

2000-2020



## A Stylized “O”

How the City of Ottawa logo  
came to be

**ACCURATE**  
CREATIVE









## Hello.

It was twenty years ago that the Province of Ontario passed the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999* which stated that the 12 municipalities surrounding Ottawa needed to be combined into one city.

A new city needed a new identity and thus on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2000, a design was chosen and the new City of Ottawa was born.

And it all started with a stylized “O”.

**Happy Birthday, City of Ottawa! Thank you for a two-decade-long collaboration.**









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# The City of Ottawa Act

## Ontario legislation

*City of Ottawa Act, 1999*

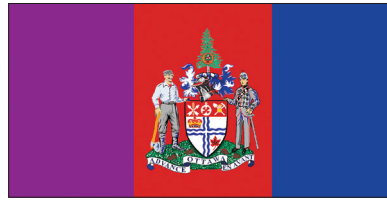
Combine

the region of...

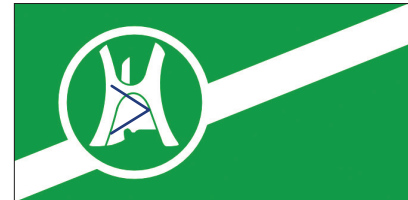


Ottawa-Carleton

with the cities of...



Ottawa (1987-2000)



Nepean



Cumberland



Gloucester



Kanata

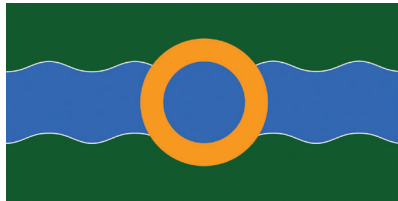


Vanier

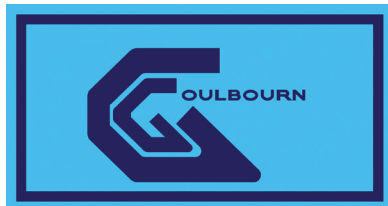
and the townships of...



West Carleton



Osgoode



Goulbourn



Rideau

then the village of...



Rockcliffe Park

... equals new  
amalgamated  
City of Ottawa.



## Defining a City

After the new legislation was passed, the **Visual Identity Advisory Committee**, a group of prominent citizens who volunteered to spearhead the development of the new look and to make recommendations to the Ottawa Transition Board, began the process of extensive consultation.

Over 1,000 residents were involved in this six-month process: sharing their vision of Ottawa, providing ideas and drawings, and talking about the characteristics of the City that were important to them. From this consultation, key themes emerged:

- 1 the City's quality of life,
- 2 its rivers and greenspace,
- 3 its strong, technology-led business community, and
- 4 its place as the Nation's capital.

With these themes in mind it was time to create a proper identity for for the new City of Ottawa.

### Visual Identity Advisory Committee

Jean Teron (Chair)  
Jean Pigott  
Lloyd Francis  
Aubrey Moodie  
Dave Smith  
John Mlacak  
Nicole Chénier-Cullen  
Susan Dagg-Fulton  
Andrea Guzzo  
Hanna Kelly  
Roger Crête  
Sacha Campeau

### Visual Identity Project Team

Andrea McCormick  
(*Project Leader*)  
Tom Crowley  
André Lamarche  
Josée Hélie  
Cindy Denommée  
Janette K. Foo

### Project's Co-Sponsors

Claude Bennett  
(*Chair – Ottawa Transition Board*)  
  
Camille Guilbault  
(*Board member*)





- 1 a city with a high-quality of life,
- 2 green space and flowing waters,
- 3 a robust technology-led business community
- 4 full of pride for being the Nation's capital





## Accurate Acts

### Initial concepts

There was a call-out to agencies to bid on the branding. Of the 69 applicants Accurate was one of three agencies hired to each propose one concept that we felt best depicted the City of Ottawa qualities.

Accurate got to work—we really wanted to win so badly. After several long nights and countless coffees, four concepts were proposed—but we could only submit one. An internal, informal poll was conducted by our agency with family and friends to see which logo we should submit. Two hundred and forty-two participants were polled, with close results between two of the four concepts.

