

“Add the technology with the cut-fill maps from the office, and the GPS on the equipment, and it all adds up to a huge difference out in the field so you’re a lot more efficient,” Benson says.

Centerpoint bids work within a 75-mile radius of Atlanta and is running eight to 12 jobs at all times in different stages. They will complete about 25 jobs from start to finish during the course of a year, with most jobs lasting between 90 and 180 days.

Facing the breakneck schedule, Benson says what keeps him up at night is worrying if he’s taking care of his



employees and if they have everything they need to efficiently complete a job.

“With a smaller workforce doing such a high volume of work, we have to make sure that the operation is running smoothly and everything is on site that enables our workers to be as efficient and profitable as possible,” he says.

## Why they buy Cat equipment

Centerpoint purchases the majority of its equipment outright from its Cat dealer, acquiring 20 pieces from Yancey Bros. Co., with two more rentals that

the contractor will ultimately purchase within the next three months.

“We use Cat Financial for the majority of our financing,” Benson says. “I would say 75 percent of our equipment is through Cat Financial. They are very easy to work with—very accommodating.”

“They really helped us get off to a good start,” Benson recalls. “Yancey helped us out tremendously to get started. We brought the Yancey team into our office and showed them what type of jobs we would be doing. Then

# SAFETY FIRST

As an excavating and utility contractor with 30-plus years of experience in the sitework industry, Centerpoint has expertise in both residential and commercial work and takes pride in maintaining budgets, completing projects on time, and creating meaningful relationships that result in quality projects over and over again.

They excel at complex projects that require skillful coordination, planning and value engineering, yet also work on projects of all sizes. No matter what the size, every job is started and finished with the safety its employees in mind.

our Yancey salesman, Keith Raisanen, helped us select the right fleet for our applications. They helped us find well-maintained used equipment, machines that were still under warranty, and were available.

“David McMillan, our parts and service support rep at Yancey, also

Via a safety training app, once a week an email is sent to all the workers’ phones that they must read and then pass a test to make sure they’re up to date on their training. Workers must complete it 48 hours after it’s emailed to them to make sure everybody is studied on that topic for the coming week.

All foremen are trained in OSHA 30 Competent Person Confined Space and they’re responsible for their crew.

Additionally, the partners maintain a presence at jobsites on a daily basis, inspecting and making sure that everybody is doing everything safely.

helped us tremendously by checking undercarriages and evaluating other critical wear items on the machines to ensure they would perform efficiently for us,” Benson says.

Benson said he and his partners chose Caterpillar and Yancey Bros. Co. when they went into business for the service they provide across the entire Atlanta area, but also for the relationship.

“In just the 20 years I’ve been in this business, we developed a special relationship with Yancey—Mr. Goodloe Yancey, Jim Stephenson and Marc Nash,” says Benson. “At the company that we were working for in the past, they used mostly Cat equipment and when something was down Yancey always helped to get it back up and running and/or they made sure the parts were available.

“So, we followed that same model because downtime costs us money,” he says. “And the people at Yancey have become more than business consultants—they’ve become trusted friends.

“Caterpillar is the only way to go in my



## THE CONTRACTOR SPECIALIZES IN THREE CATEGORIES:

### Preconstruction

- Full Service Take-Offs
- 3D Site Modeling
- Value Engineering
- Scheduling
- Pricing

### Construction

- Clearing
- Demolition
- Erosion Control
- Grading
- Storm Drain
- Sanitary Sewer
- Water Distribution
- Curb & Gutter
- Paving

### Project Management

- Budgeting
- Planning
- Client Communication
- Safety
- Scheduling
- Documentation

mind and the relationship that I’ve built with Caterpillar and Yancey is more than business now,” Benson concludes. “It’s friends and people I would go to dinner with, play golf with—people that I respect. I would recommend them to everybody.” **OTJ**

