The Oshawa/Durham Central Newspaper

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FIRST TRAIL AT BOWMANVILLE ZOO SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN 2026

Clarington Council has directed municipal staff to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the design of the first trail at the former Bowmanville Zoo lands. It has set aside a budget of \$1.1 million for the first phase of the redevelopment of the former zoo lands. The phase one will start with design and construction of trails, according to minutes from the council meeting. "That council authorize staff to implement the recommendations of the Bowmanville Zoo Lands Master Plan by issuing a Request for Proposal to select a qualified consultant to advance the master plan concept into detailed design for Phase I - Trails; and "That council allocate \$1,112,500.00 for Phase I - Trails to start construction in 2025 with a trail opening to the public in 2026," said the municipal record. The motion was carried 6:0. Bowmanville Zoo Lands Park Master Plan envisages a cost of some \$20 million. Clarington council says the community needs pools more than ice.

At a meeting on Nov. 4, council responded to criticism over the lack of ice rinks in the new South Bowmanville Recreation Centre and approved recommendations to purchase refrigeration equipment for the facility's planned ice trail and air-supported dome. Council previously approved a concept design for the facility in September, which includes an aquatics centre, FIFA-size indoor soccer field surrounded by walking track, administration area, multi-purpose rooms, changing area, outdoor civic square, splash pad, playground and refrigerated outdoor skating loop. Construction is expected to get underway soon, with an anticipated opening of 2026.

"We are not abandoning ice," said Clarington chief administrative officer Mary-Anne Dempster, noting that the South Courtice Arena was designed for expansion in the future, and so it would be more cost-effective to add ice pads there then build them into the new South Bowmanville facility.