A



B



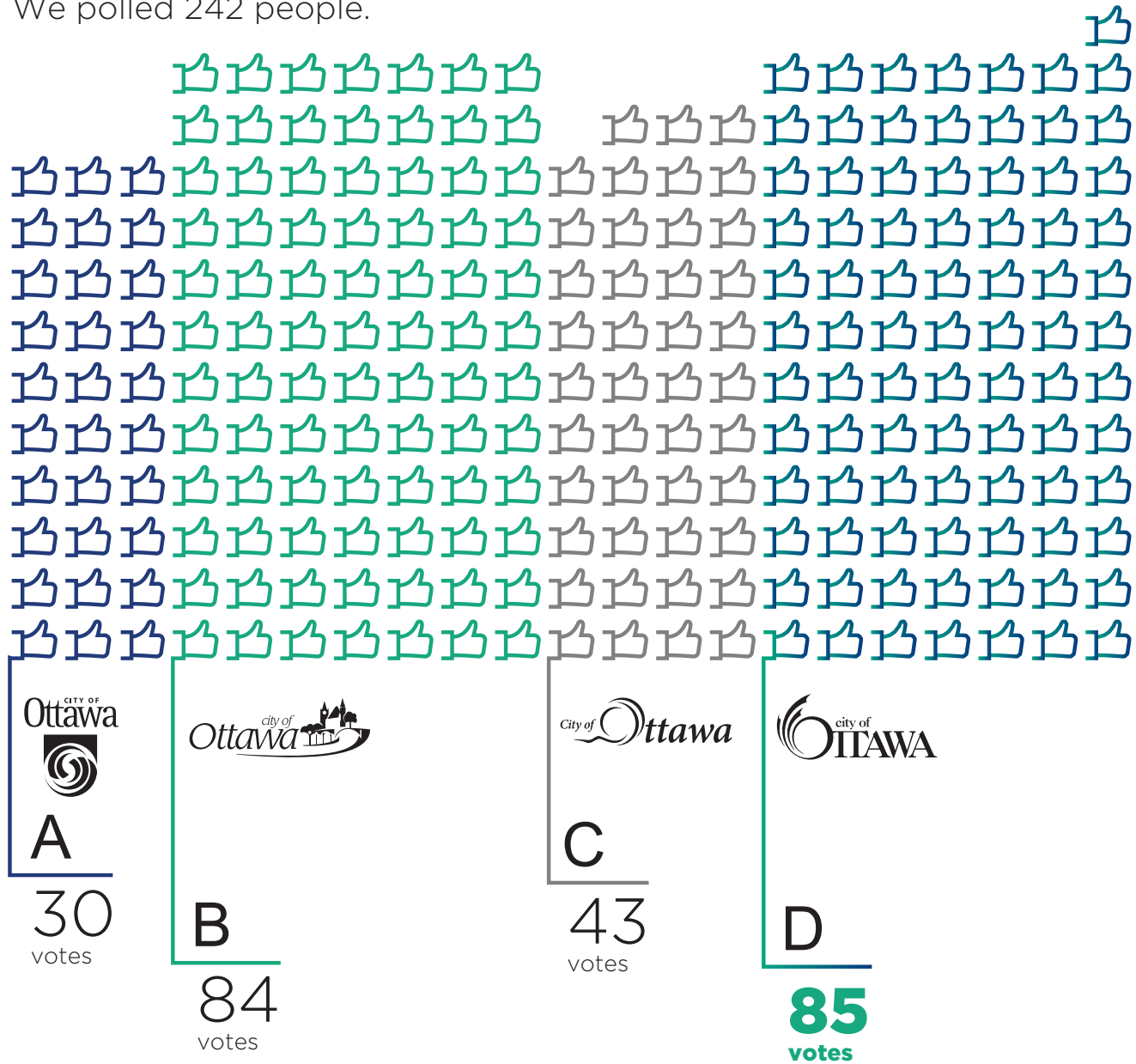
C



D



We polled 242 people.





## Feedback Results

After subtle merge and a bit of typography kerning, a more compact and accessible logo was ready to be submitted to the **Visual Identity Advisory Committee** for the first stage of selection.



+



=



Accurate submitted this logo to the Visual Identity Advisory Committee. It was then selected as one of three finalists to proceed to the next step in the decision process.

## The Next Step

After selection, it was time to present our proposed logo design to the board. The visuals and main talking points are provided below and on the next page.



## Presentation

The original rationale presented with Accurate's submission.



