FROM PG. 5

DURHAM — NEW MUNICIPAL COUNCILS PREPARE TO TAKE OFFICE

Durham municipalities are preparing for the inauguration of councils elected October 26.New mayors were elected in Oshawa, Ajax, Clarington and Scugog.Incumbent mayors were returned in Pickering, Whitby, Uxbridge and Brock.Ajax and Whitby are scheduled to hold inaugural council meetings November 16. Clarington's inaugural meeting is scheduled for November 23.

BOWMANVILLE —

INDUSTRIAL BATTERY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS ENERGY INVESTMENT

A 50-megawatt-hour battery energy storage installation is planned for Bowmanville's cement manufacturing facility.The system is intended to reduce electricity purchases during peak-demand periods.

WHY IT MATTERS: Electricity costs are a significant expense for manufacturers. Energy storage investments could improve competitiveness and help protect industrial employment.

DURHAM —

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS SEASON PROMPTS PUBLIC HEALTH REMINDER

Durham Region Health Department is encouraging residents to prepare for influenza, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.Free respiratory vaccines are available to eligible residents.Health officials are emphasizing prevention as colder weather increases indoor gatherings.

Wednesday, November 4, 2026

AJAX — PERMANENT TRANSIT STOP CLOSURE ANNOUNCED

Durham Region Transit announced November 3 that bus stop 1590 on westbound Kingston Road at Wick has been permanently closed.Passengers using Pulse Route 900 and N1 are being directed to stop 1591 on westbound Kingston Road at Salem Road.

PICKERING — GLENANNA ROAD CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Watermain construction remains underway on Glenanna Road near The Esplanade North and the Health Services Centre.Restrictions began November 2 and are scheduled to continue through November 16.Access to the Health Services Centre remains available from Kingston Road.

OSHAWA — SIMCOE STREET NORTH LANE RESTRICTIONS REMAIN IN EFFECT

Durham Region continues utility relocation work along Simcoe Street North between Glovers Road and Niagara Drive.The project is scheduled to continue through November 20.At least one lane in each direction is expected to remain open.

BOWMANVILLE — LIBERTY STREET RECONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Major road and infrastructure improvements remain underway along Liberty Street North.The project includes a new roundabout and upgrades to underground municipal infrastructure.Construction is expected to continue into 2028.

WHY IT MATTERS: The improvements are intended to support Bowmanville's continued growth, but construction disruptions remain a concern for residents and local businesses.

DURHAM — NEW MUNICIPAL COUNCILS PREPARE FOR INAUGURATIONS

Municipalities across Durham Region are preparing for the transition to councils elected October 26.New mayors were elected in Oshawa, Ajax, Clarington and Scugog.Incumbents were returned in Pickering, Whitby, Uxbridge and Brock.Ajax and Whitby have scheduled inaugural meetings for November 16, while Clarington's is scheduled for November 23.

BOWMANVILLE —

INDUSTRIAL ENERGY PROJECT COULD REDUCE MANUFACTURING COSTS

A 50-megawatt-hour battery energy storage system is planned for Bowmanville's cement manufacturing facility. The installation is intended to reduce electricity purchases during peak-demand periods.

WHY IT MATTERS: Lower energy costs could improve manufacturing competitiveness and strengthen Bowmanville's industrial economy.

OSHAWA —

TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH INVESTMENT SUPPORTS LOCAL ECONOMY

Durham College recently announced $1.75 million in federal funding for its Mixed Reality Capture Studio.The five-year investment will support research involving immersive technology, industrial training and workforce development.

Thursday, November 5, 2026

OSHAWA / CLARINGTON — WATERMAIN REPAIRS CONTINUE

Durham Region is completing watermain repairs along Townline Road North between Kilmaurs Avenue and Margate Drive.Lane restrictions began November 4 and are scheduled to continue today, November 5.Nearby homes and businesses may experience temporary fluctuations in water pressure.

