

# THE CITY

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## Shoppers glad Costco's here

### Manager calls customer response to the new Costco 'phenomenal'

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TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN – Being first through the silver doors at Costco's grand opening on Thursday was on Dorothy Rogers' bucket list.

Now, she can check it off.

"That was on my bucket list" – a list of things to do before she dies – "so finally I'm first at something," she said, leaning against her red and white shopping cart and laughing heartily with her friend, Irene Jolie.

Jolie and Rogers were the first in line, eagerly awaiting the ribbon cutting. They arrived at 6:10 a.m.

"I think it's wonderful. I've loved Costco since I lived in Ontario and I'm so glad it's here now cause I couldn't always get up to Moncton," Rogers said.

Jolie was a Costco member when she lived in Alberta.

"It's almost like history. I think we made history today in Saint John," she said.

Mayor Ivan Court was in attendance, celebrating what is now Atlantic Canada's largest Costco Wholesale. He said 11,500 membership holders at the wholesaler's Moncton location were from Saint John.

"It's going to service southern New Brunswick. ... We are a regional city. Our regional city goes from St. Stephen to Sussex," Court said, adding that now people from as far away as Fredericton and Calais, Maine will visit the city to shop at Costco.

"Why not shop in Saint John?"

Saint John East MLA Roly MacIntyre was also at the grand opening. He, along with the mayor, called the store "an anchor" for the city.

"It means a major attraction to bring people into the area and it will benefit everybody. That's the experience they've had in other markets where Costco has moved in. It just attracts other business, attracts other people. So, it means a lot," MacIntyre said.

For Mina Garnett, one shopping cart was barely enough on opening day.

The Saint John resident arrived early in the morning and promptly filled her cart with household products, water and food after the ribbon was cut. Garnett, used to travelling eight to 10 times a year



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Assistant warehouse manager Anthony Taza welcomes a crowd of customers to the opening of Costco's Saint John warehouse.

to get her Costco fix in Moncton, was excited for the store's arrival in the city and waited until the opening to stock up on groceries.

The 142,000-square-foot space was filled with customers excitedly pushing carts, munching food samples and clutching glossy membership cards.

Rose Colwell arrived at Costco early, armed with a shopping strategy. She checked out the unit price of each product and compared it to the actual price and the volume of the product. She then assessed how much she needed it.

Colwell had several items in her cart and said she was excited about Costco's opening.

"I knew what the store was and what I'd learned through shopping with Costco.

When you go in and see something you like, you buy it. You don't wait because the next day, they're (the products) gone," she said.

"(The customer response) is phenomenal," said Mike Brière, manager of the Saint John location.

"I've been here (in Saint John) for the last four months and I was going to hotels, restaurants and I had my badge



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Irene Jolie, left, goes in one direction at Costco Thursday and her friend Dorothy Rogers points to where she is going. They were Costco members in other provinces.

on. Everybody was just talking about Costco and the welcome was just phenomenal.

He has worked at other Costcos throughout the country and said this one is "special."

"We put a lot of time and effort and this is one big challenge done," the manager said.

"That's a huge accomplishment for our team here. Today is a new beginning."



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Darla Toole, with her children, gets help from Maddy McGuinness, a Costco employee, at the cash register during the grand opening of Costco on the east side on Thursday morning.