*Shaping our future together  
Ensemble, formons notre avenir*

This slogan is written for the people of our city. It reflects our spirit of teamwork, moving together to achieve a mutual goal: a successful future. The word “shaping” is pivotal, suggesting the future is in our hands, in our control. The word “together” is a reference to the joining of the municipalities. It says we are united, one city; the future belongs to all of us.



### Coat of Arms: The meaning behind the design

- 1 The shield graphic represents a number of things, from the personal (paths, waterways)

to the professional (roads, our economy)—all moving and rising in harmony. The style is abstract and timeless. It is festive, and combines traditional and modern elements to reflect the old and the new (old and new city, old and new economic base). It has a close relationship with the stylized “O” of the logo, so it harmonizes visually.

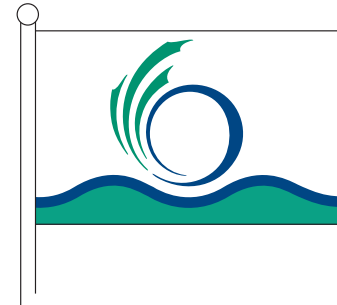
- 2 Topping the shield is a stylized representation of Queen Victoria's crown which has been modified by replacing the cross on its peak with a maple leaf. This visual reference to Queen Victoria reflects her role in choosing Ottawa as Canada's capital.
- 3 The supporters—the swan and Canada goose—were chosen for their beauty and symbolism. The swan is a figure of grace and sophistication. The bevy of swans that makes its summer home along the Rideau River is historically significant for our city because the swans are descendants of those given by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1967. The Canada goose represents movement, precision and enduring Canadian tradition. Like our city, the birds are beautiful, yet strong. They are considered uncommon in their use in Canadian heraldry; using both as supporters is very unique.



- 4 Heraldry often invokes lively images while painting a story about the subject it represents. Around the goose's neck hangs an ice skate, symbolic of skating on the Rideau Canal. Around the swan's neck hangs a cornucopia filled with cheese, grain and corn, symbolic of the agricultural heritage of the surrounding municipalities. Together, these images show a coming together, a blend of rural and city that acknowledges our past, and our future.
- 5 The compartment depicts Ottawa's four seasons: a tulip, snowflakes, green and autumn leaves are represented abstractly and equally. A large area of green speaks to Ottawa's green space. Nestled in the compartment above the motto scroll is the suggestion of waterways, representing the importance of our rivers today, and historically. For example, the Ottawa river is a constant across the entire northern boundary of the region, and played a key role in our industrial past.
- 6 The Latin motto "Prosperitas Una" translates as "Prosperity Together." It refers to the joining together of all citizens for our mutual prosperity.

## Flag: Waving our banner

A flag has been designed as part of the new City of Ottawa's visual identity.



The logo flag is designed to reflect the landscape of the region representing the new City of Ottawa. The rolling curves are symbolic of the hills that surround the Ottawa valley, which serve as a backdrop to our city, with the Ottawa river at its base. The clean white backdrop behind the new logo symbolizes how the citizens of the region see their city: as a healthy and safe place to raise their families and operate their businesses. The overall design is very clean and simple, suggesting a modern and progressive place to live and work, a good environment in every sense of the word.

The central graphic of this flag is taken from the strongest part of the logo design—the stylized “O”. It’s an element which has energy and synergy, reflecting the vibrancy of our city. The “O” also provides a subtle suggestion of a maple leaf, and shows unity and harmony: moving together in the same direction.

## Community Involvement

To encourage an inclusive process, the media invited the general public to vote for their favourite design. Through the media and town hall presentations, the City invited residents to be a part of history by sharing their voice.

### Ottawa hunts for new look

By JACKI LEROUX  
Ottawa Sun

Designs for a new visual identity for the new megacity were unveiled yesterday, and the transition board wants to know what you think of them.

The board is seeking public input on the three different sets of logos, slogans, flags, mottos and coats of arms created by three different Nepean firms.

The drawings symbolize everything from hi-tech to the Rideau Canal skating rink.

#### Feedback

"These are three very different approaches," said board chairman Claude Bennett. "They're bound to, I hope, generate a great deal of discussion."

The designs will be posted on the board's website at [www.ottawatransition.on.ca](http://www.ottawatransition.on.ca) and in newspaper ads, inviting feedback on people's preferences.

