DATE: 2001 JANUARY 4

REPORT TO: Mayor Wade and Members of Council
City of Hamilton

FROM: Marvin Ryder, Chair
Transition Board for the new City of Hamilton

SUBJECT: Transmittal for consideration of Council

The Transition Board at its meeting held December 19th, 2000 recommended that the following report be referred to the new Council for consideration and approval.

Item 7.2 Draft Coat of Arms, Badge and Flag for the new City of Hamilton

Attached herewith is a copy of the above, noted report for your review.
TRANSITION BOARD FOR THE NEW CITY OF HAMILTON

• RECOMMENDATION REPORT •

DATE: December 18, 2000

TO: Transition Board for the New City of Hamilton

FROM: Marvin Ryder, Chair

SUBJECT: Draft Coat of Arms, Badge and Flag for the new City of Hamilton

RECOMMENDATION:

a) That the draft Coat of Arms for the new City of Hamilton be approved by the Transition Board and recommended to the new City of Hamilton City Council; and

b) A draft Badge and Flag be created using the two elements of the shield (following design principles shown in the September 8 first draft of the coat of arms) and recommended to the new City of Hamilton City Council.

BACKGROUND:

On September 8, 2000, the Transition Board for the new City of Hamilton received a draft Coat of Arms, Badge, and Flag design from its Heraldry Sub-Committee. This design was then circulated to councils of all existing municipalities for comment and endorsement. This feedback was received through to the middle of October. While one council (Stoney Creek) endorsed the design as is, the general feedback was a rejection of the design. Generally councils found the design too busy. People did not react well to the bees and beehive which had a prominent position on the shield. The beaver arising from the Mural Coronet was seen as not native to the area. Some people felt the beaver looked more like a groundhog or a squirrel and its expression and design were often criticized. The choice of supporting figures was also questioned. The military figure on the left was seen as an endorsement of war. Some also felt the figure was “too historical.” The mother and child on the right was questioned as an appropriate symbol of immigration to the area. People of other ethnicities and generations were suggested. The mother and child was also seen as a stereotypical depiction of the role of women in society. Some people also felt the characters were too cartoonish and even questioned the direction in which the figures were looking.

Working with Dr. Kevin Greaves, a new design was created which attempted to simplify the first design. Many elements were dropped in the second version. Human supporters were replaced with animal supporters. The bees and beehive were replaced with the Cinquefoil [the traditional symbol of the clan Hamilton]. The beaver was replaced with another typical symbol of Canada - the Maple Leaf. The compartment was also simplified. A new badge and flag were not created but if the design is adopted by the Board they will be created using the design principles seen in the September 8 draft.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DESIGN

Note: In planning the overall design, there have been three main objectives:

a) to emphasize in the central area what was felt to be the central theme of the arms—the coming together of six separate communities to form a new, stronger City of Hamilton.
b) to include in the remainder of the arms some features of the geography, history, and “civic personality” of the new city without compromising the artistic integrity of the whole, and
c) to build on feedback received from the six merging municipalities for a simple arms, devoid of unnecessary elements with a timeless quality.

To explain the design, consider the separate elements.

The Shield

In essence there are two elements to the shield. Centrally placed is the Cinquefoil—a five petal flower. This flower figures prominently in the badge of the Clan Hamilton to which the founding Hamilton brothers belonged. It clearly represents Hamilton in the new arms. Around the Cinquefoil is a Steel Chain. The chain is made up of six large links which represent the six strong communities coming together to form a new city. The large links are now joined by smaller links to form a single strong entity. The chain also forms a circle which is a standard heraldic symbol for unity. It is a steel chain to recognize the important role of the steel industry in Hamilton both in the past and as Hamilton moves into the technological future. We are aware that some critics suggest a chain can be interpreted as a symbol of bondage. It should be noted that this chain has no beginning or end unlike a chain of bondage. Further chains of bondage also have shackles or manacles which are noticeably absent from the chain depicted on the shield.

Supporters

The first arms design featured human figures as supporters. The feedback received from communities found much controversy in the choice of figures. In choosing two or three figures how can one balance genders, important historical periods, ages, and ethnicity? With that in mind, human figures have been replaced with animals.

On the viewer’s left (the dexter side), one sees a Stag. Historically this figure can be found on some of the earliest arms for the Province of Ontario. It is also an animal native to the region. On the viewer’s right (the sinister side), one sees a female Tiger. Though not native to the area, Tiger is an old historical name for Hamilton’s sports teams and is in use by the current CFL football club. As well, one of Hamilton’s well known national and international nicknames is “Tiger Town.” Both animals are seen with the Loyalist Civil Coronet around their necks. This symbol was granted to the United Empire Loyalist Association and alludes to the original settlement of the area (largely by Loyalists of Pennsylvania Dutch stock).
Coronal Decoration

The area above the shield has gone through some dramatic revision. In the first design, a helmet and mantling appeared. These items are often seen in coats of arms and carry no specific symbolism. To simplify the design, these items were dropped. Now appearing above the shield is the Mural Coronet. Some form of a coronet is used in most civic arms. This particular design, with its combination of turrets and wheatsheaves, indicates a municipality with both urban and rural components. The wheatsheaves are an allusion to the importance of agriculture in the area.

Arising from the coronet is the Maple Leaf. In the first draft, a defiant beaver was shown. Some critics noted that there are few beavers in the area. While true, the choice of the beaver was to represent Canada. In this draft, another typical symbol of Canada was chosen. This particular leaf is two-toned giving it a three-dimensional effect. As well, the leaf is comprised of six pieces which again alludes to the six communities joining to form the new City of Hamilton.

The Motto

Another nickname for Hamilton has been “The Ambitious City.” The motto suggested for this coat of arms echoes the thread of ambition with “Together Aspire, Together Achieve.” As the new motto suggests, aspiring alone is not enough. To grow and prosper a city must also achieve. The motto for one of the founding families also bears witness to this need for achievement - “The way is through not around.” In both parts of the motto, the word “together” has been added. It suggests that a prosperous future is only possible if all the elements join to find the synergy required for growth.
TOGETHER - ASPIRE - TOGETHER - ACHIEVE

ORIGINAL CONCEPT RENDERING
TO BE INITIALLED AND RETURNED