

Mayor's Column
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While each of us may have different personal goals and aspirations that we work towards, as residents, our views are fairly similar in what we want our city to be. We want a city where there is opportunity for our sons and daughters to find a good job or operate a successful business, where they can build a career, put down roots and raise a family. A safe community that offers educational opportunity, recreational activities, where modern services are provided and we are supportive of our heritage and our environment. A city, quite simply, that is moving forward to meet the future.

I firmly believe that Moose Jaw is that city. We have the ability to meet the needs and expectations of our citizens and ample opportunity for future growth.

Moose Jaw saw many changes in the past year. The most notable being the construction of housing across the city which is key to the future growth of our city and to the future success of economic development opportunities. It is almost impossible to travel anywhere in the city and not see either new housing or construction in progress.

The incentive programs for rental developments as well as first-time ownership for families of moderate income are being utilized, and the ongoing infill housing incentive continues to be a well-received city program as we see new homes revitalizing established neighbourhoods.

The results of the Policing and Community Safety Survey, released last November, showed 79% of responders were generally very satisfied with the Police Service and 81% see Moose Jaw as a safe community. Clearly the good work of the Moose Jaw Police Services is meeting our expectation of a safe community.

This past year saw continued planning and public information meetings for the new Moose Jaw hospital. Site work is expected to begin in the spring of 2013, with construction to follow for an expected completion by 2015. 2013 will also see work continue on the Civic Centre Plaza retail development located on the former site of the Civic Centre. This retail development, combined with the opportunity for new jobs, are welcome in our growing community.

With the announced K + S Legacy Potash mine moving ahead just north of the City, and a proposed expansion at Yara International to increase production by 2016, and an \$800 million expansion at Mosaic Potash Mine by 2020, there is ample opportunity and an expectation for growth to continue in our community.

For growth to be maintained, Moose Jaw will need to continue to build partnerships with senior levels of government to ensure our infrastructure and services keep pace with new development. The City of Moose Jaw will continue to work as cost-effectively as possible, but like other cities, we require increased partnership from other levels of government to meet the demands of growth.

While closure of the Valley View Centre has been announced, many have worked to maintain Moose Jaw as home for residents, maintaining services and trained staff here in our community. Hopefully we will be hearing more details from the provincial government soon. The student residence at SIAST Palliser Campus is still a project in the initial stages that we will continue to promote to support students and long-term education opportunities in Moose Jaw.

This year, despite some challenges, promises to be good year for Moose Jaw. The projects announced and planned in Moose Jaw and the surrounding area will bring construction, business opportunity, workers and families to our City. Growth brings opportunity, and opportunity brings out the best in Moose Jaw.

Deb Higgins
Mayor