



Tom Sanderson, founder and president of Summit Property Group.



Wyatt and Tim Sanderson.  
Photo by Riverwood Photography.

# SUMMIT PROPERTY GROUP

## Looks to Expand

When life sends us curveballs, sometimes we are able to hit them out of the park. This is true for Tom Sanderson who came out swinging when he moved to Calgary 20 years ago. Ready for a fresh start, he arrived with little more than a duffel bag, an unrivalled work ethic and an openness to whatever came his way. Within a few months he had created a fledgling company that he and his wife (Adrienne) have now grown to employ a staff of 70 people in Calgary and Edmonton as well as earned, a solid reputation in the industry. As the founder and president of Summit Property Group, Sanderson has carved out a property management niche in government services and is tackling the next stage of his business: franchising to expand the business model nationwide.

Moving to Calgary at 44-years-old, broke and broken, Sanderson says "I had enough business experience and documented successes and failures". He realized he just couldn't rely upon one source of income or any one employer. A livelihood must be layered with multiple sources of income to allow proprietors to pull from Peter to pay Paul to keep a business moving. So that's what he did.

"I identified a niche Government Services market that could grow a successful business that affords a crisis-proof business and a sustainable living for employees," says Tom Sanderson.

He credits some good fortune with his start in facility management and dogged entrepreneurial determination for his success. Coming off a painful divorce and business failure, he arrived in Calgary and stumbled upon a part-time job with an affordable housing group as a resident manager at a small building, which gave him a modest income and a place to live. It was also fortuitous timing, as the city was changing its business model from an employee-based system to a contracted one. This

opportunity gave Sanderson the freedom to be an owner/operator and let his entrepreneurial spirit thrive.

Within a matter of months from starting in this entry-level position he established a business through which he contracted the property management services for at first one building and then additional locations. By his second anniversary he was managing 20 City affordable housing properties out of a home office, and as the company grew in scope and size he rented a residential garage, then a small office in the northeast, and for the past seven years the Summit team has worked out of a comfortable space in Ramsay on the outskirts of downtown Calgary. There, he and the Summit team coordinate the operation of two offices managing nearly 3,000 doors in Edmonton and the business touches around 10,000 doors in Calgary with annual revenues of over \$5.5 million.

As a not-for-profit business, Summit performs a multitude of facility management services for affordable housing locations in two Alberta cities including snow and landscaping management, janitorial services, garbage pick-up, handyman services, HVAC, building envelopes and tenant management services primarily for municipal, provincial and federal public sector customers.

"We're not a one-trick pony," he says. "Our core business is Government services maintenance and that's where the sustainable revenue streams grow from. We understand how to navigate the public work environment, which can be challenging, and our not-for-profit model resonates well with our mission and the government services sector."

Despite securing multi-year contracts in a variety of service areas including tenant management, eavestroughs, dryer vents, large item removal, grounds maintenance, parking lot cleaning, handyman contracts and capital asset management,

Summit takes nothing for granted. The team focuses on providing quantifiable value-add services beyond any client scope of work. Unlike any of the competition, Summit offers Property Management brokerage expertise with licensing in British Columbia and Alberta. While not required for government services, Property Management industry experience is one of many value-adds Summit can offer clients. Since the beginning, Sanderson and his team have gone above and beyond for client agencies and stakeholders. It is this reputation and high standards that clients say have made Summit their Go-to-Guys and One Stop Shop facility management company since 2000.

Summit has shared its extensive expertise in the affordable housing market throughout Alberta and now Tom Sanderson is looking to duplicate his successful business model and expand the reach of the company across the country. As Summit was building out their property management division, Sanderson was retained as Managing Broker by Real Property Management, and while in that position Sanderson learned about the benefits of franchise business development and owner operator partnering. He realized that he could no longer profitably grow his business geographically in Alberta so finding like-minded entrepreneurs to duplicate his model across Canada was the next transforming journey for the brand.

"Franchising works. People want to be part of something bigger than themselves while still retaining their own independence as entrepreneurs. Owner/operators are the best partners," he says.

Potential partners are a diverse lot: mature business people looking to finally work for themselves, young entrepreneurs forging a path and people of any background regardless of education or skills training who are willing to work hard. Summit's model makes it easier. It's a proven facility management model geared toward government services and, given the frequent enquiries

Sanderson fields from jurisdictions across Canada looking for his services, it is in demand.

"I don't need to sell anyone a franchise to pick up a sale. I have no desire in that. I want to be able to mentor, help, guide, coach and provide tools that are going to help you grow your business. There is a real need for our services and opportunity with Summit to expand the brand nationally," says Sanderson.

Another exciting change, Sanderson's two sons Wyatt and Tim have taken over the day to day management and business development roles as he focuses on business to business relationships and franchising the business.

With Summit's crisis-proof proven business model, the opportunities are extensive, offering a good, sustainable living in today's marketplace. Tom Sanderson is excited to enter the next chapter of Summit Property Group's story: welcoming entrepreneurs to the Summit family with the imminent launch of his franchise program. The sky truly is the limit with Summit.

Summit is now prequalifying business partners prior to the formal launch of the Canadian franchise. For more information, please call Tom Sanderson or Brent Park at 877-669-1052 or email at [franchise@spgmt.com](mailto:franchise@spgmt.com)



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