

DELIVERING TO THE HEART OF ONTARIO'S MINING FRONTIER



ROBERTSON TAPPED TO SUPPLY METAL BUILDING FOR REFINERY EXPANSION IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

When First Cobalt Corp. (now Electra Battery Materials) announced plans to refurbish and expand its cobalt refinery facility in Ontario's remote Timiskaming District, the company needed a team that could supply a large, durable and affordable pre-engineered metal building.

What's more, it had to be designed and delivered as quickly as possible, to a site more than 500 km north of Toronto. The building structure also needed to integrate seamlessly with pre-purchased process equipment. Naturally, there was little room for error.

Enter **Robertson Building Systems**, which accepted the challenge alongside familiar partner TESC Contracting Company Ltd. TESC is a well-regarded industrial construction and project management company that has worked on several projects with Robertson since becoming an Authorized Builder in 2017.

Electra tapped Robertson in the fall of 2021 to produce a metal building shell for the ambitious expansion. Sudbury-based TESC - which has more than 45 years of experience constructing and modifying industrial facilities across a broad range of specialized market segments - was hired to erect the structure upon delivery.

According to Electra, the overall site will soon be an "integral part of the North American battery supply chain," providing low-carbon, sustainable and traceable raw materials for the region's growing electric vehicle industry.

The scope of work for Robertson included supplying all services and materials required for engineering, drawings, fabrication and delivery to the site, which is nestled between a pair of small towns on the edge of the vast backcountry.

Robertson was also tasked with providing reaction loads and building diagrams, inclusive of all drawings and specifications, stamped by a licensed professional structural engineer in Ontario. Preliminary plans called for a structure that was roughly 33' high, 132' wide and more than 328' long.



Ultimately, Robertson was able to secure the contract based on its ability to fast-track the design and delivery process - a hallmark of its sterling reputation in the industry. In a larger sense, the company has been a proud partner in the Canadian mining and energy industry for years and has seen firsthand what it takes to succeed in the demanding and competitive field.

Mining companies and associated entities are known for beating a path into some of the most remote parts of the country, where little infrastructure and support exist. As a result, they often need buildings that are not only durable and weather resistant, but easy to assemble and maintain in harsh conditions.

"At sites like this, nothing comes together easily. It's a really tough environment for any builder or product supplier," says Robertson Regional Sales Manager James Austin. "As you can imagine, any new buildings need to be able to take a beating and stand the test of time. Not every company is up to the task, but we certainly are."

Rising to the occasion in the Timiskaming District, Robertson completed delivery of the pre-engineered building in mid-2022. An experienced TESC crew was on hand to assemble the final product—familiar ground for the company, which is well versed in erecting all manner of facilities and process equipment at mining and metal refinery sites, often in rugged and remote terrain.

The building shell now houses two treatment trains, along with several other key pieces of processing equipment. The solvent extraction facility will manufacture a cobalt-loaded strip liquor, otherwise known as cobalt sulfate. The shell also supports a pair of two-tonne crane systems, which run the full length of the building on both sides.

It's a valuable aspect of the greater Cobalt Camp Refinery project, which is expected to host cobalt and nickel sulfate production plants, a large-scale lithium-ion battery recycling facility and a battery precursor materials plant in the years ahead, according to *Northern Ontario Business*.

Nearly three years after refurbishment work began, the multi-million-dollar Temiskaming Shores refinery site is slated to be commissioned in 2023 - with Robertson and TESC playing important roles in spurring the build.

Interested in learning more about Robertson's work and heritage in the mining industry? [Click here.](#)

Interested in learning more about the capabilities of TESC Contracting Company Ltd.? [Click here.](#)