

Consolidate all Port Hope historic low-level radioactive waste in one safe long-term facility, LLRWMO recommends

Port Hope, Ontario, February 10, 2004 – The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office (LLRWMO) today presented Port Hope Council with its recommendation for the best concept for long-term safe management of low-level radioactive waste currently found in numerous locations in the Municipality of Port Hope. Developed during 20 months of intensive technical study and community input, this solution results from consideration and comparison of various potential ways of carrying out the Port Hope Long-Term Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Project.

Over the next two months, the public, the municipality and their technical advisors, federal and provincial agencies and other interested groups will have the opportunity to carefully review these findings and provide comments to the LLRWMO. All comments will be considered before the results of the alternative means process are finalized.

The concept of consolidating all the Port Hope historic low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) in one new facility to be constructed just south of Highway 401 and west of Baulch Road emerged as the best option when compared with other feasible concepts. The recommended waste management concept and transportation routes ranked highest in all evaluation categories: protection of the environment, minimizing risk to human health and safety, meeting community needs, technical reliability and cost effectiveness.

“This recommendation represents many years of involvement and leadership shown by the community to develop the best alternative for safely managing the historic waste in the former Township of Hope and Town of Port Hope,” said LLRWMO Director Robert Zelmer. “Everyone would like to leave an honourable legacy by cleaning up the low-level radioactive waste in Port Hope, upgrading existing waste management facilities, and removing the designation of the Port Hope harbour as an area of concern by the International Joint Commission,” he said.

Wastes managed at the new facility would include:

- 650,000 cubic metres of historic LLRW now managed at the Welcome Waste Management Facility;
- Over 535,000 cubic metres of historic LLRW located throughout the urban area of Port Hope at major licensed and unlicensed sites, numerous small scale sites, and harbour sediment.

During the year-and-a-half alternative means development process, hundreds of ideas and variations were studied in detail and evaluated by the LLRWMO project team in order to generate a short list of potential concepts. The three concepts that survived to the short-list stage were presented in June 2003 and then compared using evaluation criteria and weightings developed with the assistance of the public. Then the concepts were examined for the individual advantages and disadvantages and how effectively they address key issues, such as concerns for protection of groundwater quality. At all stages of the evaluation, the waste consolidation concept came out on top.

The recommended approach would see on-land sites cleaned up by excavation and transportation of LLRW to the new (as yet unnamed) facility near Highway 401. Of the two remediation concepts considered for the inner yacht basin harbour cleanup, conventional dredging ranked higher than the option of draining the basin and excavating the sediment.

Of the numerous transportation routes evaluated, the recommended primary routes use the Municipality's existing truck routes whenever possible. All waste will be hauled in covered trucks to minimize dust. The recommended transportation routes vary depending upon the location of the site being remediated:

- Construction materials would be hauled into the site using the Highway 401, Toronto Road route to a new, dedicated access road joining Toronto Road to Baulch Road.
- Waste in the Highland Drive area would be transported north on Cavan Street to Molson Street, east to Ontario Street/County Road 28 where trucks would take Highway 401 westbound to the Toronto Road exit and then travel down Toronto Road to the dedicated access road.
- Waste in the south end of Port Hope (waterfront areas) would be carried via Robertson/Peter Streets east to Hamilton Road. The designated truck route would be followed north on Hamilton to Croft and Rose Glen to County Road 28. Then trucks would take Highway 401 to Toronto Road and travel southeast to the dedicated access road.
- The smaller volumes of waste in the centre of the urban area (e.g. Strachan Street) would be transported via Victoria Street and Toronto Road to the new, designated access road.

Director Robert Zelmer concluded, "We believe the alternative means step of the Environmental Assessment process has identified the best concept to meet the requirements of future generations of Port Hope residents and all Canadians."

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Background information, notice of upcoming events and a map are attached. Detailed reports are available for review at the Port Hope Public Libraries on Queen Street and in Garden Hill, and at the Project Information Exchange at 110 Walton Street, Port Hope. Copies are available on CDROM.

For further information:

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February 2004

A long-term management strategy for historic low-level radioactive waste in Port Hope

The issue of how to manage historic low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) in Port Hope (in both the former Town of Port Hope and the Township of Hope) has challenged the federal government, the municipalities and local citizens for decades. Following recommendations by community committees in the late 1990s, the municipalities and the federal government signed a legal agreement and initiated the Port Hope Long-Term Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Project in 2001.

The purpose of the Project is to provide appropriate, safe, local, long-term management of historic low-level radioactive waste, contaminated soils and specified legacy industrial wastes in the Municipality of Port Hope.

As required by the scope of the environmental assessment, the community concepts to construct two new engineered aboveground mound facilities (one in each ward of the Municipality) were evaluated and compared with other alternative means of carrying out the Project.

Numerous public workshops, open houses and consultation activities provided ideas and contributed evaluation criteria used to rank and compare alternative means.

Why recommend consolidating the waste?

Consolidating all historic low-level radioactive waste in one new facility located just south of Highway 401, west of Baulch Road ranked highest on community, technical, economic, and environmental criteria and tied for highest on health and safety. Here are some of the reasons:

- The geology and topography are more suited for the location of a waste management facility.
- The large site has a greater capacity than the Highland Drive area site.
- There are fewer surrounding residences and community facilities. The relative isolation of the facility minimizes potential disruption and health and safety risks from construction.
- The new aboveground mound would be set well back from the property boundaries, minimizing impact on current and the future neighbouring land uses.
- A dedicated access road on property close to Highway 401 would be constructed, minimizing the impact of truck transportation on community residents.
- Land currently used for low-level radioactive waste management in the Highland Drive Area would be restored to beneficial, unrestricted use.
- This single facility concept would be less of a burden on future generations due to lower capital, operational, maintenance and long term monitoring costs.

