

Lithium Universe Ltd: Becancour Lithium Refinery Project Update

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Melbourne, Australia - [Lithium Universe Ltd.](#) (ASX:LU7) (OTCMKTS:ESMAF) is pleased to announce a project update of the Becancour Lithium Refinery Project. The project is advancing well and remains on track. Key milestones include finalizing the plant layout, issuing technical specifications for capex estimation, and progressing with supplier quotation activities. Environmental site visits and studies are ongoing, with no significant issues identified. Hatch's transition from Brisbane to Montreal offices is smoothly underway, ensuring continuity in project management. Early contractor engagement and strategic risk assignment are mitigating potential delays. Overall, the project is adhering to its timeline, with significant progress in engineering and procurement, ensuring readiness for a capital cost estimate and commitment to ensure environmental compliance with the regulatory framework.

Highlights

- Project is advancing well and remains on track
- Engineering milestones include plant layout, equipment packages, datasheets, scopes of work, and specifications
- Procurement priority one packages for quotes about 60% complete
- Early contractor engagement and strategic risk assignment
- Environmental work is progressing with no show-stoppers identified to date
- Strong engagement from Federal, Provincial and Local Government
- Becancour Lithium Refinery well aligned with Provincial strategy
- Mature local government support and project understanding

Procurement

Procurement activities include sending technical specifications to suppliers for detailed quotations to build the capex estimation. For priority one mechanical equipment, nine packages have been issued, with seven offers received and evaluations currently underway. Five priority one electrical equipment supply packages will be issued for inquiry within the next week. The goal is to evaluate all priority one packages by the end of September.

Due to potential lead times for electrical transformers, the tenderer list will be expanded to reduce these lead times.

Engineering

The major engineering activities include finalizing the plant layout and preparing documentation for equipment packages, such as datasheets, scopes of work, and specifications. Key tasks also involve creating the main power distribution single line diagram and providing clarifications during the tender period. Additionally, proposals received are being thoroughly reviewed to ensure they meet project requirements. Effective handling of process effluent and site runoff is another critical focus area. The development of the package register, material take-offs (MTOs), and comprehensive equipment lists are ongoing, ensuring all necessary components and details are accurately documented and organized for the project's successful execution.

Plant Layout

The first release of the plant layout has been published, with several features still under development. These include new plant areas such as the boiler plant and process effluent treatment. Structural framing of buildings and HVAC systems are in progress, along with civil works encompassing drainage, road

pavements, vehicle paths, sedimentation ponds, and car parking. The location and number of plant switch rooms is being optimised.

Efforts are being made to enhance spodumene and residue storage, focusing on materials handling and capacity. Additionally, the routing of major pipe and cable racks is being planned. The layout on-site is being designed with consideration of likely environmental constraints to ensure compliance and sustainability. These developments aim to enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the project.

Environmental Work

The team is actively involved in field inventories to develop knowledge of the biodiversity present on site. Four field campaigns have been carried-out to survey the presence of short-eared owls, breeding birds, fish and fish habitat, and wetlands. Based on preliminary results, no species at risk nor species of concern as listed under the Canadian Species at Risk Act (SARA) have been identified so far. The project team is also engaged in activities to optimize the site layout and reduce encroachment on wetlands identified on the property. Surveys are expected to be completed during the Canadian Summer. Field inventory results will be used to support environmental permitting activities and discussions with the Regulators to ensure site layout and the design of the industrial facility are developed in full compliance with the environmental regulatory framework.

A Phase I study to understand previous uses of the site is progressing and no potential environmental liability has been identified based on preliminary results. The Phase I Study is expected to be completed by the end of July. Over the coming months, the team is expected to initiate the preparation of permitting documents to ensure the Project follows formal approval lines.

Priorities

The highest priorities for the next few months include finalising the environmental permitting and approvals program, which entails completing the initial field survey, briefing with the Ministry, finalising the Phase 1 Report, and preparing the first application. Engineering work necessary for the environmental permit application is also a top priority, focusing on civil design, updated plant layout, and water management strategy. In parallel, equipment procurement will involve preliminary engineering, securing vendor proposals, and establishing schedules. Confirming the treatment of process effluent and site runoff is crucial for environmental compliance.

Additionally, commencing civil and structural engineering work is essential to maintain project momentum.

Finalising the plant layout will ensure all components are correctly positioned and integrated. Lastly, execution phase planning will be progressed, contingent on the monthly budget, to ensure that all activities are appropriately funded and scheduled for efficient project advancement.

Government and Community Engagement

A trip by key leadership members to Eastern Canada. The delegation, led by CEO Alex Hanly and including Chairman Iggy Tan, Board Directors Patrick Scallan and Dr. Jingyuan Liu, and Canadian Director, Victoria Vargas, engaged with government stakeholders, community partners, and industry peers. The meetings in Montreal, Becancour, Quebec City, and Ottawa reinforced the Company's strategy to address the Lithium Conversion Gap in North America and provided updates on our engineering progress and commercial discussions.

Ministry of Economics, Innovation, and Energy

A meeting was held in Quebec City with the Honourable Minister Pierre Fitzgibbon, Minister of Economics, Innovation, and Energy. This follows the Company's initial presentation of the Company's unique strategy in November 2023 in Dubai. Once again, Minister Fitzgibbon expressed enthusiasm for our engineering progress, the acquisition of the Option agreement within the Becancour Industrial Park, and the Hydro-Quebec application for an estimated 22.5MW energy allocation for our Becancour Lithium Refinery.

