



COMMERCIAL PROPERTY
EXECUTIVETM

Avison Young Expands Retail Footprint in Arizona

The acquisition of Phoenix-based Strategic Retail Group is the latest in a series of moves intended to bolster Avison Young's retail advisory services.

Barbra Murray

Oct 09, 2019



Image via Pixabay

Avison Young's retail footprint in Arizona just got bigger, and deeper. The Toronto-based firm recently acquired metropolitan Phoenix-based Strategic Retail Group, effectively establishing its retail brokerage practice in the Grand Canyon State.

SRG, now operating as Avison Young, made its debut in 2006 and in the relatively short time since its establishment, the firm has made a name for itself in Arizona as a strong group offering innovative solutions for investors, owners and tenants in the retail sector. SRG has shepherded local and regional clients through a variety of transactions, providing services involving tenant representation, landlord advisory, project leasing, tenant rollouts and expansions, new developments and investment sales.

For Avison Young, bringing SRG into the fold fulfills a goal the firm has pursued for the past year—growing its retail presence in Arizona beyond its existing retail property management platform. Avison Young believes

metro Phoenix and Arizona as a whole are underserved in the retail real estate arena and perceives a wealth of opportunity given the state's appeal among tourists and the Canadian snowbird crowd, as well as residents' fondness for lifestyle-specific brick-and-mortar destinations. If investor activity is any indication of retail's liveliness in the area, investment volume in Phoenix reached \$573 million in the first half of 2019, surpassing that of such top-tier markets as Boston and San Francisco, according to an Avison Young report.

Matt Milinovich, James DeCremer and David Jarand, former partners at SRG, are now principals at Avison Young. The team, along with six other former members of SRG, will work to manage and expand the firm's retail brokerage practice across Arizona.

RUMORS OF RETAIL'S DEMISE...



Matt Milinovich, Principal, Avison Young. *Image courtesy of Avison Young*

The much-talked-about cries of a retail apocalypse over the last couple of years has not made Avison Young shy away from the sector. The firm's bolstering of its retail services over the last 18 months extends beyond Arizona and includes such moves as the hiring of retail and multifamily specialist **Brian Kelley as principal of operations** for its St. Louis office.

“While the retail landscape is constantly changing and there are certainly impacts being felt due to online retail sales, we feel there is not a ‘retail apocalypse,’ but rather adjustments being made in the segment as it evolves,” Milinovich told Commercial Property Executive. “For many years now, sophisticated and forward-thinking retailers have thrived with both online and brick & mortar storefronts. While retail shopping centers are constantly changing and becoming more entertainment/restaurant-focused and retailers are right-sizing their stores to be more efficient, we still feel confident that there is a lot of business to be done in the retail commercial real estate segment to help tenants, landlords and investors during these exciting times.”