1993 OUTSTANDING AWARD
Rhône-Poulenc Rorer received a 1993 Outstanding Land Development Award. This corporate headquarters and research facility in Upper Providence Township was recognized for several outstanding site planning efforts.

SITE PLANNING
This facility is located on a former farm near the interchange of U.S. 422 and Route 29. The building is setback from the roadways and carefully sited into the rolling rural landscape to conceal its massive size and scale. The architecture of the three-story building is pleasing. Its many windows bring the surrounding scenic landscape into the building, making pleasant office space. Parking lots, providing approximately 1,800 spaces, are arranged in a circular fashion around the building and are connected by a loop road that provides safe and convenient circulation. Several parking lots are terraced into the sloping grade and blend into the existing landscape.

RENOVATION
An existing nineteenth century farmhouse and barn were renovated and are used as a corporate training center and meeting rooms. Rehabilitating these structures and using compatible building materials, such as stone and brick in all new construction, enhances the

**Project Name**
Rhône-Poulenc Rorer

**Location**
500 Arcola Road
Northeast of the Rt. 209 interchange of U.S. 422 at Arcola Rd.
Upper Providence Township
Montgomery County, PA

**Project Data**
- Corporate Headquarters and Pharmaceutical Research
- Development Laboratories
- 297 acres
- Total Building Sq. Ft. 1.1 Million
- 4.7% building coverage
- 9.4% impervious coverage
- 1,800 parking spaces

**Key Features**
- Sensitive building placement
- Effective circulation and parking layout
- Renovation and reuse of an existing farmhouse and barn
- Natural features protection
- Exceptional recreational and pedestrian amenities

**Owner/Developer**
Rhône-Poulenc Rorer, Inc.
Collegeville, PA.

**Engineer/Architect**
CUH2A
211 Carnegie Center
Princeton, NJ
rural atmosphere on site. Site details such as wooden fencing, stone walls, and small stone outbuildings, also integrate this facility into the rural setting.

**NATURAL FEATURES**

Much of the site's 205 acres was kept in its natural state. An existing hedgerow was preserved and screens views of the service and utility areas and creates a naturalized buffer between the wings of the building. A large mature hackberry tree, originally part of the hedgerow, was preserved and frames the main entry to the building. Many former farm fields are now maintained as natural meadows, and mature woodlands along the Perkiomen Creek have been preserved. Twenty-five acres of pasture land have been set aside to raise sheep, while other fields have been planted with sunflowers and corn to create food and habitat for birds. To protect long-distance rural views from future development, Rhône-Poulenc Rorer purchased an additional 92 acres adjacent to the creek to remain in permanent open space. A large pond to the rear of the buildings serves as an attractive focal point, while functioning as a stormwater retention facility. Extensive landscaping softens the building appearance. Native and low-maintenance plant material helps integrate the development into its natural setting. Large trees were planted in groves around the building and within planting strips in parking areas. An attractive planting of trees and shrubs surrounds the pond, creating a naturalized landscape.

**PEDESTRIAN AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES**

The Rhône-Poulenc Rorer facility provides exceptional pedestrian and recreational amenities. Sidewalks lead from parking lots to building entrances, and a five-mile walking and jogging trail winds through woods and meadows. Shaded outdoor seating and picnic areas are scattered throughout the facility. Active recreational facilities, such as basketball courts, tennis courts, and softball fields, are provided for employees. Rhône-Poulenc Rorer also opens its facilities to many civic organizations, local schools, and environmental groups such as the Perkiomen Watershed Association, the Audubon Society, 4-H groups, and local sporting events.

**INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Rhône-Poulenc Rorer provided significant infrastructure improvements. Road improvements included the widening and realigning of Arcola Road meeting Route 29 at a new signalized intersection and the widening of Route 29 to four lanes with the addition of needed turn lanes. Rhône-Poulenc Rorer was also responsible for extending a waterline from the Mingo Village area to serve its facility and the adjoining properties.

This pharmaceutical corporate headquarters and research facility has earned the Outstanding Land Development Award due to its well-planned on-site design and the careful blending of this facility into the surrounding rural landscape.

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**The MCPC Approach**

*The Montgomery County Planning Commission's Land Development Competition is an annual program dedicated to recognizing excellence in site planning and design throughout Montgomery County. It honors the developers, consultants, and municipalities responsible for shaping the places that add to Montgomery County's high level of liveability and attractiveness.*

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission, Courthouse, Norristown, Pennsylvania 19404