Experience shows that soil and waste contaminated with historic LLRW can be moved safely. During construction and remediation, movement of waste and materials will be addressed by appropriate safety measures, careful monitoring and selecting transportation routes that minimize effects on public roadways and local residents.

Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office



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Port Hope Project – Environmental Assessment Next Steps

- Review of the results of the alternatives means process by stakeholders:
 - Local residents and the general public;
 - The Municipality of Port Hope and its team of expert peer reviewers – Hardy Stevenson and Associates;
 - Federal, provincial and local authorities and agencies;
 - Any other group or individual with an interest in the Project.
- Consult stakeholders for comments on recommended alternative means.
- Collect and consider all comments on the alternative means process and resulting recommended concept.
- Revise and issue report on recommended alternative means.
- Develop a detailed description of the project in order to conduct the assessment of the effects of the project on the environment.
- Release the baseline environmental reports on human health and safety considerations, terrestrial, aquatic, atmospheric, groundwater and geology and social and economic environment for review and comment by stakeholders.
- Conduct effects assessment of the recommended project.
- Issue draft Environmental Assessment Report for review by local residents, the general public and key stakeholders.

Upcoming Public Consultation Activities

- Announcement of results of the environmental assessment alternative means process will be mailed to almost 1,000 stakeholders in the Port Hope project.
- Reports (Alternative Means, characterization of the environment etc.) will be made available on CD ROM and at Port Hope Libraries and the Project Information Exchange for review by interested stakeholders.
- Information and reports will be on display at the Project Information Exchange 110 Walton Street.
- Meetings will be held with a variety of community groups such as service clubs, environmental groups, Chamber of Commerce, School Parents Associations etc.

To arrange a presentation for your group please call 905 885-0291

- Open Houses will be held:
 - **April 1, 2004** 6 – 9 p.m. at the Lions Centre, Strachan Street;
 - **April 5, 2004** 12 – 8 p.m. at the Port Hope Municipal Hall, Queen Street;
 - **April 13, 2004** 6 – 9 p.m. at the Welcome United Church Hall;
 - **April 14, 2004** 12 – 8 p.m. at the Canton Municipal Hall, County Road 10; and
 - **April 15, 2004** 6 – 9 p.m. at the Campbellcroft Lions Centre
- Comments on Alternative Means for the Port Hope Project will be received until April 19, 2004.

Visit us at the Port Hope Home Show- Town Park Recreation Centre April 23, 24 & 25, 2004

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Recommended Transportation Routes–Port Hope Project

Various transportation routes from different parts of the community are recommended for Port Hope. For example, low-level radioactive waste now stored at the Welcome Waste Management Facility would be excavated and transported to the new aboveground mound on dedicated internal haulage roads completely within the new site boundaries.

Construction material (gravel, clay, sand etc.) would be brought in from the Highway 401 and County Road 2 interchange along Toronto Road interchange to a new dedicated facility access road from Toronto Road to Baulch Road to the proposed new facility site. Transportation of historic waste and contaminated soil from the Highland Drive Area, the Waterfront area and the Central Area of Port Hope would be on designated truck routes where possible.



Port Hope Project

The recommendation for the best way to carry out the Port Hope Long-Term Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Project is to manage all low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) at a single new long-term waste management facility. The waste will be excavated from all Port Hope locations and placed into a new, state-of-the-art aboveground mound, specifically engineered to safely contain and manage the waste for generations to come.

Many transportation routes were considered and evaluated for bringing both the aboveground mound facility construction materials and the excavated historic low-level radioactive waste and contaminated soils to the recommended site for the facility.

Roadways and streets within the community were evaluated based on a number of considerations including volume of pedestrian traffic, on-street metered parking, high and/or congested traffic conditions, particularly narrow streets, or other features rendering the route unsuitable. Remaining routes were then subjected to stringent evaluation based on factors such as the number of trucks, the length of time the routes would be in use, potential for accidents and environmental effects, disturbance to residents, and cost of roadway improvements.

Main Transportation Routes to the Waste Management Facility

Potential transport routes were then compared and three main transport routes were selected for hauling waste and contaminated soil from the remediation sites to the new Waste Management Facility. Whenever possible, the recommended routes use the municipality's existing trucking routes.

The main routes are as follows:

North Region (Highland Drive area)

This route leaves the Highland Drive area temporary storage sites northbound on Cavan Street to the intersection with Molson St. It then proceeds eastbound on Molson and north onto Ontario Street/County Road 28 to the westbound entrance of Highway 401. Then along the 401, to southeast-bound Toronto Road to the new dedicated access road on federally-owned land joining Toronto Road and Baulch Road.

South Region (Waterfront areas)

Depending on the specific sites, the route will consist of the following streets (eastbound direction): Hayward Street, Queen Street, Robertson Street and Peter Street to Hamilton Road. It then proceeds north on Hamilton Rd. and west onto Croft, along Rose Glen Road and turns northbound on Ontario Street to Highway 401. The rest of the route will be the same as for the North Region.

Central Region (for example, Lions Recreation Centre Park)

This route follows Victoria Street and Toronto Road northbound to the new dedicated access road between Toronto Road and Baulch Road.

The final stage of property clean-up will require the importing of clean backfill. This will be brought to the sites on the same routes as those used for waste removal but in reverse order.

***For More Information
Visit the Project Information Exchange
110 Walton Street, Port Hope***

Call (905) 885-0291 or toll free 1 (866) 255-2755

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