"We will find something that clearly identifies our new city," Bennett said.

Three firms compiled the creations with the assistance of the Canadian Heraldic Authority and about 400 ideas submitted by residents.

"The submissions espoused certain common values that are familiar to all Canadians, such as environmental preservation, a country that's safe and clean," explained Chris Mercer of Adhawk Communications.

Doug Jackson of Accurate Design and Com-



Tony Caldwell SUN



**EIGHT-YEAR-OLD** Kelsey Courchesne of Kinburn, who won a trip for four to Vancouver for her design idea, holds one of the proposed coats of arms. Above, three of the proposed logos.

munication said putting a skate around the neck of a Canada goose on their coat of arms symbolizes one of the region's most prominent features, the Rideau Canal.

"The coat of arms should tell a story," he said. "It's not just telling us where we've gone, but where we are and where we're going."

The third option relies heavily on the envi-

ronment.

"It speaks to the rural and environmental cause," said Kevin d'Entremont of Acart Communications.

[jacki.leroux@ott.sunpub.com](mailto:jacki.leroux@ott.sunpub.com)

■ **Megacity image:** Pages 13 and 21



## SYMBOLS: Committee won't mix and match

Continued from page A1

"Like our city, the birds are beautiful, yet strong."

The birds appear to be standing on a bed of green grass bearing tulips, fall leaves and snowflakes. The flag and logo from this submission is much more modern: a streaming green swoosh around the O in Ottawa and the updated slogan, Shaping Our Future Together.

The first coat-of-arms motto, in Latin, is *Prosperitas Una*, meaning Prosperity Together.

The second entry includes the loon wearing a crown. "The loon is calling," says the supporting document, "and is ready to take flight, just as the 12 municipalities are about to take flight towards a new union of hope and prosperity."

The loon is flanked by a pair of deer, a stag and a doe.

The second flag is a whimsical blend of colours and appears to include rivers, mountains around a stylized O. Its suggested slogan is Forward Together, while its Latin motto is *Præcedere et Una*, which it translates as Proceed Hand in Hand As One.

In the third coat-of-arms, there is a mute swan carrying a globe. On either side, there is a grey wolf carrying an emblematic white pine and a Canadian breed of horse carrying the symbol of the Speaker's Chair in the House of Commons.

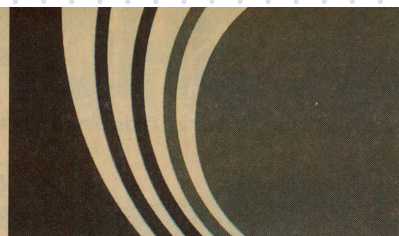
It bears the Latin expression *Ad Astra*, meaning to the Stars.



This flag, top, has a stylized tulip and, in the middle version, an exploding star with 12 points, representing the dozen municipalities. Its slogan for Ottawa is In the Spirit of Canada.

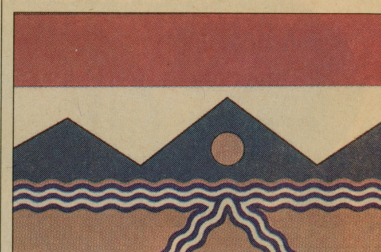
"The shield's supporters, a grey wolf and a Canadian Horse, acknowledge the coming together of wilderness and civilization in the Ottawa Valley," says a report to the committee.

The third flag has a stylized tulip and, in the heraldic version, has an exploding star with 12 points, represent-



Shaping our future together  
*Formons notre avenir ensemble*

The flag and logo from this submission is much more modern: a streaming green swoosh around the O in Ottawa and the updated slogan, Shaping Our Future Together.



City of Ottawa / Ville d'Ottawa  
*Forward Together / Allons de l'avant, ensemble*

This flag features a whimsical blend of colours and appears to include rivers and mountains around a stylized O. Its suggested slogan is Forward Together, while its Latin motto is *Præcedere et Una*, which translates as Proceed Hand in Hand As One.



*Tell us what you think*

As part of our commitment to develop a visual identity for the new City of Ottawa with the citizens of this region, the Ottawa Transition Board's Visual Identity Advisory Committee invites you to tell us which of the three series of symbols you prefer and why, and if you have any suggestions on how to improve them.

**The Process so far**

Over 400 citizens provided us with words and images describing the new city of Ottawa as part of a major public consultation earlier this year.

