

\$36 million Bolton Camp on schedule, will be 'regional hub' for community

Written By JULIA LLOYD

Residents of Dufferin-Caledon will soon begin to see Bolton Camp transform into the dream project envisioned for the town.

'Imagine a town square where you come together with your neighbours, your community members, to share experiences that range in everything from farmers markets to art and culture enterprises or activities to local sporting events,' said Daryl Gray, director, education and training at Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

On Tues. June 25, Gray delivered an update to Council members that ensured the renewal of the land, as well as an update on the ongoing construction to the re-envisioned Bolton Camp.

In 2011, TRCA purchased the property and began building on the existing cultural landscape and developing a plan to re-purpose the site as an outdoor community hub.

'Engaging community members in activities that advance their own health and wellness, bring them together, start to address the notion of building better communities and giving you, as well as this municipality, a place to come together and share experiences,' said Gray.

There are three main campuses to the new Bolton Camp. The first one is the sports and recreation area, which will be centered around the baseball diamond. Up by the upper camp to the right side is the arts and culture complex, and lastly a social innovative centre, which is centered around the old dining facility.

'One of the things the Town is very excited for is the pool,' said regional coun. Annette Groves. 'Is there a final date for when that will be completed?'

Gray confirmed with Council that the pool is scheduled to open in 2021.

Work carried out at the site right now, Gray says, is mostly structural. The water and wastewater is going to be installed in the next eight months with support from the Region of Peel.

'We have applications for the Town here for some of the work that we're planning on doing around the new entrance, as well as the bridge, the roads and parking lot,' explained Gray. 'Those are all the key infrastructure pieces that will enable the future of program involvement on the site.'

Right now the project is in phase one, 'site servicing.' Phase two 'the hub,' is where the baseball diamond is and where the pool will be. Phase three 'the hive,' is the construction of the dining hall, cookery and pop-up spaces. And phase four, 'the commons,' will consist of the arts and culture facility and the Blue Sky café.

The cost of the total project is roughly \$36.6 million, however it is being partially funded by the Region of Peel, the provincial and federal governments, along with funding from TRCA.

The Jays Care Foundation funded the baseball diamond for accessible baseball for all. And the project was just given \$1 million from the Canadian Tire Jump Start Program.

Bolton Camp has already had some great success stories, starting with the baseball program that has many kids enrolled already and is a big hit for community members.

Girls Can Too, is the first program that they developed on-site, starting in 2014 with high school students from Peel Region. The initiative has helped to break barriers for young women, who previously didn't consider volunteering in the construction industry. The program has helped to build confidence by working with women on site cleanup, the restoration of buildings and habitat restoration,

The final program that has been successful is the Indigenous Youth Program. That particular initiative is focused on First Nation communities to help Indigenous youth find employment in the environment sector. The program has seen those involved participate in designing elements of Bolton Camp that reflect their particular communities.

The ultimate goal for the project, according to Gray, is to make a completely accessible and diverse community space for Dufferin-Caledon.