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## Message from MHCA Chair GUY BELLIS

**A**s we look back on the past year, I'm incredibly proud of the work our board has undertaken and the resilience our membership has shown throughout both the celebrations and challenges that 2025 have brought.

This year marked a remarkable milestone: our 70th anniversary as an association. Seventy years of builders, tradespeople, suppliers, and industry partners shaping the communities we live in is something truly worth celebrating. It has been a privilege to reflect on the legacy of those who came before us while continuing the work of strengthening our association for the future.

To mark the occasion further, we celebrated with our 70th anniversary event – a milestone made even more special by hosting the event in partnership with Medicine Hat College on Alberta Apprenticeship Day. It was an honour to welcome special dignitaries and guests, and to honour many of our past chairs who helped shape the association over seven decades. Their presence underscored the

deep history of leadership and community that defines our organization.

We also continued to see increased engagement at our events. Our annual golf tournament, held at Desert Blume Golf Club, received another tremendous turnout and fabulous weather, bringing together members, partners, and friends of the association for a day of connection and camaraderie. Our series of member meetings held at Ralph's Steakhouse & Bar were very well attended and featured informative presentations from industry stakeholders and invited guests. A heartfelt thank you goes to OpenCircle, our ongoing meeting sponsor, for their continued support.

Alongside these celebrations, we have also navigated a number of significant pressures impacting our local construction industry. Tariff-related issues stemming from the United States, as well as Canada's counter-tariffs, have created uncertainty for many of our members. These shifts have affected our industry on multiple fronts – raising concerns about project costs, complicating pre-bid and

awarded contracts, extending timelines due to supply chain disruptions, and even influencing whether owners choose to proceed with planned work.

We know these challenges are not abstract; they impact real people, real businesses, and real projects here in Medicine Hat and across southeastern Alberta. As your board, we have focused much of our advocacy on helping ensure these impacts are understood at municipal, provincial, and federal levels. We continue to emphasize the need for transparent, predictable procurement practices, reasonable contract structures, and better communication around market volatility – especially when external factors drive sudden changes to material costs and availability.

Over the past year, the board has also worked hard to strengthen the support, programs, and opportunities available to our members. Some of the key initiatives we've advanced include:

- Advocating for fair and balanced procurement practices with local owners, municipalities, and project partners.



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- Engaging closely with industry associations across Alberta to align our efforts and amplify member concerns related to tariffs, supply chain pressures, skilled trades availability, and cost escalation.
- Enhancing member engagement and networking opportunities, ensuring our events, training, and information sessions continue to bring value to com-

panies of all sizes.

- Modernizing board processes and governance, ensuring MHCA remains strong, accountable, and well-positioned for the next 70 years.

Our participation and work on the City of Medicine Hat Development Advisory Committee has given us a forum and important voice at the table to raise issues

that directly affect our members, such as reducing permit turnaround times, removing barriers that restrict development, addressing bureaucratic red tape, and ensuring fair procurement and contract award practices. We are committed to continuing this work so that our local construction sector remains competitive, efficient, and well-supported.

Throughout these efforts, one theme has remained constant: our association is at its strongest when our membership is engaged, informed, and connected. Your feedback, your participation, and your willingness to share both successes and challenges help guide the work we do at the board table. I highly encourage you to bring your ideas and concerns forward, so that we can continue to represent you in the best way possible.

As we move forward into 2026, our focus remains clear. We will continue advocating for a stable and predictable business environment, supporting our members through industry uncertainty, and promoting the professionalism and expertise that define Medicine Hat's construction community. Our commitment is to ensure that your voice is heard, your interests are represented, and your success remains our priority.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to John and Danita for their continued dedication to our association. Their commitment behind the scenes plays a critical role in keeping our organization running smoothly and successfully. And to my fellow board members – thank you for your time, your passion, and your willingness to volunteer your expertise to help move the association forward.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support and trust. It's an honour to represent such a dedicated and hardworking membership, and we look forward to building another strong year together. ■

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## Welcome from Executive Director JOHN DIGMAN

**M**y 2025 year-end message begins, as always, with a few thanks.

Firstly, my and our entire association's thanks go to Dean Kopperud, Chair 2019–2021 and again in 2024. Dean has been, and remains, a great supporter of the association and will continue as Past Chair.

Guy Bellis stepped into the Chair role and moved from the association's designated Alberta Construction Safety Association board member to an equivalent

position with Alberta Construction Association.

I was very pleased that Janice Kirchner, one of our board members, agreed to replace Guy at the ACSA. I believe that we have two excellent advocates to represent our association at the provincial level.

My thanks go to our board members who, as always, have provided input and support throughout the year. They put a lot into the association, and their time and efforts are really appreciated.

Our office continues to support our

members efficiently and effectively. This is in no small part due to my Executive Assistant, Danita. In August, Danita will have been with the association for five years.

Every year, my biggest thank you goes out to our members. The association operates for them, and without them we would not be here. In 2025, we are celebrating long-serving member companies who have five-year through to 60-year memberships with the MHCA. Those 60-year companies are Kruse Glass, Plato's Super-

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**The skills shortage is exacerbated by older workers moving into retirement. MHCA is actively involved in, and sit on the board of, Careers South East Alberta. We also support the Registered Apprentice Program and the Skills competition for youngsters wishing to enter the trades.**



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MHCA itself celebrated 70 years of service to the local construction industry in 2025. We held a special event at Medicine Hat College with invited speakers from Canadian Construction Association, Alberta Construction Association, Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce, Medicine Hat's MLA, and long-standing MHCA benefits provider OpenCircle.

The event was a great success with close to 100 attendees, including 18 past chairs of MHCA.

Our association continues to promote initiatives aimed at underrepresented sections of our society. We are acutely aware that there currently is a skills shortage and that over the coming years, it will most likely get worse. We are actively involved with immigration initiatives such as integrating newcomers into Economic Development.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are important areas, and we continue to sit on a panel with local leaders to work towards workplaces that provide equal opportunities without barriers.

The skills shortage is exacerbated by older workers moving into retirement. MHCA is actively involved in, and sit on the board of, CAREERS Southeast Alberta. We also support the Registered Apprentice Program and the Skills competition for youngsters wishing to enter the trades.

A program aimed at increasing entry into the trades commenced last year. The dual-credit program involves MH college and various school boards. MHCA fully supports this initiative.

The ongoing changes to federal immigration policies may impact the workforce in our region but at present any impact is unknown.

There's a need to ensure that qualifications gained elsewhere are assessed and given equivalence in our trades. This is an ongoing issue that is being addressed



at various level and by both provincial and national organisations.

Construction in general, and Infrastructure projects, are still seen by both provincial and federal governments as a key route to maintaining a strong economy. The construction sector provides around 10 per cent of GDP, and around 10 per cent of the workforce is employed in the construction industry.

Thanks to a major donation of land and funds from the Yuill Family Foundation, a school of agriculture has just had its groundbreaking. Undoubtedly, our local construction companies will be heavily involved in the design and construction of this school which is scheduled for completion in 2027.

The twinning of Highway 3 between Lethbridge and Medicine Hat is ongoing with the Witla to Medicine Hat stage still in the consultation/design phase with a detailed design to be completed soon. No confirmed date for construction/completion is available; however, once this upgrade is completed, it will undoubtedly bring additional business to Medicine Hat.

There is still no change in the operating hours of the Wild Horse border crossing to 24 hours. Such a change would bring more freight traffic through Medicine Hat, which in turn would benefit local accommodation and associated businesses.

MHCA member companies continue to work with major contractors on solar and wind projects.

Further work on low-carbon initiatives is being spearheaded by Invest Medicine Hat. The Task Force will produce foundational tools that detail the opportunities available to advance a zero-emission fuel economy in Southeast Alberta.

The City continues its work to attract new industries, and workers, to Medicine Hat. The entirely new council (with the exception of mayor Linnsie Clark) will, I am sure, continue in this task. Growth in

the City will lead to a need for additional construction projects such as new industrial and commercial buildings, housing areas, new roads, and infrastructure. Growth will also provide new business opportunities to support the incoming workers and their families.

