

Bowmanville Park Concept

A design workshop was held on September 29, 2022 to co-create a concept plan for the former Bowmanville Zoo lands with members of the community. Approximately 20 people joined the workshop including members of Valleys 2000, staff from the Municipality of Clarington and the Conservation Authority, and the developer of the adjacent Timber Trails community.

Working in two groups at the workshop, participants were invited to explore options for the 34 acre parcel abutting King Street E and Mearns Avenue along the wooded valley of Soper Creek.

Over the course of the three hour workshop, two groups discussed a host of variations for the 34 acre parcel....

- > Should the lands be a destination natural environment park or a community park with an environmental focus?
- > Should the park include sports fields or have play facilities with an environmental focus?
- > If there are sports fields, where should change rooms, washrooms and storage be provided? Or should there only be a washroom?
- > How much parking and where should it be located? Should visitors drive into the park or just into the entrance?
- > Should the park include event or performance space and if so where and how big?

During discussions on early thinking, the group shared ideas...

- > garden of intelligence... a place of encounters with wildlife, art, history, Indigenous history
- > naturalize the landscape
- > educational programming with a natural outdoor classroom
- > connect with the cultural past of the place
- > include a "frame of activity" with cultural performance, education nodes, sports
- > could tuck a sports field in so it does not overwhelm the park
- > include a skating area or trail

The drawing illustrates a compilation of the best ideas for the site. A community/cultural hub, education hub, recreation zone, natural areas and enhancements to the Soper Creek trail that provides the ribbon that connects the park's key areas. Photographs are examples of the possibilities for key locations. The concept plan provides a "point of departure" for continued conversation with the community, refinement of ideas and development of detailed plans to guide the evolution of the former Bowmanville Zoo lands into the signature park envisioned by Valleys 2000.

Legend

A. Community / Cultural Hub

1. PERFORMANCE, ART & EVENT SPACE
2. AMPHITHEATRE
3. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
4. PICNIC AREA
5. COMMEMORATIVE FOREST

C. Education Hub

6. VISITOR CENTRE
7. OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS
8. COMMUNITY / DEMONSTRATION GARDEN
9. GATEWAY / ENTRANCE

D. Recreation

10. SOCCER FIELD
11. PLAYGROUND / WASHROOM BUILDING

E. Natural Areas

12. SOPER CREEK
13. PONDS
14. WET MEADOWS
15. DRY MEADOWS
16. WOODLANDS
17. TRAILS

✱ Interpretive Wayfinding Signage



Community /Cultural Hub

Education Hub



Recreation

Natural Areas

Valleys 2000 opens the design workshop...

The Bowmanville Zoo was a private zoo that served our community for about 100 years. The zoo was much beloved by our community, and when it closed down a number of years ago, many people were angry and dismayed. Many of us have fond memories of the elephants walking through town, or of visiting the lions, or feeding the goats and sheep. Many of those beloved zoo animals lived their whole lives in our community and are buried on the property.

The proposed zoo park, which occupies much of the former zoo lands, is an opportunity to bring our community back together in that same space, and to honour the legacy of the zoo itself.

How we do that is an open question.

Council, Valleys and the Municipality feel that we have an opportunity before us to build an amazing signature park for the community

of Bowmanville. The existing lands already border trail systems to the north and south, and integrating the zoo into the trail system makes a lot of sense. Beyond that purpose, however, the zoo lands are something of a blank canvas onto which we can paint a spectacular new park.

Valleys believes that rather than simply choosing from a menu list of possible amenities for the space, we should start with a singular vision, tied to the history of the property, and look forward to a future in which people in the community have a park that is truly one of a kind, truly special, and truly reflects the feelings and sentiments of the community. In this 35 acre park we have an opportunity to celebrate the natural space, the historic space and the community space that was the Zoo - and to inspire and move people: literally and figuratively.

This will mean making some choices. It will mean casting a bold vision. And it will mean starting the planning process with a singular, thematic and

inspiring vision for a park, and then deciding what amenities make the most sense to fit that vision. After all, the great municipal parks (Central Park, the Highline, Brickworks, The Wandelpark, Stanley Park and others) all started with such a vision.

That's why we brought you together. In the room today we have representatives from the community, of every kind of expertise, every kind of perspective, and every kind of experience that can bring new insights and new ideas into the playing process. You are here because we need your thoughts, your vision, your ideas to bring the signature, part to life, and working together, Valleys believes we have the collective expertise in the room, and the talent in the room, to create a vision in a master plan that is unique, inspiring, and historic. And once we're done preparing that vision, Valleys will do what we have always done -- rally the community behind it, raise funds, and bring the dream to life.