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## **Meriden's ideal location serves as a magnet drawing new firms and encouraging expansions**

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As the popular old adage suggests, business success often goes hand in hand with selecting the perfect place to set up shop. Even in a difficult economic climate, new businesses have relocated to Meriden and local businesses have expanded. The mayor's office and our economic development office have worked with many companies to ensure that Meriden remains competitive.

Meriden's central location, at the crossroads of Interstates 691 and 91 and the Wilbur Cross Pkwy., serves as a magnet drawing new firms to the city and encouraging expansions. Protein Sciences Corporation, a privately held biopharmaceutical company, has expanded and recently announced it will manufacture vaccine to protect humans against the H1N1 "swine flu" virus. The company also received a \$45 million commitment from U.S. Health and Human Services to support clinical trials of its flu product. Aplicare, a manufacturer of antiseptic ointment, has consolidated its national operations on Research Pkwy. The Community Economic Development Fund relocated from West Hartford into 11,000 s/f of office space adjacent to I-91 and Rte 15. Aerospace contractor, Composite Machining Experts, expanded its operations and aerospace company. AGC Corporation recently held a job fair to recruit new employees.

Business incentives affect a company's relocation or expansion decision. Meriden offers tax abatements for real property improvements and personal property tax abatements as well as low interest loans for manufacturers to acquire or renovate properties. Accel International recently took advantage of a \$500,000 city loan to support acquisition of a 150,000 s/f building on North Colony St. Accel manufactures high-performance wire used in electronics, aerospace, medical, military, automotive and telecommunications sectors.

Midstate Medical Center, our full service hospital, has located its walk-in clinic on the city's east side through an adaptive reuse project. The city's movie theater was converted into a medical office building with MidState Medical Center becoming the largest tenant. Developer, Casle Corp. of Avon, completed the transformation of the 34,000 s/f cinema in June. In addition, two 21,000 s/f buildings will be built to house medical offices and a sleep study center.

Meriden has seen positive real estate activity over the past year. A New York food partnerÅ-ship with factories in Brooklyn and Israel acquired the former home of Pyramid Technologies plant on Elm St. Pyramid Technologies bought a larger, industrial property on Gracey Ave. to expand its operations. Italian food manufacturer, Ragozzino Foods, Inc. added 42,000 s/f to its Chamberlain Hwy. property.

Downtown activity is on an upswing. Luchs Engineering and architects DeCarlo and Dahl acquired 16,315 s/f vacant post office on Colony St. for \$485,000. The property will house its offices. Two obsolete buildings on Colony St. were recently demolished to make room for more parking. Paul's Courtyard Cafe opened on West Main St. in the former Dequaine Museum. The cafe joins the

Sandman Gallery which also moved into the same building within the past year. Also on West Main St., artist housing welcomes residents in the downtown.

Meriden's downtown is slated to become a stop on Connecticut's New Haven to Springfield commuter rail service. We are busy planning the development of an intermodal transportation center at the current Amtrak station site. This intermodal center will not only serve Meriden's current Amtrak service, it will also offer linkages to local bus, taxi and corporate van services. The intermodal center will provide increased access into and out of the downtown from I-691's downtown exit and will attract new businesses, commuters and residents to the city's center.

If you are interested in learning more about Meriden, our incentives, available real estate properties and sites or our downtown development plans visit [www.meridenbiz.com](http://www.meridenbiz.com). We welcome your interest in our city.

Michael Rohde is the mayor of the City of Meriden.

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