We are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to meet new council members. The first step has already been taken with an invitation to address our 2026 AGM.

Our association continues to work closely with the City management, as we are a member of both the Development Advisory Panel and City Procurement meetings. We also work closely with Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce as both organisations have many shared concerns and goals.

Throughout 2025, MHCA has continued to attend virtual, and in-person, Alberta Construction Association and Canadian Construction Association meetings. In addition, I attended the in-person CCA symposium held in Calgary. It was a great opportunity to meet with my counterparts from all corners of Canada.

The CCA and Alberta Construction Association are both key players in advocating to federal and provincial governments on behalf of the construction industry.

In addition to attending our 70th celebration event alongside ACA chair

Jenn Hancock, ACA Executive Director Warren Singh attended our March 2025 member meeting and gave an update of how he sees the future of the ACA.

After eight years on the board of the Alberta Construction Safety Association, including two years as Risk and Finance Chair and two years as Board Chair, I stepped down from the ACSA. However, I will continue as the MHCA voting delegate at the ACSA's Annual General Meeting.

The 2025 summer golf event was once again held at Desert Blume and exceeded all expectations. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to relax from work, play golf and network with fellow members. My thanks to all teams, sponsors, exhibitors and volunteers for making it such a great event.

Our member meetings continued throughout 2025. In September, we substituted our regular meeting for our 70th celebration event. We thank all the informative speakers that made presentations to our members in 2025.

Our aim for 2025 was to retain existing members and attract new ones, and I am pleased to say we exceeded our targets. We continue to offer various training offerings, software programs, and other benefits frequently at discounted rates to our members.

Kind regards and best wishes to all our members for 2026. ■

  
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Contact: Ivan Aguilar  
*Engineering Consultants*



## Message from Medicine Hat Mayor LINNSIE CLARK

This year marked important advancements in our long-term electrical infrastructure planning. The Alberta Utilities Commission approved both the East Ring Enhancement Project (slated for completion in 2029) and the Southwest Substation (anticipate in-service early 2027). The East Ring Enhancement Project (EREP) will upgrade 24 kilometers of 40-year-old electrical transmission line for an increase in voltage from 69 kilovolts (kV) to 138 kV. This upgrade will support projected growth in commercial and residential electricity use in Medicine Hat's service territory. The Southwest Substation will also accommodate electric load growth in the South of the City. These investments will ensure reliable service and support Medicine Hat's capacity to welcome new development while responsibly planning for long-term growth.

Internally, the City has been working to streamline development processes and reduce red tape. We introduced Levels of Service (LOS) for permit application processing times, backed by quarterly reporting for transparency and predictability. These levels all meet or exceed the timeframes outlined by the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Three quarterly reports have been published as of November 2025, with additions and improvements coming with each report. Here is a snapshot from Q3 2025:

- **Development Permits**
  - Goal: 10–15 business days (80 per cent of the time)
  - Achieved: 83 per cent
- **Building Permits**
  - Goal: 15 business days (80 per cent of the time)

— Achieved: 100 per cent

- **Trade Permits**
  - Goal: 15 business days (80 per cent of the time)
  - Achieved: 100 per cent
- **Business Licenses**
  - Goal: 15 business days (80 per cent of the time)
  - Achieved: 99 per cent

We've also modernized the Municipal Servicing Standards Manual, the first major refresh since 2015. The MSSM outlines the minimum specifications required for City infrastructure to inform developers and contractors. This 266-page guide now offers clearer, more accessible specifications for developers and contractors, making it easier to navigate requirements and processes.

As of October, 518 building permits were issued, creating or modifying 263 units, a clear indicator of ongoing development momentum. A total of 365 multi-family dwellings are currently under construction, with an additional 195 units that target specific markets such as seniors housing or affordable housing.

Over the past two years, Medicine Hat Economic Development has advanced numerous initiatives in cooperation with other City departments. The 2024 Housing Infill and Redevelopment Incentive Program (HIRIP) supported the development of 10 projects and over 150 units. Within the downtown core, the City Centre Vibrancy Incentive Program helped fund the revitalization of 15 businesses. Beyond direct funding opportunities, ongoing supports include several tax exemption programs, as well as advancing positive legislative and policy changes.

Supporting an affordable and welcoming community remains central to our work. The latest calculations from the Alberta Living Wage Network highlight Medicine Hat as the most affordable of the 21 participating communities, reinforcing our reputation as a place where families and businesses can thrive.

To the Medicine Hat Construction Association, thank you for your continued partnership, expertise, and leadership. Your work is essential to the progress happening across our community. Together, we will continue building a strong, resilient, and opportunity-rich Medicine Hat, one that serves the needs of today while preparing thoughtfully for tomorrow. ■

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## Message from MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat JUSTIN WRIGHT

# Building Medicine Hat's future: Alberta housing starts show provincial growth

**A**s Medicine Hat continues to evolve alongside Alberta's economic growth, our province's housing sector is responding with remarkable vigor. Recent data shows an unprecedented surge in provincial housing starts, with 37,971 new homes under construction so far in 2024 – a 34 per cent increase from the same period last year. This growth demonstrates that Alberta's strategic plan to address housing needs is delivering results across communities like ours.

The numbers tell a compelling story across our region. While major centres like Edmonton and Calgary show significant growth, smaller cities are experiencing remarkable development as well. Lethbridge, our regional neighbour, has seen an extraordinary 209 per cent increase in housing starts, while Red Deer reports a 93 per cent jump. These region-

al successes signal positive momentum for Medicine Hat's own housing development initiatives.

These figures represent real opportunities for Medicine Hat families, young professionals, and seniors. From affordable starter homes to multi-family developments, we're seeing a diverse range of housing options emerge to meet varying needs and budgets. This diversity is crucial as our community grows and evolves alongside provincial population trends.

The path from permit to completed home requires continued collaboration between local government, developers, and construction partners. Here in Medicine Hat, we understand the unique challenges: managing supply chains, securing skilled labor, and navigating regulatory requirements while maintaining

our community's character. Our provincial government remains committed to supporting these partnerships and ensuring that approved projects move efficiently from blueprints to building sites.

Looking ahead, we must maintain this momentum while ensuring sustainable growth that fits our community's needs. Our focus remains on streamlining processes, supporting innovation in construction methods, and working closely with local stakeholders to address Medicine Hat's unique housing requirements.

As new homes rise across our city and province, they represent our commitment to growth, prosperity, and quality of life for all residents. While the provincial numbers are impressive, the real success lies in creating communities where Medicine Hat families can thrive. ■



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## Message from Alberta Minister of Infrastructure MARTIN LONG

**C**ongratulations to the Medicine Hat Construction Association (MHCA), which recently celebrated 70 years of building southern Alberta. This milestone reflects decades of leadership, craftsmanship, and community impact, a legacy that continues to shape the region and contribute to Alberta's growth.

As Minister of Infrastructure, I am ensuring the government is investing in high-quality and cost-effective infrastructure for public facilities that support the healthcare, education, justice, and community services. Infrastructure investments across the province are about more than just bricks and mortar; they support thriving communities, create jobs, foster economic growth, and improve public services.

In Medicine Hat and the surrounding area, the Government of Alberta is investing more than \$152 million in five school projects. Two replacement schools – Brooks Junior High and Holy

Trinity Academy in Medicine Hat – are already under construction, with completion expected in summer 2026 and 2027 respectively. Planning is also underway for three additional projects: a new Catholic high school in Brooks, modernization of Brooks Composite High School, and a new middle school in Redcliff.

On the health front, The Government of Alberta is investing over \$30 million to regional improvements. This includes planning for upgrades to three operating rooms at Brooks Health Centre, construction of a new and expanded pharmacy at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital, and planning for a south zone cardiac services and an intensive care unit supports to be located at the Chinook Regional Hospital (Lethbridge) and the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital.

We're also supporting projects that maintain and renew public infrastructure, such as upgrades to the court-

house security system in Medicine Hat, which is part of our broader commitment to keeping public infrastructure safe, functional, and responsive to community needs.