Major themes were identified and direction was provided to three design firms by the Visual Identity Advisory Committee.

Each firm designed a family of identifiers consisting of a logo, slogan, coat of arms and motto, and a flag based on the coat of arms and a flag based on the logo. Each firm worked closely with the Canadian Heraldic Authority (CHA) to develop the coat of arms.

**Next steps**

Citizens' comments will be considered when the Visual Identity Advisory Committee prepares a recommendation to the Ottawa Transition Board including any modifications. Modifications to the coat of arms must be acceptable to the CHA.



**The New City of Ottawa**  
*History in the making...  
Be part of it!*



*Check out the suggested logos, slogans, coat of arms and flags for the new City of Ottawa!*

*Here's how you can participate*

**Go On-line**

www.ottawatransition.on.ca  
e-mail: ID@ottawatransition.on.ca

**By mail or drop-off**

Visual Identity Program, Ottawa  
Transition Board,  
111 Lisgar Street,  
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2L7

**By TTY**

244-5437

**By Fax**

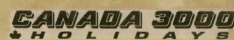
244-5446

**By voice**

244-5300 ext. 4230

Logo/Slogan	Coat of arms	Flag (logo)	Flag (coat of arms)
<b>Only one will be selected</b>			
<b>SERIES A</b>			
<b>SERIES B</b>			
<b>SERIES C</b>			

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Canada

# New Ottawa getting new look



CBC News · Posted: Aug 31, 2000 1:57 AM ET | Last Updated: August 31, 2000

By the time the transition board unveiled the three designs for the new city's coat of arms, logo and flag, they were already the talk of the town. Three different firms came up with the designs, based in part on submissions from more than 400 local residents - residents like 8-year-old Kelsey Courchesne, who submitted a picture of "Ottawa and all its animals."

In fact animals, such as a goose with skates around its neck, figure prominently in all three coat of arms. Some are wondering if the transition board has gone a bit quacky.

"What's more important ... that we have a new city that's on a firm financial footing with the labour issues resolved or that we have a new city with a nice logo?" asks regional councillor Alex Munter. "And I wish the transition board were focussing more on the really important issues."

But board chair Claude Bennet defends the exercise. "You know if it's a new company ... you introduce your logo and your coat of arms and whatever else you want. This is not any different," says Bennet.

The new design will eventually find its way onto every one of the city's trucks, streets signs, and of course letterhead. If you want a say on which of the three designs the board should choose, go to the [Ottawa Transition Board's site](#).

The board hopes to make a final decision sometime in October.

ADVERTISEMENT

## Temporary Mandatory Mask By-law



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377 reading now
- 4 ANALYSIS** Why mail-in ballots are at the

## And the “O” has it

The city spoke, and the stylized “O” came out on top. After a hard-earned celebration, we rubbed the lack of sleep from our eyes and got to work: over 45 products related to the logo were rolled out. (See page 26 for a sample list of products.)

6

• NEPEAN THIS WEEK • FRIDAY FEBRUARY 16, 2001 •

# Local design firm gives city a new visual identity



Top left, David Duguay, Guylene Laforce, Maja Kovacevic, Doug Jackson and Diane Dufour are pleased with their design work for Ottawa's logo.

**MICHELE RICKARD**  
NEPEAN THIS WEEK

During the months leading up to amalgamation, employees from a Nepean-based design and communication firm were busy creating a new visual identity package for the new City of Ottawa.

The creative team at

Accurate Design and Communication was selected to do the design work after its logo won the public and Ottawa Transition Board's approval in late October.

Last spring, the transition board chose seven design companies to submit applications for possible consideration. From those selections, three fir-

ms proceeded to the final proposal stage. In the end, it was the series created by Accurate's art director Doug Jackson and designers Guylene Laforce and Maja Kovacevic, that captured the board's attention and secured the project.

Diane Dufour, president and founder of Accurate, says the excitement really started to build after the transition board approved the company's bid to do the design work for the new city.

"It was so exciting to know that we had secured the contract. I mean this is big since it is the nation's capital. It is definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and it means a lot to me as an owner," she says.

The mid-sized firm, located in the Antares Business Park, has since created dozens of design applications for the new city logo, from the look of the website, to business cards and employee uniforms, as

well as advertising, brochures, publications, promotional items.

