

Mayor looks beyond St. Francis

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Editor:

This week, Beech Grove will lose a local landmark when St. Francis Hospital closes after almost 100 years serving our community. Generations of residents have passed through the hospital's doors seeking health care services.

Though it has been years in the making, the closing of this iconic facility is no less difficult for our community to bear.

I've heard from many Beech Grove residents who are deeply upset by the closing, and as a lifelong resident, I understand and empathize with their distress.

But now is not the time to lament our loss. We must instead look toward next steps.

That's why I want to take this opportunity to let Beech Grove residents and others in Marion County who've depended on this St. Francis location know that we are actively preparing for the future.

I've been in office for fewer than 100 days, but I know how important it is for us to work together quickly to fill this void.

As mayor, it's a top priority to make sure Beech Grove residents have convenient access to quality health care services. I'm also committed to making sure our local economy not only survives this departure, but also flourishes and grows in its wake.

In the coming weeks, I plan to host a number of community meetings and discussions to consider all the options and develop a plan of action that I hope we can agree on and begin to implement within the next six months.

That conversation begins with you, and I invite you to contact my office with your ideas about the hospital's future.

In the meantime, I hope you'll take a moment to thank the employees and staff members who've provided vital health care services at St. Francis in Beech Grove since 1914. Their work has saved lives and touched thousands of families on a personal, unforgettable level.

I believe in Beech Grove, its residents and our ability to adapt to circumstances beyond our control, and I know we will find a solution that works for our community.

Dennis Buckley
Mayor, Beech Grove