Every infrastructure investment, no matter where in Alberta it is made, contributes to our shared goal of delivering high-quality, cost-effective public facilities that meet the needs of growing communities. This work is only possible through strong partnerships with industry leaders like you, who bring expertise, innovation and a deep understanding of local priorities.

One thing remains clear: collaboration is key. I'm truly privileged to work alongside partners who share our vision for a better Alberta. By working together, we can continue to deliver projects that meet Alberta's needs efficiently and effectively, while building a province that works better for everyone.

I remain committed to open dialogue and collaboration, whether through our Industry Liaison Committee, roundtables, or direct engagement. Your insights help us improve processes, strengthen delivery, and ensure infrastructure projects reflect the needs of Albertans.

Thank you for your continued dedication and unwavering commitment to service excellence. I look forward to working with you in the year ahead as we continue building Alberta's future, together. ■



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# Medicine Hat Regional Safety Committee 2025 Message



**T**he regional safety committees are volunteer-led and made up of volunteers from construction and trades associations, small-medium-large contractors, suppliers, union reps, Workers' Compensation Board, Alberta government, along with individual worker members for the purpose of providing a communication link between the employers and the Association's Board of Directors.

The RSCs serve an important role and are an integral part of the ACSA operations. Along with functioning as a conduit between ACSA and our members, RSCs plan and implement community outreach activities, furthering ACSA's vision and mission in the eight regions. We all advocate for lives lived safely.

If you would like more information regarding the Regional Safety Committees, please visit <https://www.youracsa.ca/regional-safety-committees>.

This past year has been a challenging one as we have attempted to grow the committee. We have a few new members, but our meeting attendance is generally around five people. Thanks goes out to Linda Norrish, who is covering both the Secretary and Treasurer position.

This year our committee supported and helped organize the "Steps for Life Walk", helping to raise over \$10,000, an increase over last year, for the Threads for Life Charity. The Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support known as Threads for Life is a Canadian registered charity dedicated to supporting families after a workplace fatality, life altering injury or occupational disease. Planning has already started for the 2026 event, and our Vice Chair, Jason Wheeler, will chair this year's Steps Committee.

In Medicine Hat, the RSC tries to get safety messaging out into the community as often as we can. We also sponsor three scholarships at our local college, aiming to give scholarships to those students showing an aptitude for safety.

As always, MHRSC was instrumental in organizing the annual National Day of Mourning (April 28th). Thanks goes out to Steve Brosnikoff, who is always involved in the detailed planning. There was a large attendance from families who had lost loved ones in workplace incidents, workers, emergency service personnel, and politicians both local and federal to observe a minute's silence.

The committee also sponsored The International Safety and Health week event in May.

For more information on our local committee please visit our LinkedIn page. ■



Message from Alberta Construction  
Association Executive Director

**WARREN SINGH**



## Building Alberta's construction workforce in 2026: Productivity, skills, and a changing industry

Alberta's construction sector continues to face a defining moment. As demand for infrastructure, housing, and industrial development grows, the province is navigating a tightening labour market and the ongoing challenge of replacing an experienced workforce now edging toward retirement. More than 20 per cent of Alberta's current construction workforce is expected to retire over the next

decade, and thousands of additional workers will be needed simply to meet population and investment growth.

These demographic pressures deepen an equally important challenge: the need to strengthen productivity. While Alberta's contractors continue to deliver exceptional work, productivity growth in the Canadian construction sector has remained largely unchanged for nearly two decades. Improving productivity is not only essential for deliv-

ering projects on time; it's also a key factor in maintaining competitiveness and ensuring long-term resilience for the industry.

### A productivity challenge with real consequences

Across Alberta, contractors report similar concerns: difficulty finding skilled workers, increasing project complexity, and the need to adopt new technologies that support efficiency. Some factors, such as permitting delays or global supply chain pressures, lie outside industry control. But one of the strongest levers within reach remains the upskilling of the existing workforce.

Giving tradespeople, apprentices, and supervisors access to digital tools and modern construction methods will be crucial in narrowing the productivity gap and ensuring Alberta maintains its competitive edge.

### ACA's vision: A skilled, modern, and future ready workforce

The Alberta Construction Association continues to champion a clear workforce strategy: ensuring the right people, with the right skills, are avail-

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able for the right roles. This industry driven approach is informed by input from contractors across the province, including member associations in southeast Alberta.

It is clear from consultations and national research that digital literacy and exposure to emerging technologies are now fundamental components of workforce development. To support this shift, ACA has been leading key initiatives designed to prepare workers for the construction methods, tools, and software that are rapidly becoming standard across Canada and internationally.

### Two key initiatives leading the way

#### **Digital Tradesperson Project (DTP)**

Supported by Alberta Advanced Education, the DTP helps build internal capacity for digital roles such as Virtual Design and Construction. The project is designed for:

- Tradespeople transitioning into digital or coordination roles
- Onsite workers who need digital familiarity
- Apprentices preparing for increasingly tech-enabled worksites

The program includes a four-day

VDC training course, followed by a 200-hour paid placement, enabling workers to apply new skills directly within a construction environment. Employers may also qualify for reimbursement, making the program accessible for businesses of all sizes.

#### **Digital and Technology Exposure (DTX)**

The DTX program, which launched this fall, introduced four new courses created through extensive engagement with contractors and technology partners:

#### **Digital and Technology Overview:**

- AI in Construction
- Drones in Construction
- Executive BIM Course for owners and senior leaders

These courses introduce practical, real-world applications of technology, helping contractors understand how digital tools can support productivity, safety, and project planning.

#### **Strengthening provincial advocacy**

ACA continues to work collaboratively with government partners to support policies that address industry needs, including:

- Building consistent, fair, and modern procurement processes
- Improving training pathways and workforce supports
- Advancing digital adoption and innovation
- Strengthening contract fairness and prompt payment performance
- Reducing regulatory bottlenecks that impact project schedules

Feedback from associations like the Medicine Hat Construction Association helps guide ACA's advocacy, ensuring policy reflects on the ground realities faced by contractors across Alberta.

### Moving forward together

Alberta's construction industry stands at an important point of transition. While workforce pressures and productivity challenges are real, so too are the opportunities to modernise, build capacity, and strengthen industry wide collaboration. ACA's commitment remains the same: to support members, advocate for effective solutions, and help shape a future ready workforce that keeps Alberta building strong.

For more information on ACA initiatives or to participate in ongoing industry engagement, please contact [policy@albertaconstruction.net](mailto:policy@albertaconstruction.net). ■

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# Unlocking construction's full potential for Canada's future

BY RODRIGUE GILBERT, CCA PRESIDENT



Canadian  
Construction  
Association



**A**s Canada navigates a year of political change and economic turbulence, one message is cutting through the noise in Ottawa: construction is essential to our country's future.

Thanks to the unwavering support and collaboration of partner association members like the Medicine Hat Construction Association (MHCA), the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) is not only elevating our industry's national voice. We are turning that voice into action, influence, and results.

With infrastructure central to the federal government's economic and political strategy, our industry is at the core of every national priority.

## Advocacy that drives results

CCA's advocacy has never been more visible, or more vital. Since Parliament's return, our Public Affairs team has been working around the clock to ensure construction priorities are front and centre in federal policy decisions.

Our efforts this fall have focused on aligning the federal government's building agenda with industry needs, achieving several major milestones:

- **Budget 2025:** We conducted an in-depth analysis of the federal budget that confirms construction's critical role in delivering on national priorities. This was complimented by a strong media strategy, resulting in CCA being featured by mainstream media outlets like the Globe and Mail, CTV's Vassy Kapelos Show, and CBC National News.
- **Hill Day 2025:** With record participation, unprecedented engagement, and a high-profile reception, this year's Hill Day provided an opportunity to reinforce our messages to ministers, Members of Parliament, and staff that our industry plays a vital role in driving Canada's growth. The number of meetings secured and strong turnout at our signature reception demonstrated CCA's expanding influence and growing profile with this new government. Our message was further amplified

through a targeted public campaign that included a press conference, extensive media outreach, and major market advertising of our We Build Canada campaign.

