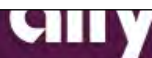


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Nov 24, 2009 - 10:05 EST

Avison Young opens new office in Lethbridge, Alberta

Newest office represents next step in company's strategy to expand domestic and international operations TORONTO (CNW) - Avison Young, Canada's largest independently-owned commercial real estate services company, announced today the opening of a new office in Lethbridge, Alberta.

The newest Alberta office, located at Lethbridge Centre in downtown Lethbridge, will initially comprise four industry leaders: Doug Mereska, Rollie Beauchesne, Jeremy Roden and Dave Nelson. The newly-formed Lethbridge partnership will be led by Mereska as Managing Director.

Lethbridge, a city of 85,000 people, is located two hours south of Calgary and one hour from the Canada-U.S. border. The city consistently demonstrates lower unemployment rates than the provincial or national averages and was recently ranked ninth out of 121 cities for lowest cost of doing business.

"The opening of an office in Lethbridge, Alberta is in response to the strong interest we received from prospective clients in this region," comments Mark E. Rose, Chair and CEO of Avison Young. "The new office is a great opportunity for Avison Young to build on the successes of our Calgary and Edmonton operations. With their combined backgrounds and experience in the industry, Doug Mereska and his team will build upon Avison Young's foundation of quality service and lead us to further growth while maintaining Avison Young's excellent reputation in all the communities in which we serve."

Avison Young is a leading Canadian commercial real estate brokerage and property management company with more than 500 real estate professionals in (now) 14 offices across Canada and in the U.S. Today's announcement comes on the heels of the opening of a new office in Washington, DC two weeks ago.

"We are very pleased to welcome this group of distinguished professionals to the Avison Young organization," comments Todd Thronson, Managing Director of Avison Young's Calgary office. "Given their market knowledge and professional skill sets, these gentlemen complement our drive to be best-in-class in all the markets we service. We are excited about the services platform we can now offer to our clients who do business in Lethbridge."

Over the past year, Avison Young has pursued an active acquisition and expansion strategy to enhance its solid Canadian operation. In December 2008, Avison Young completed its national merger process, creating a single national corporate entity. That same month, the company acquired Darton Property Advisors and Managers,

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establishing Avison Young as one of the country's largest independently-owned, third-party commercial property management firms.

In January 2009, the company opened its first U.S. office, in Chicago, IL, followed by the office in Washington, DC two weeks ago. The company has been continually adding key talent in its existing markets across Canada.

"My new partners and I are excited about the opportunity to open a commercial-specific real estate office in Lethbridge and to bring the Avison Young brand into this market," says Mereska. "Avison Young has undergone significant growth over the past year. We are impressed by the company's performance and current strategic direction, and excited to be representing the next step of the company's expansion plan."

"Lethbridge is a diversified city that possesses deep roots in the history of our nation and is a key contributor to the success of the Southern Alberta region and the province of Alberta," adds Mereska. "Public service is the number one employer, which leads to a very stable economic climate. We look forward to working with our new and existing clients and providing them with first-rate real estate services."

Founded in 1978, Avison Young is Canada's largest independently-owned commercial real estate services company and the only national, Canadian-owned, principal-managed real estate brokerage firm in the country. Headquartered in Toronto, Ontario and ranked among Canada's leading national commercial real estate organizations, Avison Young is a full-service commercial real estate company comprising more than 500 real estate professionals in 14 offices across Canada and in the U.S. The company provides value-added, client-centric investment sales, leasing, advisory, management and financial services to owners and users of commercial, industrial and multi-residential real estate properties.

Editors/Reporters can now follow Avison Young on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/AvisonYoung> Biographies/Backgrounder Doug Mereska Doug Mereska has been selling and leasing commercial real estate for the past eight years. He will continue to focus on his area of expertise in investment real estate, developed through years of working with various real estate investment companies. A graduate of the University of Lethbridge, Mereska is a long-time resident of the city and is involved in numerous community initiatives and service clubs.

Rollie Beauchesne Rollie Beauchesne is the elder-statesman of the Lethbridge partnership, having begun his commercial real estate career in 1991 after many years of successfully operating his own retail business. His 18 years of experience in all aspects of commercial real estate sales and leasing have made him an industry leader. Thanks to his in-depth knowledge of the Lethbridge market, Beauchesne has worked for many different national and local companies, from REITs to retailers.

Jeremy Roden Jeremy Roden has an extensive background in the Lethbridge commercial real estate market and prides himself on the strong relationships he has developed with many significant landlords, developers, investors, land owners and tenants. Roden's motivation to succeed and determination to ensure that his clients are always a first priority have propelled him to become a market leader.

Dave Nelson Dave Nelson has held ownership in several small- to medium-sized businesses in and around the Lethbridge area. He was born and raised in Lethbridge and, hence, his knowledge of the market will prove to be vital to the company's success. Nelson spent the first 19 years of his working career as a Class-A Professional in the Canadian Professional Golfer's Association, the last 10 years as the Head Professional/General Manager at the Picture Butte Golf Club north of Lethbridge.

Lethbridge, Alberta From its early days as a drift mining and agricultural centre, Lethbridge became the commercial, financial, transportation and industrial hub of southern Alberta it is today. Among its multitude of attributes, Lethbridge boasts two nationally recognized post-secondary institutions, the largest research centre in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's national network of 19 research centres, a young, well-educated and ethnically diverse population, and one of the lowest costs of living in North America.

Service and trade industries generate over half of all the occupations in Lethbridge. Other occupations are diversified across the industries of manufacturing, public sector



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services, construction, transportation, finance/insurance/real estate, and primary industry. Lethbridge consistently demonstrates lower unemployment rates than the provincial or national averages and was recently ranked ninth out of 121 cities for lowest cost of doing business.

The city of Lethbridge is ideally located at the crossroads of four major highways, two hours south of Calgary and one hour from the Canada-U.S. border.

The average commuting time to work is 10 minutes. According to the 2009 civic census, the city of Lethbridge has a population of 85,492, and Environment Canada has listed Lethbridge among the top 10 Canadian cities with the most sunny days per year.

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11/24/2009 /For further information: comment or photos: Sherry Quan, National Director of Communications & Media Relations: (604) 647-5098 or (604) 726-0959, [squan\(at\)ay-bc.com](mailto:squan(at)ay-bc.com); Mark Rose, Chair and CEO: (416) 673-4028; Doug Mereska, Managing Director, Lethbridge, (403) 330-3338; Todd Thronson, Managing Director, Calgary, (403) 232-4343, www.avisonyoung.com/ CO: Avison Young (Canada) Inc.

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