Cameco provides Vision 2010 update

Cameco is working on a long-term plan to clean up, renew and rejuvenate its Port Hope conversion facility. Vision 2010, the name by which the project has been known since first being announced at Port Hope Council in 2002, will occur in conjunction with the Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI).

Vision 2010 will involve the removal of old and under-utilized buildings, the removal of historically-contaminated soils, the transfer of stored historic wastes that are a legacy from Eldorado Nuclear Limited’s operations and the construction of several new replacement buildings. Approximately 150,000 cubic metres has been set aside for the disposal of these historic materials in the proposed long-term, low-level radioactive waste management facility on Baulch Road.

Vision 2010 is currently the subject of a comprehensive study under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. Cameco plans to complete the draft environmental impact study by the end of the year and to share this document with the public, once it has been submitted to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

Cameco, the Municipality of Port Hope and the PHAI have been engaged in discussions for several years on how best to co-ordinate the Vision 2010 project with the Municipality’s waterfront redevelopment plans. Early discussions led to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was passed by Port Hope Council in 2008. The MOU sets out the intention of Cameco and the Municipality to work together to ensure that our shared goal of improving both public access and the appearance of the Port Hope waterfront is met. Even though some of the specific elements of Vision 2010 have changed since that time, Cameco remains committed to meeting the spirit of that agreement.

Recently, Cameco and the Municipality of Port Hope negotiated agreements that help move Vision 2010 significantly forward. The first agreement, referred to as the DFO Purchase and Sale Agreement, is vital for Cameco because it ensures that operation of the uranium dioxide (UO$_2$) plant can continue in its existing location, as Cameco will now have the security of tenure over the lands on which the plant resides. Cameco and its predecessor company have leased these lands for many decades. Half of Ontario’s electricity is generated using uranium processed in that plant. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) recently transferred ownership of these lands as well as additional property to the Municipality of Port Hope.
The DFO Purchase and Sale Agreement provides that Cameco will purchase the section of land under and around the UO₂ plant at fair market value after the Municipality has owned the land for five years, as required by the Divestiture Agreement between the Municipality and the DFO. A key component of the DFO Purchase and Sale Agreement is the assumption by Cameco of all environmental liabilities associated with the divested land, thereby removing them as a potential obligation for local taxpayers.

The second agreement, known as the Waterworks Purchase and Sale Agreement, is important to the Vision 2010 project, as it provides an opportunity for Cameco to finalize its preferred master plan for site redevelopment. Without an agreement to acquire the decommissioned former waterworks property, the master plan would have been developed based on the existing fence lines and there would have been no opportunity to increase public access to the west side of the harbour.

Cameco has consulted with the community extensively on the Vision 2010 project and recognizes that increased public access to the Port Hope waterfront is a key priority for local residents. Cameco has every intention of doing what it can to meet this community priority and to ensure that Vision 2010 is as complementary as possible to the Municipality’s waterfront redevelopment plans.

Some of the early proposed site layout plans included a significant westward shift of the fence line along the Port Hope harbour, with an accompanying change to property ownership. For a variety of reasons, Cameco is now unable to shift the fence line as far away from the harbour as originally planned.

However, the necessary work has begun to allow the fence line to move to the west, away from the harbour while ownership remains with Cameco. If regulatory approval can be obtained, the fence line shift will still provide increased public access to the Port Hope harbour.

At the south end of the property, Cameco has committed to moving the fence line north, away from Lake Ontario, providing greater public access to the outer harbour area. Cameco will co-operate with or assist the Municipality as necessary in order to move the fence line in this area.

Cameco has also committed to funding the construction of a new access road that will be an extension of the current Choate Street. The proposed new road will replace the current awkward arrangement whereby motorists must make a number of turns around the facility if they wish to access the outer harbour. Cameco will enter into a written agreement with the Municipality respecting both this work and public access to the harbour on Cameco’s property once the terms are settled.

Another important component of Vision 2010 is landscaping. Early plans featured berms located outside the fence line. More recent plans have been modified to allow Cameco to install berms within its fence line. These berms will act as a flood prevention measure and will provide radiation and visual shielding. The aesthetics of the whole area will be
significantly enhanced by the planting of vegetation and landscaping to provide a greener look to the facility.

 Cameco is in the process of producing drawings that will illustrate how these berms and landscaping will enhance the appearance of the facility and the overall look of the harbour.

 Cameco is confident that Port Hope residents and visitors will be pleased with the improved appearance of the Port Hope waterfront, once Vision 2010 has been completed. Further updates on the project will be provided as decisions are made and plans finalized.