- **Policy development through government engagement:** CCA is actively monitoring and engaging with the deployment of Prime Minister Carney's building agenda through consultations on Build Canada Homes (BCH), the Major Projects Office (MPO), the National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA), and the Buy-Canadian procurement policy to ensure construction perspectives are heard and incorporated. Both the MPO and NIA represent significant wins for our industry, reflecting our advocacy for increased investment, reduced red tape, and evidence-based planning to guide infrastructure decisions.
- **Meech Lake meeting:** We co-hosted another successful meeting with senior federal officials to discuss the challenges and opportunities for federal construction projects and procurement. Topics ranged from supply chain disruptions to security clearance bottlenecks.
- **Fall 2025 Quarterly Economic Insights:** We released our latest quarterly report for fall 2025, reaffirming our commitment to providing timely, data-driven insights into the state of the construction industry. The regular publication of these reports increases visibility into our sector's needs, and in this case particularly, in the lead-up to a pivotal federal budget.

These activities reflect a simple truth that CCA stands as the trusted voice and leading source of insight for government, media, and industry stakeholders.

## Programs that strengthen partnerships and professional development

Beyond advocacy, CCA is broadening its suite of tools and programs, introducing new initiatives and refining existing resources to further strengthen and support the construction industry.

Over 100 construction leaders attended CCA's inaugural Best Practices in Construction Symposium in Toronto on October

30-31. Designed specifically for the professionals who lead day-to-day construction operations – from site supervisors and project managers to estimators and contractors – the two-day event tackled the real-world challenges of delivering complex projects in today's environment.

After a strong turnout in the spring, we added a fall round to our Canadian Construction Documents Committee (CCDC) Seminars. New sessions have been scheduled in Montreal, Niagara, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria this November. These seminars provide a deep dive into updated construction management contracts, including CCDC 5A, 5B, and 17, as well as the CCDC 30 integrated project delivery guide and contract.

Meanwhile, the Gold Seal Certification Program has been modernized with the launch of the new Gold Seal portal and directory in May, streamlining the application process and boosting certification visibility. With 600 applicants across all categories and 64 recognized Gold Seal Employers, the program remains a national standard for leadership in construction.

We are also modernizing how we deliver services across the country. A key initiative is the development of SignaSur™, CCA's new digital platform for construction document delivery. Starting in October, members have had the opportunity to beta test the platform. The Board has approved the pricing strategy for traditional document sales, with the full transition to SignaSur™ on track for January 1, 2027. SignaSur™ is poised to offer secure, accessible, and modern access to essential construction documents, helping raise the standard for project excellence in Canada.

### Events that connect the industry

Planning is well underway for CCA's 2026 Annual Confer-

ence, taking place March 10-13 in San Diego, California. The event will bring industry leaders together to explore the forces shaping construction's future – from strategic infrastructure for nation-building to workforce development and emerging technologies.

We are also pleased to announce that The Honourable Jean Charest, former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and Premier of Québec, will be our closing keynote speaker. His perspective on Canada's political and economic direction promises to be both timely and thought-provoking.

More details on sessions, speakers, and registration options are available on the CCA website.

### The road ahead

CCA is moving full speed ahead to ensure the momentum we built is not lost. The construction sector, backed by partners like MHCA, will continue pushing for the policies and investments that will move the industry forward.

With strong partnerships, a united voice, and a clear vision, we can build a more resilient supply chain, a stronger workforce, and the modern infrastructure Canadians need. CCA is committed to advocating for the tools, policies, and investments that will allow our industry to thrive – not just for today, but for generations to come.

### Want to stay informed and engaged?

Sign up for CCA's PLUS+ newsletter for regular updates on advocacy efforts, industry trends, and tools to support your business. Subscribe today at [ccasubscribe](https://ccasubscribe.com), and join a community that's shaping the future of construction in Canada. ■

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# Raising the standard: Why Gold Seal Certification matters more than ever



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**W**ith public investment in infrastructure on the rise, Canada's construction industry is more competitive than ever. Projects are growing in scale and complexity, timelines are tightening, and the pressure to deliver is mounting. In this environment, both companies and professionals are looking for ways to stand out and build trust.

That's where Gold Seal Certification comes in.

Administered by the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), Gold Seal is the national standard for excellence in construction management. It validates the experience, education, and competence of professionals in key roles, including project managers, estimators, superintendents, forepersons, owner's construction managers, and safety practitioners.

Whether you're charting a path for personal advancement or looking to elevate your team, Gold Seal Certification is a powerful tool for showcasing your skills, knowledge, and commitment to the highest standards.

## **For construction professionals: Stand out, move up**

Construction is competitive and evolving fast. Gold Seal Certification gives experienced professionals the recognition they deserve while opening doors to leadership roles across the country.

The program formally recognizes your experience and commitment to excellence in the industry, boosting your professional credibility. The certification process also encourages continuous learning and professional development, ensuring that certified professionals remain current with the latest industry practices and standards.

Gold Seal signals to employers that you have the knowledge, discipline, and commitment to deliver on every job site.

And now, applying is easier than ever. With the new Gold Seal portal, candidates can track their progress, manage their application, and access resources all in one place.

## **For employers: Build your reputation**

Employers who support their teams in becoming Gold Seal Certified are investing in a workforce culture rooted in excellence, trust, and continuous improvement.

Becoming a Gold Seal Employer demonstrates your commitment to quality, workforce development, and industry best practices. It signals to clients, partners, and the broader industry that your team prioritizes quality, safety, and professional excellence at every level.

In today's fast-paced and high stakes construction environment, that reputation matters more than ever. Clients want to know their projects are in good hands. Gold Seal Certified teams deliver that peace of mind.

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Gold Seal doesn't just recognize talent; it cultivates and nurtures it. For professionals, it's a career milestone offering credibility and growth opportunities. For employers, it's a way to attract, retain, and grow top-tier talent benefiting their companies. The result? A stronger, more resilient industry.

Whether you're aiming to take your own career to the next level or reinforce your company's reputation for excellence, Gold Seal is the path forward. With a streamlined application process and growing industry support, there's never been a better time to get started.

Explore the program, sign up through the new portal, or learn more at [cca-acc.com/gold-seal](https://cca-acc.com/gold-seal) or contact [goldseal@cca-acc.com](mailto:goldseal@cca-acc.com). ■



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# Building the future: Chamber advocacy and milestones provide framework for southeast Alberta

**T**his year has been transformative for the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce, marked by its 125th anniversary, hosting the Alberta Chambers of Commerce Provincial Conference, and advancing key advocacy wins that directly impact the construction and development sectors.

## Celebrating 125 years of impact

The Chamber's 125th anniversary was commemorated with the unveiling of "Commerce Way" in Medicine Hat and the hosting of the 87th Alberta Chambers of Commerce AGM and Policy Plenary. These events showcased the region's leadership in policy development and economic collaboration, drawing delegates from across Alberta to discuss the future of business and infrastructure. The Policy Plenary Session featured six resolutions sponsored or co-sponsored by the Chamber, including proposals on brownfield redevelopment, greywater reuse, trade corridor development and regional air service, each with direct implications for construction and infrastructure planning.

## Advocacy wins that matter to construction

### Streamlining Development Processes

The Chamber of Commerce has continued its advocacy on key municipal issues, from reducing red tape to creating a strong and diverse economy, with notable progress in improving development processes, including:

- Established turnaround targets for permits and licenses.

- Quarterly performance reports that track application processing times.
- Fixed-price utility installation schedules that reduce unpredictability and improve service delivery.
- Simplified patio application to cut costs and delays for downtown businesses.
- Open access to traffic data that supports investor and developer decision-making.

These changes align with the Chamber's long-standing policy on creating a business-friendly regulatory environment and are beneficial for construction firms navigating municipal approvals.

