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## **CERC receives IEDC Excellence in Economic Development Award**

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The Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC) presented about the success of the state's commercial real estate efforts at the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) conference in Columbus, Ohio - the world's largest gathering of economic developers. CERC director of real estate Melissa Pasquale discussed the impact of CERC SiteFinder and also accepted the 2010 IEDC Excellence in Economic Development Award for top special purpose web site.

Since 1993, CTSiteFinder.com has been instrumental for hundreds of users in the real estate transaction process, resulting in successful deals that help to grow businesses and jobs in Connecticut. Over its history, SiteFinder has facilitated more than 600 successful real estate transactions, equating to thousands of added jobs to the state.

Last year, CERC launched the latest, cutting-edge version of this nationally marketed web site, which now includes IEDC-compliant economic and demographic information. The new SiteFinder platform not only allows the user to search for available space, but also to analyze the location advantages of the property with drive times, business lists, and other community information. The online database has served as a key tool to assist the real estate community for more than a decade, and continues to be an information exchange between economic development professionals, commercial real estate brokers, and businesses evaluating their relocation and expansion needs. Since the launch, the new site averages 19,000 searches per month and currently lists more than 3,000 available properties - totaling space of nearly 50 million s/f and 140,000 acres.

"We've worked hard the past year to create a cutting edge tool that helps Connecticut be in a more competitive position for business attraction, real estate investment and job growth," said Pasquale. "We're pleased to be able to share the success of this award-winning web site with other economic developers, brokers and site selectors and to help users easily discover the advantages of any community in Connecticut."

"We recognize CERC for providing successful strategies to promote new paradigms in economic development in this period of global recovery," said William Best, IEDC chair. "Our awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in communities. CERC is showing that they are at the forefront of the economic development profession and are using innovative and effective practices that can be replicated in other communities."

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