

# Development speaks to importance and growth of high-tech industry

BY DAVID PARKER, CALGARY HERALD JULY 26, 2018

This city has a thriving technology industry thanks to many homegrown businesses becoming hugely successful in the national and international markets. And they are big users of our commercial real estate.



**The new 200,000-square-foot Hexagon building in Melcor's The District development was situated to take advantage of views to the west.**

Cody Clayton, president of Remington Development, says its past three major commercial buildings have all been occupied by high-tech firms.

Computer Modelling Group works out of a 90,000-squarefoot building in University Research Park, the Benevity logo proudly sits atop the Meredith Block — where more than 300 Calgarians are employed — overlooking Memorial Drive, and Remington has completed a new home for Hexagon in Melcor's The District development.

Michael Ritter, Hexagon's president and CEO, organized a pre-grand opening recently to give a tour of the building to workers and their families. They will not move in until September but much of the interior space is under high security, so few members of the staff will have access to all areas.

More than 1,000 people were invited to wander through and see where every employee would spend their working days and enjoy meals provided by 14 food trucks.

A powerful global brand, the company provides precision positioning technology, dedicating around 30 per cent of its annual revenues to research and development of GPS navigation products. Much of the work is conducted under different security levels — which guided IBI Group and Shearer Design in developing the 115,000 square feet of office, research and development area,

26,000 square feet of specialty industrial space, and a conference and event wing.

Architect Scott Miller, associate with IBI Group who was responsible for the building's design, says it was challenging to meet the owners' needs, with two distinct wings linked by a clearglazed two-storey lobby.

It was also situated to take advantage of views to the west and to integrate it into the natural landscape of Nose Creek.

More than 580 parking stalls are available for staff and visitors, with 249 of them below grade.

Ritter began his search for a new location for the company's Canadian headquarters guided by the need for his scientists to conduct GPS testing with an unobstructed view from roof to sky and no tall buildings nearby.

Melcor's 7.9-acre site near the airport was ideal. He wanted to hire a local architect, interior designer and builder and enlisted the help of Peter and Justin Mayerchak of Colliers International to select IBI, Shearer and Remington.

Remington purchased the land and developed it with the intent of leasing the building to Hexagon, but since completion Ritter is negotiating to purchase it.

The development is a testament to the growth and importance the high-tech industry to the economy of this city. Ritter says we have a tremendous amount of scientific talent in Calgary, which he is confident will help build a significant technological industry.

## **NOTES:**

Forty students and teachers from 12 countries were welcomed to a five-day event at SMART Technologies last week to discuss how technology is affecting education. Calgary-based SMART is a world leader in classroom technology. "Calgary has every reason to be a leading hub for technological advances worldwide — the summit was a great way to gain international perspective on classroom technology and make strides in improving the ways we educate and inspire future generations," said Jeff Lowe, chief marketing officer.

The board of governors of Hull Services has announced the appointment of Julie Kerr as its new executive director. Most recently serving as the senior operating officer, community, rural and mental health for Alberta Health Services, she has considerable experience in the mental-health field, holding a number of

leadership roles in social and health services areas in government in both B.C. and Alberta. Kerr will assume her new duties effective Sept. 5, following the retirement of George Ghitan who served 22 years as the executive director of Hull Services.

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