## Addressing development fee concerns

In response to significant fee increases adopted for 2025–2026, including business license hikes, the Chamber has urged the City to re-evaluate the tiered fee structure and work to implement incremental increases over time versus single increases that often create financial constraints for business. The Chamber continues to request that industry is consulted to ensure fairness and transparency in decisions that come forward. The Chamber's recommendations aim to prevent fee structures from becoming barriers to investment and growth, particularly in the construction and development sectors.

## Reducing red tape

Since first drafting its Red Tape Reduction Policy in 2013, the Chamber has worked to eliminate unnecessary regulatory





burdens. In 2025, this effort culminated in a revised policy focused on cutting excessive paperwork and approval delays; enhancing customer service and permitting efficiency; and improving processes within the technical coordinator committee and supporting SMEs by reducing compliance costs.

This initiative is especially critical for construction firms and developers who rely on predictable timelines and clear regulatory pathways.

### Future opportunities

The Chamber attended the 2025 Economic Growth forum, hosted by Community Futures Entre-Corp, bringing together regional leaders to explore workforce development and housing; emerging industries in aerospace, defence, and energy; and infrastructure opportunities and future potential for success.

Key themes included collaboration across sectors to address labour shortages and housing supply, as well as investment attraction opportunities and key assets in the region that make Southeast Alberta a prime area for future growth and success.

The Chamber also conducted a Provincial Budget Analysis with highlights including investment in water management infrastructure to repair and upgrade canals, dams, spillways, and reservoirs. Investment in affordable housing, a continued commitment to twinning Highway 3 and enhancing ICU capacity in Southern Alberta, noting continued investment in the region.

The Chamber's Vote Prosperity 2025 campaign rounded out the 2025 year with a focus on Municipal Advocacy in Action.

Through its Vote Prosperity 2025 campaign, the Chamber advanced a non-partisan platform urging municipal leaders to prioritize:

- Business competitiveness and infrastructure investment.
- Improvements to Government accountability.
- Building healthy communities through affordability and public safety.

Construction stakeholders will appreciate the emphasis on reducing red tape, improving housing supply, and enhancing our community vibrancy, priorities that directly affect business retention, investment attraction, more efficient project timelines and robust community development.

### Looking ahead: Building the future together

As the Chamber continues to champion policies that support infrastructure investment, regulatory reform, and regional collaboration, construction association members are encouraged to stay engaged and connected to the local Chamber. Whether through advocacy, networking, or strategic partnerships, 2025 has laid the groundwork for a more efficient, transparent, and opportunity-rich development environment in Southeast Alberta.

From celebrating 125 years of impact to shaping the future through policy and collaboration, the Southeast Alberta Chamber of Commerce is building a framework through its connections, support, and influence to stimulate growth and prosperity for a more resilient, and prosperous future in Southeast Alberta. ■

# Principles for sustainable development

BY SHELLEY BROOKS, BILD MEDICINE HAT

The Building Industry and Land Development Association of Medicine Hat (BILD Medicine Hat) has been an active and influential organization for more than 15 years. Our membership represents a diverse cross-section of the residential construction sector – including trades, builders, developers, and service providers – united by a shared commitment to excellence, innovation, and sustainable growth within Medicine Hat’s home building and renovation industry.

BILD Medicine Hat maintains an ongoing collaborative relationship with the City of Medicine Hat, engaging in regular meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest and opportunities for improvement within the local development landscape. The City recognizes our association as a leading authority on residential construction and land development, and we are regarded as a key resource for insight, expertise, and industry best practices.

Our association is also committed to fostering the next generation of skilled professionals. In partnership with Medicine Hat College, BILD Medicine Hat has supported scholarships for students pursuing careers in the construction trades. We understand the vital role that education and workforce devel-

opment play in strengthening our industry, and we remain dedicated to supporting local talent and promoting careers in the trades essential to home building.

Each fall, BILD Medicine Hat welcomes residents to enjoy the Annual Parade of Homes – a signature community event that showcases the craftsmanship, design, and expertise of our member builders and trades. This event offers Medicine Hatters the opportunity to explore a variety of new homes across different neighbourhoods and developments, highlighting the quality and innovation that our industry brings to the community.

Affordability of housing in Canada is becoming increasingly challenging. From red tape, inflation, supply chain price increases and availability of educated tradespeople shortages... There are so many factors that can affect the cost of a new home, and our members work tirelessly to produce quality homes at affordable prices in Medicine Hat.

*Shelley Brooks, BILD Medicine Hat Executive Officer, enjoys working within the industry to enhance the association’s benefits to members.*

*If you are interested in becoming part of BILD Medicine Hat, contact Shelley at 403-977-6722 or [eo@bildmedhat.com](mailto:eo@bildmedhat.com); or visit us online at [www.bildmedhat.com](http://www.bildmedhat.com). ■*





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*Past Presidents at MHCA's 70th Event.*

# Building a legacy

## How the MHCA grew from a small builders' exchange into a pillar of the local construction industry

BY SHAYNA WIWIERSKI

**I**n the spring of 1955, as Medicine Hat emerged from the shadow of interwar economic struggles, a group of local builders and contractors gathered with a vision: to create a unified voice for the city's growing construction sector. That year, the Medicine Hat Builders Exchange – later known as the Medicine Hat Construction Association (MHCA) – was born, marking the beginning of a seven-decade journey that would shape the region's built environment and champion the interests of its construction professionals.

### Roots in post-war growth

The 1950s was a transformative decade for Medicine Hat. The city, already known as the "Pittsburgh of the West"

for its rich natural resources like natural gas and clay, was experiencing a surge in commercial activity and population growth. The local economy was buoyed by industries such as Medicine Hat Potteries, which operated until 1955, and new architectural features were added to community landmarks, including the installation of rose windows on St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church. Downtown saw changes as businesses like the Canada Café, Esquire Shop, Burt's Billiards, and Alberta Credit Jewellers found new homes, reflecting the city's expanding commercial footprint.

Against this backdrop, the MHCA's founders – fewer than 20 members at the outset – saw a need for organized representation. The association's early

mandate was simple: to provide effective advocacy and quality service to general contractors, trade contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers in the region.

"The association was created through the Chamber of Commerce as a way to generate business and become a part of the community," said Thomas Oland, past president of Oland Construction Ltd. and MHCA president in 1974 and 1989. "We initially rented space from the chamber of commerce, holding regular meetings, dinner events, and even a few golf tournaments."

The MHCA quickly became a hub for networking, sharing resources, and addressing common challenges, from safety standards to labour practices.

One of the more significant roles that





Aerial view from Medicine Hat Hospital to Greenhouses and from Crescent Heights to 4 Street. (1972)

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPLANADE ARCHIVES. IMAGE BANK #0328.0147147.



Aerial view of Medicine Hat looking south over the Medicine Hat Hospital and surrounding residential area. (1981)

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPLANADE ARCHIVES. IMAGE BANK #0360.0006

the MHCA fulfilled during this period was to offer a plans room, where companies could come to view architectural and engineering plans. This eliminated the need for owners and architects to print out hundreds of sets of drawings.

“The availability of a plans room was one of the things that really sped up the tendering systems,” said Oland. “Use of the association and membership increased dramatically as a result. And

there was better communication between the owners and general contractors.”

### From builders exchange to industry leader

In 1965, the organization was formally incorporated and renamed the Medicine Hat Construction Association, solidifying its status as a key player in the local industry. Over the years, the MHCA expanded its reach, growing to more than

100 full members and representing a broad spectrum of construction professionals. The association’s advocacy extended beyond Medicine Hat, with representation at the provincial level through the Alberta Construction Association (ACA) and nationally through the Canadian Construction Association (CCA).

The MHCA played a pivotal role in the formation of the ACA, which was



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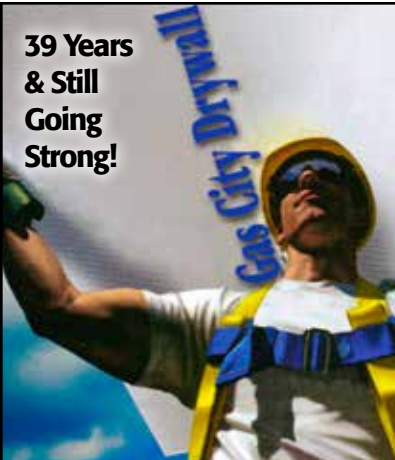
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## Did you know?

