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Main State Ventures signs Casey Family Service to 21,000 s/f lease

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According to Main State Ventures (MSV), Casey Family Services, the direct service agency of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, has signed a 10-year lease to relocate to 775-779 Main St. One of the leading child welfare organizations will take over the entire building, representing 21,000 s/f. Located across from The Barnum Museum, this project will involve major renovation including new interior construction fit out as well as extensive façade improvements.

Renovations are expected to begin by June and extend into the fall for an end-of-year occupancy. Currently located at 789 Reservoir Ave., Casey Family Services will move its entire 36-member staff to Main St., continuing to provide the same high-quality services for vulnerable children, youth, and families, particularly those involved with the foster care system. The office will be a meeting place for the community, including the foster and adoptive parents, as well as youth, served by the agency. Casey Family Services also has been a key player in a local collaborative providing free tax-preparation for low-income individuals and families.

The two Main St. buildings were previously occupied by Planned Parenthood, among other groups. They have been vacant since 2002.

MSV acquired 775-779 Main St. as part of the People's United Bank downtown portfolio in November 2008.

The entire portfolio represents two prime city blocks including seven buildings totaling 255,000 s/f with 2.8 adjacent acres of developable land.

"Casey Family Services is an outstanding organization and a well-respected leader in the city's network of social service agencies," said Kim Morque, principal, MSV. "These buildings have been vacant for years and MSV is committed to bringing them back to life and putting them to productive use. This deal sends a strong signal that companies want to be in downtown. I want to thank mayor Finch and the team at the Economic Resource Center for their support of this transaction."

"We have had a presence in the city for more than 32 years," said Raymond Torres, executive director of Casey Family Services. "We are proud of our long-standing connection to this city, and are pleased to be involved in a resurgence of development in the downtown district." Linda Goldenberg, Bridgeport Division director, said, "As the first and oldest division within our agency, we will continue to engage the youth and families in our community, as well as our new neighbors on Main St."