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MIG Seeks Western Value-Added Buys

By--Ben Barczewski

MIG Real Estate, formerly **Stoneridge Capital Partners**, is planning to deploy at least \$250 million of capital in 2011. The newly renamed company is focusing on value-added office, grocery-anchored retail, multifamily and industrial properties in markets west of the Rockies and expects this year to be its most active year to date. "There is a stronger pipeline this year than last and we are well-capitalized," said **Greg Merage**, ceo. The company has about \$400 million of capital that it could deploy over the course of the year, he added.

The Newport Beach, Calif.-based investor sees a number of opportunities in San Diego and Las Vegas, which it has already begun to exploit with the acquisition of two offices and a grocery-anchored retail center. The offices, which are in San Diego, total 44,000 square feet and 94,000 square feet and were acquired as a pair. It was their location in the city's Golden Triangle that made them a good buy. "There are lots of other big companies in that area, such as **Qualcomm**, **Scripps** and **Pfizer**. The buildings also benefit from regional housing," Merage noted.

The office acquisition was a sale-leaseback that will leave about 80,000 square feet unoccupied. MIG expects to fill this with a medical, biotech or communications tenant. Although Merage declined to discuss details of the financing, he noted that MIG did not use debt.

Likewise, location played a large role in the acquisition of a 99,000-square-foot retail center in Las Vegas. The property, anchored by an **Albertsons**, is just west of the I-215 loop and is part of a 25,000-acre master planned community that has seen strong demographic growth over the past 17 years. "Generally, because we have discretionary, very patient capital and we have a lot of cash, we are comfortable with the long-term growth aspect of the Vegas market," Merage explained.

MIG looking for properties in the \$5 million to \$75 million range in its core markets in California, Denver, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Hawaii.