The average cost of a new home build in 1955 was \$10,950.

officially incorporated in 1959. Medicine Hat Builders Exchange president, Harry Stewart, was among the signatories to the ACA's incorporation, underscoring the city's influence in shaping provincial construction policy. This collaboration helped unify Alberta's construction industry, fostering collaboration and setting higher standards for safety, training, and fair labour practices.

### Advocacy and community impact

Throughout its history, the MHCA has been a steadfast advocate for its members, addressing critical issues such as lien legislation, apprenticeship and training, and workplace safety. The association has also been at the forefront of initiatives to address the skilled labour shortage, including programs to integrate newcomers into the local economy. Today, the MHCA continues to provide resources such as networking events, access to local job opportunities through services like BuildWorks Canada, and professional training programs.

"The association was a great place to network and to find out where the permits were being issued, where the new development was taking place, and who

was doing the developing," said Jim Lawrence, owner of Jim's Electric (2006) Ltd., and MHCA president in 1998.

The MHCA's influence extends beyond its members. The association is actively involved in local development advisory panels, ensuring that the con-

struction industry's perspective is heard in municipal planning and policy decisions. Its efforts have helped shape Medicine Hat's skyline, from residential neighbourhoods to commercial and industrial projects, leaving a legacy on the city's landscape.



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“Back in my early days with the association, the industry was vibrant and alive,” said Terry Meier, past president and general manager of LMT Enterprises Ltd., and president of the MHCA in 2005 and 2006. “There was a lot of work going on and a lot of projects.”

### The MHCA magazine: Showcasing industry and community

In 2005, the Medicine Hat Construction Association published its first magazine, marking a significant milestone on its 50th anniversary. The magazine serves not only as a vital communication tool for the MHCA, but also as a vibrant showcase of the region’s construction achievements, industry challenges, and member highlights. Produced in partnership with DEL Communications Inc., the magazine features messages from MHCA leaders, updates on industry legislation and safety, profiles of local projects and companies, and insights into workforce development.

The publication reflects the MHCA’s commitment to transparency, engagement, and professional development. It offers members valuable exposure through advertising and editorial space, while also keeping the broader Medicine Hat community informed and connected to the vital construction sector that shapes the city’s landscape.

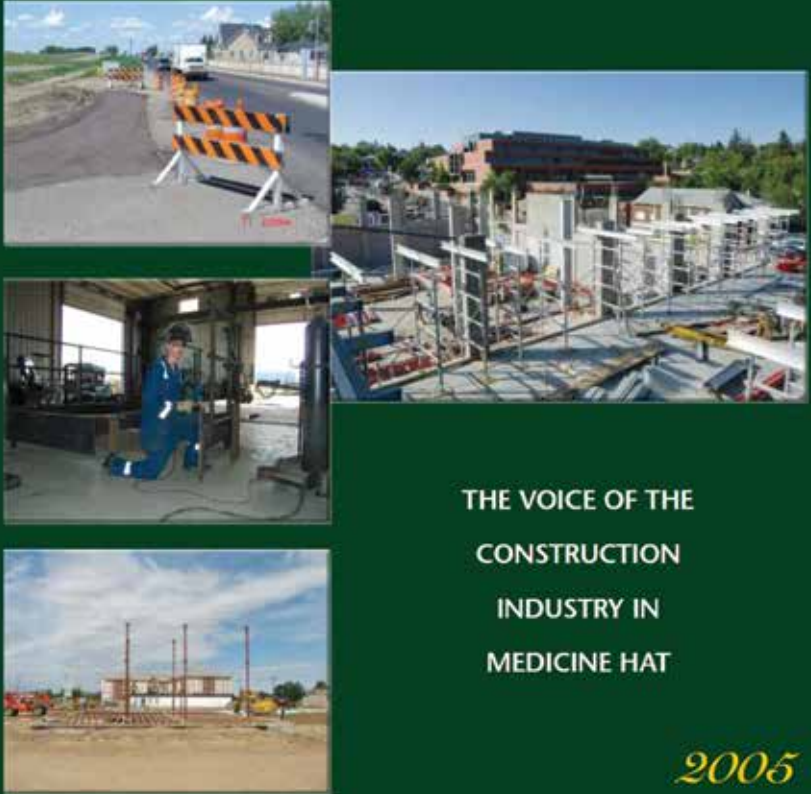
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From above left: Medicine Hat Regional Hospital; CanAlta Centre 2015; and Toyota dealership renovation.

Published annually, the magazine has grown in scope, dedicating space to discussions about supply shortages, labour challenges, innovative projects, and sustainability initiatives. As the MHCA celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2025, the magazine stands as a testament to the association's evolution and its role as the industry's voice.

### Celebrating 70 years

As the MHCA celebrates this milestone year, the organization reflects on a rich history of growth, advocacy, and community impact. From its humble beginnings as a small builders' exchange to its current role as a leading voice in the construction industry, the MHCA has remained true to its founding mission: to support and represent the professionals

who build Medicine Hat.

"Today, the Medicine Hat Construction Association continues to thrive. Our membership is strong, our advocacy is active, and our commitment to supporting education, safety, and industry standards remains at the forefront of what we do," says Guy Bellis, current chair of the MHCA. "We're proud of our partnerships with institutions like Medicine Hat College, our support of apprenticeships and skilled trades training, and our work promoting innovation and collaboration in the construction sector."

The anniversary isn't just a celebration of the past but a look toward the future. The MHCA continues to adapt to the changing needs of the industry, embracing innovation and new technologies while staying committed to its core values of collaboration, advocacy, and community service.

"There has definitely been a shift in the way the association is used – a shift away from paper documents to more of an online electronic world," said Tim Padfield, president of Pad-Car Mechanical Ltd. and president of the MHCA in 2008.

As Medicine Hat looks ahead, the MHCA stands ready to build on its legacy, ensuring that the city's construction industry remains strong and vibrant for generations to come.

The Medicine Hat Construction Association's story is one of resilience, vision, and community. Over 70 years, it has grown from a small group of builders into a cornerstone of the local industry, shaping the city's development and advocating for the professionals who build its future.

"As we celebrate the past 70 years, we also look ahead to the next chapter. The challenges facing our industry – from workforce development to sustainability to evolving technologies – are significant. But so are the opportunities," says Bellis. "With continued collaboration, strong leadership, and the same spirit of unity that sparked the creation of this association in 1955, I have every confidence that we'll continue to grow, adapt, and lead for many years to come."

*Note: all quotes aside from those from Guy Bellis were taken from the 60th anniversary issue of the MHCA publication. ■*

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Residential: 1,030 / 171

Industrial: 196 / 44

Commercial: 267 / 49

Institutional/government: 311 / 72

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# Medicine Hat's new affordable housing project pushes ahead

BY LYNDON MCLEAN

**M**edicine Hat's latest affordable housing development currently underway on Kipling Street is much like any other mid-sized project, with the rumble of equipment in an otherwise quiet neighbourhood signalling that something new is on the horizon.

But a few twists and turns in the journey mean it isn't a straight road from empty lot to home sweet home.

For Guy Bellis, General Manager of design-build contractor Mid-West Design & Construction Ltd., these complexities are simply part of the job.

"The project was tendered late last year," Bellis says, "but because of some

permitting delays and such, we didn't actually start construction until early summer."

The project – a 21-unit, three-storey apartment building on track for a November 2026 completion date – is led by the Medicine Hat Community Housing Society. PH McNally Associates Ltd. serves as project representative, with

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Project Manager Joel McNally overseeing consultants, construction teams, schedules, and budget discipline.

“My task is to make sure the project scope doesn’t get out of control – that there are no unexpected extra charges,” McNally explains. “I’ve been involved since the concept stage, after the Society secured the land donation from the city.”

If the land for the project came easily, the design did not.

