

Carbon Motors Pulls Equipment From IN Plant

The Associated Press

CONNERSVILLE, Ind. (AP) — A company that had hoped to open a high-tech police car plant employing as many as 1,500 workers in eastern Indiana has cleared out its plant amid the resignation of a key official.

Mayor Leonard Urban told the Connersville News-Examiner (<http://bit.ly/ZsRCZn> [1]) that crews removed equipment from the Carbon Motors plant in early March. Connersville Street Department employees have painted over the Carbon Motors logo on the entrance and exit signs at the plant and removed the "Carbon Motors Drive" street sign.

The company had leased part of a vacant Visteon plant, but its lease with the city was to end Sunday, and no extension has been sought.

Carbon Motors arrived in Connersville in 2009 amid great fanfare, pledging to build its high-tech police cars at the idled auto parts plant. The plant's closing had left the county with the state's highest unemployment rate, and Carbon Motors was seen as a way to help turn things around.

But the U.S. Department of Energy rejected Carbon's bid for a \$310 million loan to finance the start of production in March 2012, throwing the company's prospects in Connersville into doubt.

Company officials continued developing the vehicles and working to secure private funding.

The city is trying to sell the former Visteon plant.

Urban said he received an email from Alan Bratt, who served as plant development officer for Carbon Motors, saying he had resigned from the company. But he had few other details about the company's plans.

"No one has said anything about where they are going or what's going to happen, we just know they came and got their stuff," Urban said.

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