NORTH DURHAM —

MAJOR BROCK TOWNSHIP ROAD IMPROVEMENTS ANNOUNCED

Durham Region is preparing additional construction along Shore Line Road, also known as Regional Road 47.Lane restrictions are scheduled from November 9 through November 30 between Mara Road and the Durham Region–Simcoe County boundary.The project includes pavement rehabilitation, drainage improvements and culvert replacements.Additional work is planned for 2027.

SCUGOG / UXBRIDGE — FUNDRAISING BEGINS FOR NEW ANIMAL SHELTER

The Township of Uxbridge is encouraging donations toward two major community projects.One is the new Uxbridge-Scugog Animal Shelter, currently under construction at 5500 Lakeridge Road.The facility is intended to provide modern accommodations for stray, abandoned and surrendered animals.Fundraising is also underway for a new Uxbridge Aquatic and Sports Complex.

Friday, November 6, 2026

OSHAWA / CLARINGTON — WATERMAIN REPAIRS AFFECT TOWNLINE ROAD

Durham Region scheduled watermain repairs along Townline Road North between Kilmaurs Avenue and Margate Drive for November 4 and 5.The work involved temporary lane restrictions and possible water-pressure fluctuations for nearby properties.

PICKERING — GLENANNA ROAD CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Watermain construction remains underway on Glenanna Road near The Esplanade North and the Health Services Centre.The work is scheduled to continue through November 16.Access to the Health Services Centre remains available from Kingston Road.

AJAX / WHITBY — LAKE RIDGE ROAD RESURFACING CONTINUES

Durham Region's resurfacing project on Lake Ridge Road remains underway between Dundas Street East and Rossland Road.Lane restrictions are scheduled through November 30.

NORTH DURHAM — BROCK TOWNSHIP ROAD CONSTRUCTION BEGINS MONDAY

Durham Region has announced lane restrictions on Shore Line Road, Regional Road 47, between Mara Road and the Durham–Simcoe boundary.Construction is scheduled from November 9 through November 30.The project includes culvert replacements and drainage improvements.

OSHAWA —

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EXPANDS INTO UTILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Oshawa Power has introduced additional capabilities for its artificial intelligence customer assistant, Watt.The upgraded system allows customers to access billing information and complete certain electricity service requests.The utility says identity verification safeguards are included.



PICKERING HAS FOUND ROOM IN ITS PRIORITIES FOR A WOODEN SCULPTURE WITH A SPENDING ALLOWANCE OF $30,000.

By John Meloche

Pickering has found room in its priorities for a wooden sculpture with a spending allowance of $30,000. Residents should take a good look. It offers a revealing picture of how comfortably City Hall spends money that belongs to everyone else. The artwork hangs inside council chambers renovated under an approved project cost of approximately $3.3 million. Its polished wooden forms curl into two loops, joined by twisting, leaflike shapes. From a distance, it resembles an elongated figure eight.

The city calls it Je Me Souviens and describes themes of memory, growth and time.

I see an expensive flourish that council should have had the discipline to question.



The authorized maximum was $30,000; the final invoice should be public. But the spending decision itself deserves criticism. Council looked at a room already receiving millions in renovations and decided an additional artistic centrepiece belonged on the shopping list.

Why?

Accessibility improvements have a practical purpose. Working microphones have a practical purpose. Security has a practical purpose. Council should explain exactly what justified this decorative purchase and why a less expensive option would not do. “Art is valuable” is an argument for appreciating art. It is an inadequate explanation for a particular public expenditure. And the sculpture is only one example. Council endorsed Heritage Tree for the Dorsay Community & Heritage Centre at a net project cost of $112,566.43 in September 2025. A year later, it endorsed another artwork for the centre’s west garden at the same stated net project cost. Two commissions. More than $225,000. Somebody is doing well out of these investments. But is it the city?

Residents deserve more than descriptions of cultural identity and attractive gathering spaces. They deserve evidence that the benefits justify the price.The approval rules make this spending even more troubling. A 2023 city report identified $25,000 as the threshold above which public art required council approval. The current purchasing policy sets that threshold above $100,000. Council’s answer to expensive art purchases should have been stronger scrutiny. Instead, the threshold for requiring its approval has quadrupled.

