



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Equity Expands into New Market**

**Columbus, Ohio – July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006** - Equity, a full-service commercial real estate company opened their regional headquarters in Tampa, FL. This office will serve as a center of operations for Equity's Southeast Region, which includes Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. The company specializes in retail and healthcare projects offering development, construction, real estate brokerage and property management services. Equity has already identified and is pursuing \$150 million worth of projects. Steve Wathen, CEO of Equity, says that "Choosing Tampa was easy. The central Florida region is one of the strongest demographic matches in the nation for our retail and healthcare specialties, and the tremendous population growth in the region adds to its appeal."

Equity's array of services are offered independently or in any combination, so each client can have a real estate solution uniquely tailored to their needs. This full-service platform aids the company in attracting and retaining top talent in all fields. Equity's agents are among the most financially productive in their markets. "We are excited about our entry into the Tampa market. Our full service approach is very attractive to any potential brokerage team member who wants to serve clients with more complex needs or more demanding projects. I am confident that our market share will grow rapidly." stated John Brooks, Executive Vice President of Real Estate Services for Equity.

The momentum of Equity's entry into the Tampa market is being aided by the acquisition of a commercial real estate brokerage group, the Rorebeck Marini Real Estate Group now called the Rorebeck Marini Equity Retail Group. The four-member team, including Curtis Rorebeck, Michael Marini, David Gibson and Howard Bergen, will continue to specialize in retail real estate transactions. The newly formed Rorebeck Marini Equity Retail Group will benefit from their years of successful retail tenant representation and site location. The company was started 15 years ago as the Rorebeck Expansion Group. Later Marini joined from Wachovia Bank when the business grew in land acquisition and real estate investments. Wathen knew they would be an asset to the growth of Equity. Excited about the acquisition, Rorebeck says, "Equity offers clients a "big team" approach to the real estate business. The full-service platform of construction, development, brokerage and property management that is all in-house gives us an edge no one else has in this area. I am happy to see Equity move into this area and offer a complete package that is truly beneficial to all of our clients." Active in central Florida, their high-profile clients include TGIF Friday's, First Watch, Splittsville, Tijuana Flats, and Buffalo Wild Wings (BW3's).

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Equity acquired an office building at 4107 West Spruce Street, in the West Shore business district. The building is currently being renovated. Equity will initially occupy 5,000 square feet of the 30,000 square foot building and will be leasing the balance of the space. Other members of Equity's team in the Tampa office include Timothy Riggs and Linda Smith, both sales associates specializing in leasing and sales and Phil Kirkpatrick, a development officer. Kirkpatrick states, "Virtually every segment of commercial real estate is growing rapidly in Tampa and in the state of Florida. Equity's growth as a company has been very strong in its other markets and the company will be vigorously pursuing new opportunities here. For that reason Equity is currently recruiting for several other positions among all divisions within the Southeast Region."

Started in 1987 by Steve Wathen, Equity has quickly become a commercial real estate firm with national stature. Though the company has grown significantly, Equity has not lost focus on their core values and commitment to their clients. Equity's executive team has combined project volume of over \$1 billion and is at the forefront of the company's success. The company revenues grew by 87% in 2005 and Equity has been named a National Top Developer in Modern Healthcare Magazine. To serve its many new clients, Equity's staff has grown 38% just last year. Equity expects to expand its national team by nearly 50% this year. The company has a broad geographic reach with business ventures in such various locations as Dallas and Houston TX, East Lansing, MI, Springfield, MO, and Greenville, NC, and its most mature markets throughout Ohio. Equity's development project list is comprised mostly of retail and healthcare projects, but the firm serves most commercial project types. Equity has experience working with numerous hospital systems and physician practices, developing medical office buildings, ambulatory surgery centers and other specialty healthcare facilities. Equity also has developed lifestyle centers and retail centers.

Excited about entering the Tampa market, Equity looks forward to their continued growth and expansion with their Southeast Region. Equity was incorporated in 1989 and currently has offices in Tampa, Florida and Cincinnati, Ohio, plus its headquarters in Worthington, Ohio. Equity is one of the largest developer/ builders of commercial projects in the Midwest. Its Tampa office is located at 4107 West Spruce Street, Suite 100, Tampa, FL 33607. 813/579-2000.