“It has evolved quite a bit from the initial concepts,” McNally says. The original vision called for four identical apartment buildings, but when FWBA Architects, the prime consultant, began shaping the site, the realities of space, access, and infrastructure forced a rethink. Two buildings were merged into one larger structure, leaving a trio of buildings instead of four. The current build is one of the two smaller, identical ones.

That reconfiguration was only the first pivot.

“The building code actually changed partway through,” notes McNally, who calls the timing “a little awkward.” The development cycle stretched longer than expected as designers and owners navigated the updated standards.

By the time shovels hit the ground, the calendar had become a bit of a constraint. Mid-west co-ordinated installa-

tion of deep services and site grading, handled by their subtrade partner DL Nagel, while Western Foundations took on the formwork for both the building foundation and a substantial concrete retaining wall bordering the site.

“We just completed the retaining wall, and most of the site services are now installed, looking ahead to backfill and completing site grading,” Bellis says. With the retaining wall complete, the crews are set to pour the building foundation, followed by underground plumbing for what will be a structural slab.

But that work now unfolds under the onset of winter – not ideal for concrete, excavation, or the steady rhythm of outdoor trades, but progress remains intact. “It’s a little unfortunate that we’re into winter construction right now,” McNally says.

And Bellis echoes the sentiment.

“The timing being pushed back means we’re facing winter construction, which is a whole new set of challenges, but certainly not something that we are unfamiliar with or unable to overcome.”

Still, there have been small blessings. An unusually mild fall allowed crews to push further than they expected before the cold set in. And despite any procedural delays, Bellis says commitments with local trades are fully in place, and work is advancing steadily. “It’s just a

matter of moving things along, keeping the schedule tight, and getting everything in place,” he says.

Affordable housing builds often carry a public expectation of efficiency and speed – after all, the need is urgent. But projects like this are rarely straightforward. Grant funding, land transfers, city approvals, consultant coordination, code updates, and shifting construction seasons all interact like gears in a machine; when one slows, the others grind. The story behind this Kipling Street building is less about obstacles than persistence.

McNally, for his part, is confident in the team’s trajectory.

“The consulting team is all doing their jobs, and the contractors are all doing their jobs,” he says. “Everything that way is going smoothly.” It’s the kind of quiet endorsement any public-sector housing project hopes for.

Despite any adversity, Bellis remains positive about the project.

“We’re excited to be involved and to provide solutions for the community’s housing initiative. We’re proud to be part of that – hiring local trades and keeping the work in the community.”

By next fall, the property on Kipling Street will look very different. Framing will rise, trades will cycle through, and by November 2026, 21 new households will have a place to call home. ■

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# A new era for Catholic education in Medicine Hat

The new Holy Trinity Academy will unite three schools into a modern K–9 facility

BY SHAYNA WIWIERSKI

A \$77.4 million Catholic school is rising on Medicine Hat's northeast side, poised to replace three aging buildings and anchor a new K–12 campus.

The Holy Trinity Academy replacement school in Medicine Hat is a major capital project that will bring together three existing Catholic schools into a single, modern K–9 facility. The new school will replace St. Francis Xavier School, St. Mary's Junior High School, and St. Michael's School, consolidating them on a shared campus with Monsignor McCoy High School to form a unified K–12 site for the Medicine Hat Roman Catholic Separate School Division.

The replacement school will be built on land directly north of the current St. Francis Xavier School. Once Holy Trinity Academy is complete and occupied, the existing St. Francis Xavier building will be demolished, allowing the site to be fully integrated into the expanded campus rather than maintained as a

separate, aging facility. Situated beside Monsignor McCoy High School, the project is designed to create a continuous Catholic education pathway from kindergarten through Grade 12 on a single, connected site.

Planned as a two-storey building, Holy Trinity Academy will encompass 9,824 square metres of space and accommodate up to 950 students from kindergarten to Grade 9. The total project cost is \$77.4 million, funded primarily by the Province of Alberta, which is contributing \$74.9 million. The school division is adding \$2.5 million to cover an additional 460 square metres of gymnasium space, expanding athletic capacity beyond the base provincial scope.

Construction on the new school began on April 1, 2025, following design and planning work led by the division and its consultants. Completion and opening are anticipated in fall 2027, aligning with the start of a new school year and the planned transition of students from the three existing schools into the new fa-

cility. FWBA Architects is serving as the project architect, while LEAR Construction Management is acting as the general contractor. To date, no significant construction challenges have been reported.

Inside, the school is being planned as both an academic hub and a community venue. In addition to core classrooms, the design includes an approximately 400-seat community theatre to support drama programming and public events, as well as a dedicated band room. Two full-size gymnasiums, a fitness area, and a football change room shared with Monsignor McCoy High School are intended to strengthen athletics and extracurricular offerings. Specialized program areas for foods, dance, art, and carpentry, along with project centres, a learning commons, a sensory room, and multiple flexible learning spaces are aimed at supporting a wide range of teaching styles and student needs.

The division has positioned Holy Trinity Academy as a model of inclusive design. The building will feature





accessible washrooms, a mobility track, sensory spaces, and adaptable learning areas, all intended to better serve students with diverse physical, sensory, and learning needs, and to remove barriers to participation.

By replacing three older schools with

one fully accessible, program-rich facility on a shared K-12 campus, Holy Trinity Academy represents a significant long-term investment in Medicine Hat's Catholic school community. The consolidated campus is expected to improve continuity for students moving through

the grades, enable more efficient sharing of facilities and programs with the high school, and provide a new cultural and recreational focal point for families and community groups who will use the theatre, gyms, and other shared spaces outside of the regular school day. ■



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# Building Strong Foundations: Takeaways from the ACSA Conference



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**A**s the Medicine Hat Construction Association (MHCA) marks 70 years of building and community in southern Alberta, the Alberta Construction Safety Association (ACSA) extends its congratulations and thanks to the members behind the milestone. For seven decades, MHCA members have helped build the foundation of Alberta's construction that is resilient, innovative and committed to keeping workers safe.

That same commitment to safe, thriving crews shaped ACSA's work over the past year and framed the conversation at its 2025 Conference.

The spirit of progress and collaboration drove the ACSA 2025 Conference,

held November 5-6 at Calgary's BMO Centre. More than 430 industry leaders, workers and safety advocates came together under the theme "Safety Foundations: Constructing a Culture of Excellence" to explore how innovation and connection are shaping safe, productive worksites now and for the next generation of workers across Alberta.

Cantiro Senior Organizational Health and Safety Advisor Nicole Linman said, "Each year, this conference reinforces something our industry has long understood – progress is built on learning from the past and carrying those lessons forward with intention."

## Innovation in action

Now in the second year of its Five-Year Strategic Plan, ACSA members, staff and partners used the conference to advance the conversation from compliance to capability – focusing on how the industry is reframing how it thinks, does and measures safety. ACSA CEO Mark Hoosein noted, "The program reflected what members asked for over the past year: practical tools, real case studies and space to question what needs to change."

Keynote speaker Mark Breslin, author and CEO of Breslin Strategies, challenged attendees to embrace their ability to champion change as a pathway to safer and stronger companies. Breakout sessions turned these ideas into practical





action, giving employers and crews tools they can take back to their sites. Sessions led by Dr. Ali Golabchi of the Construction Innovation Centre, Tiana Field-Ridley and Trevor Moses of Opening Minds, and Shawn Gray of ConstructIQ Advisory gave companies ways to evaluate new technologies, strengthen psychological health and safety and use artificial intelligence to identify risks and streamline processes without replacing human judgment on site.

New this year, the Safety Spotlight featured five 10-minute presentations from Alberta researchers, delivered through ACSA's growing partnerships with post-secondary institutions. The session showed how advances in safety science and training are preparing the next generation of tradespeople and how those ideas can translate into safer tasks and stronger crews.

### Collaboration across the province

The ACSA Partners Panel brought together leaders from industry and our partners to discuss shared challenges,

from mentorship and onboarding to the ongoing effort to reduce injuries among first-year workers.

