



**Mayor Fraser Tolmie**  
**New Year's Address**  
**City Council – January 13, 2020**

The roadmap to the City of Moose Jaw's future lies in the collective values of its people.

We are on a one-way street to the future, a direction in which time is taking us.

This course may become challenging, uphill or even rocky at times, but we owe it to those who have gone before us to listen to their stories; learn from their experiences, and take the same courage, grit and determination to forge our City's future.

The character of our community reflects what we value.

Our past helps us chart our future and it is appropriate at this time to reflect on the recent history of our City.

Who would have imagined that a year ago, the City of Moose Jaw would be embroiled in an international conflict? The controversy circled around which community had the biggest Moose - Stor-Elvdal in Norway, or Moose Jaw.

The pride of Canada was on the line and our community rallied to the cause.

We were not alone.

Many far and wide also heard of Mac the Moose losing his title.

The oldest independently owned and operated brewery, Moosehead Breweries, donated \$25,000.00 to return Mac the Moose to his rightful place as the world's tallest moose. The feud went viral gaining national and international attention.

Our community made headlines on Global News, CTV, CBC, BBC, CNN, Fox, NBC, Maclean's, the Globe and Mail, National Post, the New York Times, LA Times, Shanghai News, and radio stations in England, Ireland, Norway and across Canada. The conflict was referred to as the Moose Wars!

It ended with local business owners donating their time, giving Mac the Moose newer and bigger antlers allowing the City of Moose Jaw to reclaim the title of World's Tallest Moose.

And we are happy to say after hosting former Deputy Mayor Linda Otnes Henriksen from Stor-Elvdal, Norway, that there is a Moose Truce where we celebrate Norway Day and Norway celebrates Canada Day!

Moose Jaw has gone from being a potential destination for Springfield's Baseball team, on the Simpson's television show, to a topic of conversation on the Stephen Colbert show!

It has become the norm to showcase our community and let the rest of the world know our story.

Looking back these past few years, Moose Jaw hosted and was featured in the Rogers Hometown Hockey, we won the Coors One Horse Town Concert and were featured when it was broadcasted on CMT.

Before "shopping like a mother" became a thing, Moose Jaw was referred to in a Superstore Commercial with Canadian Sprinter Andre De Grasse.

It would only be natural, after all this attention, for star Jon Hamm to mention Moose Jaw in the latest "Skip the Dishes" commercial.

People have written songs for us and about us and through it all we have remained tall!

We are a community built on values and we have learned the importance of sharing our stories. That, at times, can make us notorious.

We are a diverse community and we know as Moose Javians, that we have more stories to tell.

There has been a change in recent years which has culminated in people and organizations working together for the benefit of each other.

This was witnessed in the biggest turnout at Sidewalk Days, leading into the largest celebration of Canada Day and Moose Jaw almost doubling in population at the return of the Saskatchewan Airshow held at 15 Wing this past summer.

We, as a community, benefited from all this attention, resulting in an increase of almost 30% in tourism numbers.

We value doing things together and working collaboratively with others.

We, as a City, like to be part of a community.

We like to do things together and support each other.

We are intentional and we support events with good causes.

Whether it's participating in the yearly Moose Jawg on July 1<sup>st</sup> to raise funds for the Moose Jaw Health Foundation, or experiencing the culinary delights of Chef Dale McKay in the last Festival of Trees fundraiser.

We support Church fundraisers and bake sales at local craft shows and encourage local vendors to participate in the Farmers' Market.

These things are important to us.

We want to be represented by those who support us and make the effort to recognize our hard work.

We, as a community, like to experience and support culture.

Annual events such as the Festival of Words, allows our community to show off our diversity, and experience what others have to share through literature.

The Cultural Centre has doubled ticket sales since 2016 with a host of different events going from annual ticket sales in 2016 of \$240,000 to over \$500,000 in 2019.

New ideas have sprung from old ideas.

The former Wild Animal Park has been renamed Tatawaw Park which means, "Welcome, there is room for everyone".

The inaugural prohibition days trolley tour of local establishments started in 2019, and based on its success, there will be another one in 2020.

Although our notorious brand lies in our unique stories, we cannot overlook or neglect that a City is made up of a community of people.

People who live, work and invest their time, efforts and talents in our City.

2019 may have been the first time that Council completed its budget process before Christmas. It was during that budget process for the first time that Council was able to hear the stories firsthand of community builders sharing their passion for their community and the work they do by volunteering and making our community better through their time and efforts.

We do have watermains to repair, roads to fix, parks to maintain, sports facilities that need upgrading but we don't do it for the sake of a budget line - no, we make those decisions to benefit the people who live here.

We cannot neglect our responsibility to continue to work on the infrastructure that is required to support a growing thriving community.

We need to constantly remind ourselves that we are competing globally for economic growth.

2019 saw the announcement of Imperial Distillery's decision to make Moose Jaw its home.

Canadian Tire is expanding, and, in the near future, SaskPower will be starting construction on a 350-megawatt powerplant in our industrial park benefitting local vendors which, in turn, will help other businesses in our community to thrive.

Western Investor, in its November 12th edition, placed Moose Jaw in the top five western cities to place property investments over the next year, making it number one in Saskatchewan. And a separate publication, Canadian Real Estate Magazine, in its 21<sup>st</sup> November edition, also lists Moose Jaw in its top five and number one in Saskatchewan.

We have received other awards and accolades, including an award for marketing and branding from the Economic Developers Association of Canada.

But we still must move forward, gaining momentum from all the pushing of our past to launch our future just as a four-man bobsled team with local man Ben Coakwell did by winning the gold medal for Canada at Lake Placid and a bronze medal in the two-man event. Or the heavy lifting that is required to carry us through the future like Rhaea Stinn (nee Fowler), who currently holds the world record in both the 72 kg and 84 kg weight classes and named the "World Games Athlete of the Month" in November.

We cannot become complacent or expect that we are entitled to a better future.

We must work for it!

Moose Jaw values a strong work ethic.

Moose Jaw started roaring into the 2020's with Toque and the Churko Family holding a fundraising concert at the Mae Wilson Theatre. This combination of local talent, a good cause at a historic venue, encapsulates who and what we are.

On the horizon, the roar of the rings will return with the Scotties Tournament of Hearts and this week a community effort is being launched to make Moose Jaw Kraft Hockeyville.

In the coming months the familiar **roar** of our Snowbirds will fill the skies over Moose Jaw as we welcome back past members celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being Canada's Premier Air Demonstration Team.

Who can tell the future of our City, our province or our country, but maybe it will include a roaring national debate on the moose being Canada's national animal?

The rest of 2020 has yet to be written and if 2019 is any indication, it will be a notoriously good story.