# OPERATION TRAIL HEAD WILL CREATE AN ADVENTURE FOR EVERYONE

January 11, 2026

*By Heather Rule*

Currently, kids in Perham wanting to try hockey have to go to nearby Detroit Lakes instead. A full sheet of ice on an outdoor rink as part of Operation Trail Head would be much more user-friendly, said Trent Swanson, president of Perham Area Youth Hockey Association.

But the entire project planned for Arvig Park in Perham – complete with a multi-use building next to the ice rink – would be for everyone in the community. The use of the project goes way beyond hockey and ice skating.

"Just trying to have a place where the community can get together," Swanson said. "Right now, Arvig Park is a beautiful park, and it's a wonderful spot for the community, but not a lot of people know where to go or what to do."

The planned facility will be a 6,000-square-foot multi-use building in Arvig Park. This building would provide a warming chalet, along with restrooms and locker rooms. There are also plans for a common area for community events, concessions, a rental shop for outdoor equipment and a base for the local cross-country team.

Operation Trail Head is in the beginning stages of fundraising in 2025, led by the group Catfish Larry and the Lady Pants, who are setting up programs and opportunities to raise money for the project. They're looking to raise $2 million to $5 million. When they reach the $2 million mark, they'll be able to break ground for the ice rink and the building. Though the completed project will be city-operated, the facility and project will not impact taxes.

The entire project will make the already beautiful park more useful, and hockey will only use the rink a few hours a week, Swanson said. They'll hope to have Learn to Skate programs and mite programs for young kids.

"The rest of the time, it's open for the community," Swanson said. "It's community ice. Right now, when we have good ice, on a Sunday I'll have 30 families waiting for the Zamboni to get off the ice. They'd go out there and just play all day long.

"It's not about hockey. It's a hockey association that runs it all. But it's really a community place to stay involved and to stay active."

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