"Safety isn't just compliance – it's performance," said ACSA CEO Mark Hoosein. "A safer job site is a stronger, more successful business. Every time we reduce injuries, we strengthen trust, im-

prove retention and reinforce Alberta's reputation for excellence."

BILD Calgary Region CEO Brian Hahn, a panelist at the conference, added, "Working safely, quality and productivity all go together. There's nothing more sustainable you can do than make sure your workers go home safely."



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Members saw that mindset reflected in ACSA's Injury Prevention Campaign, which produced more than 25 practical resources targeting common incidents such as falls and back strain, and in Crew Brew, a program that takes safety conversations directly to job sites across Alberta.

### Recognizing excellence

The event concluded with the Safety Excellence Awards, celebrating companies and individuals setting new stan-

dards in safety leadership. Their stories showed what is possible when Alberta's construction community works together, regardless of size, location or trade. Claims data and feedback from supervisors, health and safety practitioners and apprentices at outreach events shaped these efforts, and ACSA is sharing the tools so members can test them on site and send feedback through conference and campaign surveys or by emailing [info@youracsa.ca](mailto:info@youracsa.ca) to guide the next round of improvements.

### Looking ahead

Across more than 57,000 member companies, over 25,000 workers completed ACSA training in 2024 as the association continued to help businesses of all sizes strengthen their safety systems, mindsets, and daily practices through programs such as the Certificate of Recognition (COR) and Small Employer COR (SECOR).

MHCA's long-standing commitment to collaboration and safety mirrors the values behind the ACSA 2025 Conference and the work members are leading across the province. ACSA salutes the builders, leaders and safety advocates who have shaped southern Alberta's construction legacy.

ACSA invites all MHCA members to join next year's conference to learn, connect, and bring back practical ideas their teams can use – because when safety is built into every decision, excellence follows.

**Save the date: October 28 and 29 at Edmonton's JW Marriott ICE District. ■**



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## SPOTLIGHT:

# What is a Surety Bond?

A surety bond is a promise, often called bond, that ensures a business meets its contractual or legal obligations.

### It's a three-party agreement:

- **Principal:** The business purchasing the bond and responsible for performance.
- **Obligee:** The party requiring the bond (client, project owner, or government).
- **Surety:** The insurance company guaranteeing the Principal's obligations.

Unlike traditional insurance, if the Surety pays a claim, the Principal must reimburse the Surety. The risk stays with the Principal.

### Types of surety bonds

- **Bid Bond:** Ensures that if a contractor wins a bid, they will sign the contract. If they refuse, the bond covers the owner's cost to find another contractor.
- **Performance Bond:** Guarantees the contractor will complete the project according to the contract's terms. It protects the owner from financial loss if the contractor fails to perform.
- **Labor and material payment bonds:** Guarantees that subcontractors, suppliers, and workers will be paid for their work on the project.
- **Maintenance bonds:** Covers the cost of repairs for any defects in workmanship or materials that appear after the project is finished, for a specified period.

Feature	Surety bonds	Traditional Insurance
<b>Primary Protection</b>	Protects the Obligee (third party) from the Principal's failure to perform its duty.	Protects the Insured (policy holder) from unexpected losses.
<b>Parties Involved</b>	Principal, Obligee, Surety	Insured, Insurer
<b>Risk Transfer</b>	Does not transfer risk. The Principal is liable and must repay the Surety for any claim losses.	Transfers risk from the Insured to the Insurer. Insured pays covered claims without expectation of repayment.
<b>Function</b>	Functions as a financial guarantee of performance, like a line of credit.	Functions as a risk-pooling mechanism to indemnify the insured against potential losses.

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## **MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

- **Advocacy!** Medicine Hat Construction Association is the “Voice of the Construction Industry Since 1955.” For 70+ years, MHCA have been the platform on which local contractors are able to bring their concerns and recommendations to the attention of Municipal, Provincial, and Federal authorities.
- Full MHCA Membership includes being a member of both the **Alberta Construction Association (ACA)** and the **Canadian Construction Association (CCA)**, as a portion of your fee is remitted to each organization.
- Throughout the year, membership meetings are a great **opportunity to network with industry partners** and learn more about relevant topics from guest speaker presentations.
- Opportunities to **promote your company** through sponsorship of Member Meetings and Events.
- **Unlimited 24/7 access to all Alberta projects (and documents) listed on BuildWorks Canada.**
- Twice weekly BuildWorks Canada **bulletin reports featuring new projects in Alberta and Saskatchewan.**
- Access to MHCA’s **color plotter** for all your blueprint needs. **Members receive an exclusive price!**
- **Discount pricing** on Standard Contract Documents, Construction Guides, and OH&S books.
- **FREE Commissioner of Oaths service.**
- Special pricing through our training partners and for other member services.
- Our **weekly Newsletter** features MHCA announcements, CCA, ACA & ACSA news, a City of Medicine Hat Building Permits Report, BuildWorks Canada project reports: Open Projects, Bid Results and Awards.
- Advertise in our weekly newsletter and on our website at a rate reserved especially for members.

### **FULL MEMBERSHIP: GENERAL CONTRACTORS, SUBCONTRACTORS/TRADES, & SUPPLIERS**

Full member = full benefits listed above. **\$1196.00 + GST per annum**

### **INDUSTRY AFFILIATE: MEMBERS OF OTHER CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATIONS, SOLE PROPRIETORS, OR SELF-EMPLOYED**

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Find resources on preventing first-year worker injuries at [FirstYear.YourACSA.ca](https://www.firstyear.youracsa.ca)



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- ✓ **Earn your safety designation:**
  - National Health and Safety Administrator (NHSA)
  - National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO)

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## BUILDING HEALTH:

# How Telemedicine is Transforming Care for Construction Workers

Construction work is demanding – physically and mentally. It involves long hours, physical tasks, and challenging conditions. Despite these realities, workers face barriers to accessing timely healthcare – particularly when job sites are not located close to medical facilities.

Missing work to go to a clinic means lost wages. Delaying care can lead to serious health issues and longer recovery times. Telemedicine helps to address these challenges by allowing workers to consult with qualified healthcare providers remotely, without leaving the job site or their home.



## OpenCircle and Teladoc: A Proven Solution for the Construction Industry

For more than 35 years, OpenCircle has provided health benefits tailored to the construction industry. One of its key offerings is Teladoc Health Canada's telemedicine service designed to make healthcare accessible to members and their families.

"High-quality, convenient healthcare is a necessity – not a luxury," says Ross J. Undershute, President of OpenCircle. "Our members work hard. Telemedicine ensures they receive the care they need, when they need it, without sacrificing time on the job or their health."

### What Telemedicine Is and How It Works

Telemedicine provides access to licensed healthcare professionals through secure phone or video consultations allowing workers to receive care without leaving home or the worksite.

#### Telemedicine can be used for:

- **Everyday illnesses** such as colds, flu, infections, or rashes
- **Minor injuries** that include sprains, strains, and burns
- **Chronic condition** management for issues like diabetes or asthma
- **Injury triage** to determine whether an ER visit is required

### Why Telemedicine Benefits Construction Workers

- Workers can connect with a provider on breaks or after shift from the job site, reducing lost time and avoiding unnecessary wage loss.
- Telemedicine providers can quickly assess whether an injury or illness needs emergency care or can be treated remotely, helping to avoid unnecessary ER visits.
- Early treatment for muscle, joint, or back pain can prevent a minor issue from becoming a long-term injury.



### Key Features of Telemedicine

- 24/7 phone or video access to healthcare providers for a wide range of health issues
- Canadian board-certified and licensed medical professionals
- Coverage across Canada and the United States
- Availability for members and their eligible dependents

Telemedicine is about more than convenience – it protects your health and ability to work with **fewer days off**, **faster recovery times** from injuries or illnesses, **reduced travel time and costs** for healthcare, and **peace of mind** knowing that a qualified provider is available anytime, anywhere. It means you do not have to choose between your health and your livelihood.

If you have access to telemedicine through OpenCircle and Teladoc, it is available 24/7 for you and your family, at no extra cost. It can make a significant difference in both your health, your family's health, and your ability to stay on the job.



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