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Avison Young Opens DC OfficeBy *Erika Morphy*
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Lipton

WASHINGTON, DC-Canadian commercial real estate company Avison Young has opened an office in the District that it hopes to develop into a full service commercial real estate brokerage. Keith Lipton, former executive vice president and managing director of Grubb & Ellis' local office, has been recruited as managing director of the Avison Young operation.

Also joining from Grubb & Ellis are Margaret Donkerbrook, as vice president of Research and Sarah Peyton, as regional operations manager.

Lipton tells GlobeSt.com that the company intends to open offices in Maryland and Virginia; the timetable depending on the company's acquisition and recruiting activities. It intends to build out staff--at least 20 brokers by the end of 2010--through hires and acquisition of local firms. He declined to provide additional details about the company's growth plans or go-to-market strategy other than to say the company expects to have closed its first deal by end of Q1 2010.

The DC office is part of Avison Young's larger strategy of building out a network of offices in the US, following its year-long national consolidation in Canada, a process that also included the acquisition of Darton Property Advisors and Managers. In January 2009, the company opened its first US office, in Chicago.

A number of brokerage firms have set up shop or expanded operations in the District recently, including FirstService REA, which brought on board much of the **former GVA Advantis team**. Other examples include Cassidy & Pinkard Colliers which is **building out a tenant rep division**.

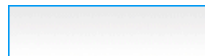

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