Lithium Universe emphasized Quebec's strategic benefits, including hydroelectric power, proximity to the James Bay region, and logistic advantages with port access to the transatlantic region. The Minister reiterated his support for our vision of transforming Quebec into the Centre of Lithium Conversion for the transatlantic region.

The Company is impressed with the forward-thinking provincial government of Quebec and the progress of the Strategic Innovation Zone under the pragmatic guidance of Minister Fitzgibbon.

Becancour Lithium Refinery Site

In February 2024, the Company successfully executed an option agreement to acquire a refinery site strategically located within the Becancour Waterfront Industrial Park (BWIP). The site in Becancour, close to Trois-Rivieres, lies between Montreal and Quebec City and is near major highways and railways. The Port of Becancour supports year-round operations with deep-water access. The site offers low-cost hydroelectric power, robust infrastructure, and comprehensive water and waste facilities, ideal for the proposed Lithium Refinery.

The Company once again met with key executives from the BWIP in Becancour. The meeting focused on the Company's progress in site evaluation activities and included a presentation on the process design, featuring pictures from a reference lithium carbonate refinery. The port was confirmed to have the capacity to manage 50,000-ton bulk shipments, exceeding the Company's initial requirements. The Company had the opportunity to inspect Lot 22, encompassing an area of 27-hectare, and view the proximity to infrastructure and immediate tie-in to existing BWIP utilities. The SPIPB team provided an overview of planned expansions and facility upgrades to the onsite infrastructure, positioning Becancour as a leader in offering prime industrial real estate in Quebec.

The Company will be looking to commence various community initiatives to integrate the industrial site into the wider community.

Municipality of Becancour

The Company met with the Mayoress of Becancour to discuss the Company's objectives to contribute to the local economy by providing hundreds of employment opportunities and helping to realize its economic potential.

LU7 reaffirmed its commitment to the Becancour and wider Trois-Rivieres region, pledging to support various social, community, and environmental initiatives in the coming years. The Mayoress expressed enthusiasm for the Company's plans within the SPIPB, recognizing the development of a proven and reliable design with internationally aligned process outputs.

Provincial Government - Quebec

The Company also met with key delegates in Montreal from Investissement Quebec (IQ), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MRNF), Energy Transition Valley Innovation Zone, and the Ministry of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks. The provincial government has identified a lithium conversion gap within the supply chain, crucial for servicing the expected increase in spodumene supply from the James Bay region in the coming years. Quebec is a North American leader in attracting foreign direct investment, sustainable development, and supporting battery metals projects. The province has a strong history of supporting lithium battery supply chain development, with significant provincial and federal government incentives.

Recent government support includes the General Motors (GM) and Korea-based POSCO Chemicals' US\$1 billion cathode active material (CAM) factory, the Ford/EcoPro BM US\$800 million cathode factory, and Northvolt's US\$7 billion EV Battery Facility at Saint-Basile-le-Grand. This creates a favourable regulatory environment for the Company's project, ensuring robust support throughout the cycle.

Canadian Federal Government - Ottawa

The Company met with various federal government stakeholders from Invest in Canada (IIC), Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), and Export Development Canada (EDC). Given the lack of refining capacity in Canada, LU7's lithium carbonate plant is an innovative project, as there are no current operating or planned facilities of this kind within the country. Building lithium conversion capacity alongside spodumene mines will enable Canada to become wholly self-sufficient in the lithium chemical supply chain.

Hatch - Montreal

The Company and its engineering partner, Hatch, held a productive meeting at the Montreal office to align their shared culture and fast-track development vision. They reinforced the philosophy of "same process, same equipment, same supplier," which minimizes technical risks, ensures quality, and reduces costs. The operational environments in Australia and Canada share many similarities, facilitating the integration of skills into Quebec.

Hatch's leadership in building lithium conversion facilities and tackling challenging projects validates the decision to partner with them. Through this collaboration, the Company acknowledges Hatch's expertise as

the premier lithium refinery engineering expert.

Lithium Universe Chairman, Iggy Tan said, "The project is on track, finalizing plant layout, issuing capex specs, progressing supplier quotes, with smooth office transition, and no environmental issues, ensuring readiness for capex cost estimate. The reception from federal, provincial and local government delegates has left a very positive impression on the LU7 Board of Directors. The region has made strong commitments since releasing the Critical Minerals Strategies four years ago and we have seen that in the significant investments made within the battery supply chain and pragmatic discussions held with key government executives. We look forward to advancing the Company's Becancour Lithium Refinery to contribute in making Quebec the lithium conversion centre within the Transatlantic region."

*To view tables and figures, please visit:
<https://abnnewswire.net/Ink/82C8D877>

About Lithium Universe Ltd:

Lithium Universe Ltd (ASX:LU7) (OTCMKTS:ESMAF), headed by industry trail blazer, Iggy Tan, and the Lithium Universe team has a proven track record of fast-tracking lithium projects, demonstrated by the successful development of the Mt Cattlin spodumene project for [Galaxy Resources Ltd.](#)

Instead of exploring for the sake of exploration, Lithium Universe's mission is to quickly obtain a resource and construct a spodumene-producing mine in Quebec, Canada. Unlike many other Lithium exploration companies, Lithium Universe possesses the essential expertise and skills to develop and construct profitable projects.

Source:
Lithium Universe Ltd

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