

## Ottawa broker starts new practice to focus on sustainability



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**After more than 25 years working for other companies, well-known Ottawa real estate broker James McNeil has decided to strike out on his own.**



*(Provided.)*

Mr. McNeil recently left his job as a vice-president at Cushman & Wakefield Ottawa out of a desire to bring his own “green” approach to commercial real estate.

He aims to focus on sustainability practices and call upon a list of experts for related services, people that he has formed connections with during his decades in the business.

Sustainability will include factors such as how to best design a workspace for energy efficiency, as well as recommending sustainable tenant practices in their day-to-day worklife.

“I just felt it would be much more advantageous to myself to create a more unique real estate firm, which at its core is a brokerage, but to be able to offer all the different services that clients are starting to demand,” said Mr. McNeil, a former Ottawa green real estate practice lead at Cushman.

He acknowledged that a startup company in this field does have big competition: large, branded, multinational companies with billions of dollars in revenue available to them.

There are disadvantages, however, to companies of those size, he said. They're less nimble and may not be able to individualize services as much as a client needs.

He says these are some of the reasons why more brokers are choosing to be self-employed.

"These boutique real estate firms are popping up everywhere, and they're generally managed by people that are highly experienced within their industry," he said.

And although he is working on his own for now, he is building a portfolio of related experts and companies that could be of use to his current clients, as well as new ones.

Specifics will be forthcoming once the new people are on board, he said.