Management approvals and budget controls remain. But individual purchases up to that higher threshold can proceed without the separate council approval previously required.

That means fewer occasions when elected representatives must publicly defend these purchases. I consider that a retreat from accountability.

If council is proud of this spending, let councillors explain each substantial purchase in public. Let residents hear the alternatives, the costs and the reasons for proceeding.

Dorsey James, the chamber sculpture’s creator, also has several other works listed in Pickering’s public art collection. The city should publish a complete history of its paid commissions and restoration work, including payments to him and other artists. Residents should be able to assess the whole bill. A Public Art Reserve does not make spending painless. Money already set aside still requires judgment before it is spent.

I lost the election. I have not lost my voice.

Returning elected officials can expect me to keep examining these decisions. Winning an election does not turn wasteful spending into good judgment

In my view, this is precisely where council needs to cut back: discretionary purchases whose public benefit has not been convincingly demonstrated. Publish the invoices. Disclose the maintenance costs. Restore stronger oversight. Defend the spending. City Hall can admire its sculpture. Residents should examine the bill.

GTHA Manufacturers to Build G7’s First Small Modular Reactor

As part of its plan to protect Ontario in the face of U.S. tariffs and position the province as a global energy superpower, the government is announcing that 14 contracts have been awarded to companies in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) to build the G7’s first small modular reactor (SMR) at the Darlington New Nuclear Project (DNNP). These contracts will create good-paying jobs in the region, support hundreds more and add over $110 million to Ontario’s GDP. Leveraging Ontario’s world-class manufacturing supply chain, today’s announcement will secure critical components for this first-of-its-kind project, including transformers, pumps and specialized steel. These contracts represent another milestone in Ontario’s nuclear build-out, connecting local businesses to one of the province’s largest clean energy infrastructure projects and creating opportunities for workers, skilled trades and suppliers to participate in the next generation of nuclear technology.

“By being first in the G7 to build small modular reactors, Ontario is securing a first-mover advantage that translates into real contracts and good-paying jobs,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Mines. “Ontario industries are emerging at the centre of the global nuclear build-out, and this leadership is delivering wins for Canada’s economy and vital contracts for Canadian businesses. Nuclear energy is tariff-proof, which is why we are building at scale and for future generations. Our government’s efforts are turning best-in-class nuclear expertise into a competitive advantage, creating more than 18,000 jobs when we need them most.”

Ontario’s nuclear industry is tariff-proof and recession-proof. As global uncertainty and U.S. tariffs put pressure on the province’s key industries, the DNNP is opening new markets for tariff-impacted sectors, including steel and concrete. For example, as part of the 14 contracts announced today, Oakville-based Hooper Welding is supplying steel for structural modules used to build the DNNP, while Toronto-based St. Mary’s Cement is supplying concrete and operating a high-density concrete batch plant for the project.

More than 100 Canadian companies have already signed agreements with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) to deliver this first-of-a-kind project, establishing themselves as leaders in the growing domestic and global markets for new nuclear technologies. These companies are helping build the expertise, capacity and skilled workforce needed to deliver major nuclear projects at home and compete for opportunities in growing markets around the world.

This advantage has secured new domestic manufacturing investment in Ontario, including Velan’s planned facility in Durham Region to build critical safety valves for SMRs in Europe, and BWXT Canada’s agreement to manufacture key SMR components in Ontario for Poland.

Once complete, the four SMR units at the DNNP will deliver 1,200 megawatts (MW) of reliable, clean electricity, enough to power approximately 1.2 million homes. The construction, operation and maintenance of the four SMR units will add $38.5 billion to Canada’s GDP over the next 65 years.

SMRs play a central role in Energy for Generations, the government’s first-ever integrated energy plan to ensure Ontario has the reliable, affordable power it needs to power new homes and drive economic growth. The government’s integrated approach and record investments in energy infrastructure are also providing the certainty needed for Indigenous communities, municipalities, businesses and industry partners to invest confidently in Ontario’s future. With a clear path forward, the plan is not only meeting the demands of today, but it is protecting jobs, supporting workers and powering economic growth for generations to come.