

Choice Properties REIT - A Strategic Operating Segment

A look at how Choice Properties REIT became the second operating segment of George Weston Limited. As Loblaw Companies Limited reviewed its strategy and opportunities to create value for shareholders, it made the decision in 2013 to move a significant portion of its owned real estate into a new entity – Choice Properties REIT (“Choice”). Choice, which was majority owned by Loblaw, was established to grow the value of their portfolio through active property management, the acquisition of other Loblaw-owned properties, site intensification, and executing exciting new developments. Choice quickly established a track record of providing its unitholders with stability, thoughtful growth, and attractive returns.

In the spring of 2018, Choice acquired Canadian Real Estate Investment Trust for \$3.9 billion, making Choice Canada’s largest REIT with a diversified portfolio across multiple asset classes and one of the most attractive development pipelines in the country. This transaction strengthened Choice’s necessity-based retail portfolio and provided a platform in office, industrial and rental residential real estate.

On November 1, 2018, with Loblaw and George Weston continuing to push their strategic agendas forward with pace, the companies announced the completion of a reorganization under which Loblaw had “spun out” its majority interest in Choice to George Weston. This resulted in George Weston’s ownership in Choice increasing to 65.4%, a majority interest which included the 3.8% interest in Choice owned by George Weston prior to the spin-out transaction. This milestone represented both a strengthening and a diversification of George Weston’s portfolio of companies.

The spin-out of Choice Properties provided compelling benefits for each of George Weston, Loblaw and Choice. Loblaw was positioned as a pure-play retailer, focusing its core retail business in growing areas such as digital retail, connected healthcare and payments and rewards. This transaction also better positioned Choice under George Weston, which is a more natural long-term owner of Choice, which can support Choice’s future growth and diversification plans. For George Weston, the reorganization added a second strategic business segment to its operating company portfolio. George Weston is now more balanced and diversified, with two strong and well-positioned operating segments in retail and real estate. Today, Choice is better positioned than ever to pursue its strategic objectives and to maximize the value of its diverse, high-quality real-estate portfolio.