

# Premier Ford visits Stevenson Memorial Hospital to launch redevelopment project

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario Premier Doug Ford, along with local dignitaries and mayors of towns in the region, arrived at Stevenson Memorial Hospital in Alliston on Monday, March 9, to officially break ground for the hospital's redevelopment project.

The project is part of the government's plan to invest nearly \$60 billion in more than 50 major hospital projects across the province over the next ten years.

The government support of \$175 million marks a major milestone in the project.

"With more inpatient beds, expanded diagnostic and surgical services and an emergency department triple the size of the current one, the new Stevenson Memorial Hospital will connect more patients and families across Simcoe to convenient, world-class health care," said Premier Doug Ford. "Our government will continue to deliver on our historic hospital and primary care expansions, so families have reliable access to quality health-care services, no matter where they live."

The redevelopment of Stevenson Memorial Hospital will be completed by 2028 and include new and expanded acute care areas, the construction of a new, three-storey building that will more than double the size of the hospital, to approximately 147,100 square feet, as well as an increase in inpatient bed capacity by 20 per cent, providing more access to care to the community.

"With this investment, our government is protecting Ontario's health-care system and ensuring that more people in New Tecumseth and across Simcoe County can connect to convenient care, where and when they need it," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "This investment is another example of how we are investing in the health-care needs of communities, to deliver the highest standard of care for generations to come."

Work has already started on the hospital grounds, including a new helipad at the southeast corner. The new emergency department will be triple the size of the current department and will include expanded diagnostic and surgical services, as well as a brand-new birthing suite.

"This announcement represents far more than the start of construction. It reflects years of dedication from hospital leadership, foundation supporters, municipal and provincial partners and the many donors and community members who believed in the future of Stevenson Memorial Hospital. Together, their commitment has brought us to this moment," said Brian Saunderson, MPP for Simcoe-Grey. "This new hospital will strengthen health care for New Tecumseth and the surrounding region, ensuring that patients and families receive care in a modern facility designed to meet the needs of a growing community for generations to come."

The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation has worked very hard over several years to raise funds for the hospital redevelopment through its "Because of You" campaign.

"We all know that a hospital is much more than a building, it is the life saving technology inside it," said Sylvia Biffis, Chair of the SMHF Campaign Cabinet. "It is the compassion and the expertise of the entire team of world-class professionals who operate it - from the physicians and the nurses to the technicians, and the administrative and supportive staff, and our incredible volunteers. The shovels going into the ground today, are moving earth, but let us be clear, it is the people of New Tecumseth and South Simcoe who are moving mountains. Through your generosity, you are ensuring that families will not have to travel out of the region during their most vulnerable moments."

The hospital redevelopment project is expected to be completed by 2028.