

Mayor Deb Higgins Column – May 3, 2013

It was a pleasure earlier this week, along with a number of Councillors, to represent the citizens of Moose Jaw at the "construction start" ceremony for the new Moose Jaw Regional Hospital.

It's no small task to build a new health care facility. As everyone in the community is aware, it takes years of discussion, planning and approvals, to ensure that not only the current needs of our community are met, but to ensure that those needs are met well into the future. This week, with the official start of construction, we begin to see the results of those years of planning.

From mock-ups of patient rooms, to analysis of patient flow and patient care, to the efficiency of professional and staff areas and services, this hospital, designed with the input from healthcare professionals, patients, families and community members, is unique in the path it has taken. To see the start of construction is a very special day for Moose Jaw, a day that we have all been looking forward to.

Many of us believe that this is Moose Jaw's decade to grow and prosper, with an increasing population, strong activity in both housing and retail construction, and a number of significant investments announced in and around our community. A new regional hospital in our community is one more step in that belief becoming reality. The \$100 million investment in a new regional hospital is a strong vote of confidence in the future of Moose Jaw.

As the main facility for medical care in the Five Hills Health Region, a new hospital will not only provide excellent medical care in a modern state of the art setting, it will also support the recruitment and retention of medical professionals to our growing community.

As a regional hospital, the reach and impact of this new facility goes well beyond the boundaries of Moose Jaw. The support from rural municipalities and communities throughout the Five Hills Health Region shows a clear understanding that we all will benefit from enhanced services in a new facility.

I want to offer a thank you to all those within the community who have contributed many hours to the planning process, and to the Board and Administration of Five Hills who have guided this process from the very beginning. Their commitment to improving healthcare in our community is often behind the scenes but always appreciated.

A thank you also to Premier Wall and the Government of Saskatchewan for showing their support and understanding of the needs of our community with their commitment to Moose Jaw and the Five Hills Health Region.

Deb Higgins
Mayor