Most noticeable is the city's new flag that adorns the poles at municipal buildings and fire stations.

The logo on the flag features an energetic, stylized 'O' that is the focal point of the overall package. Three streamers moving forward and upward together, sym-

bolize the merger of the 12 municipal governments. A reference to Ottawa's role as the capital is also conveyed in the shape of the streamers, which suggest both a maple leaf and the Peace Tower. The blue and green logo colours were chosen to allude to the city's many parks and waterways.

"During the public con-

sultations, people often talked about the city's many waterways. Nature was the driving force for choosing the blue and green," Dufour says. "As for the 'O,' we wanted to work the logo into the word to give it more strength."

She adds this logo gives the city a look that is fresh and works at the corporate level.

**Ottawa**

**Information**

[www.city.ottawa.on.ca](http://www.city.ottawa.on.ca)

**580-2400**

*Shaping our future together*

### Environmental Assessment Study

#### Merivale Road Widening

(Slack Road to Prince of Wales Drive) and

#### Fallowfield Road Widening

(Woodroffe Avenue to Prince of Wales Drive)

### Notice of Study Commencement and Public Open House

**Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2001**

**Time: 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. -Presentation at 7:00 p.m.**

**Place: St Monica School (Gymnasium), 2000 Merivale Road, Ottawa**

The City of Ottawa has initiated a study for the widening of Merivale Road, between Slack Road

**Ottawa**

**Information**



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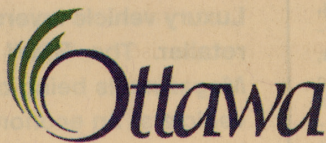
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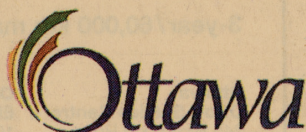
TS

05	-90.59
98	-45.59
18	-3.97
90	-0.21
93	-5.35
47	-71.67
22	-8.18

## Brand new city, brand new brands



Ottawa



Ottawa

The new City of Ottawa, to be born on Jan. 1, 2001, has two official logos and an official flag, all selected by the Ottawa transition board. The transition board expects the two-colour logo to be used most frequently.

BY MICHAEL PRENTICE

Within a few months, the new city of Ottawa will be "branded."

It will likely be branded as a place where living is relatively cheap, good jobs are plentiful, and where getting around is easy compared with, say, Boston, Washington, Toronto or California's Silicone Valley.

Perhaps Ottawa's trump card, it is expected to be

branded as a place to live that is a short distance from ski slopes, white-water rafting, hiking trails, vast forests and wilderness, and four of North America's most beautiful recreational rivers — the Ottawa, Gatineau, Rideau and St. Lawrence.

Right now, when outsiders think of Ottawa at all, they usually think of it as a government town.

See **BRANDS** on page D2

## Recruiter shows how to pick up staffing

Head-hunter says fat salaries also  
simply do

BY VITO P

## Reviews

In choosing Accurate's submission, the client considered comments they received from the public after the draft designs were unveiled. Here is a sampling of those comments:

“...eye-catching.”

“...progressive and modern-looking.”

“The logo is lively and will represent our city well.”

“...fresh and vibrant.”

“Clean and modern look representing Ottawa as a dynamic and high-tech city.”

“...definitely a winner in my mind. It depicts the Ottawa of the new millennium.”





Ottawa

“...reflects the best parts of Ottawa...  
the modernity of its workforce,  
industry and economy.”



# The Creator

## Doug Jackson

### What do you do?

My professional experience is concentrated on brand development and creative direction on a wide array of web, print and multi-media projects. I provide strategic advice to clients on managing and growing their brand as well as maximizing their web and social media marketing presence. I am a creative copy writer and also mentor a large team of web development, interactive and print graphic designers.

### Have you always lived in Ottawa?

Born in Toronto, raised on a farm near Lindsay, Ontario. I moved to Ottawa in 1983.

### What does the City of Ottawa mean to you?

It's home. It's where I raised my family. It's one of the most beautiful cities in Canada and I'm proud to say I'm from here.

### How did you feel when you heard Accurate's concept was chosen?

It was amazing. A lot of hard work by the team, perseverance, and complete faith we were on the right track paid off!

## What the logo means to me...

...working with a team and learning to just face the fire and argue your case and make things happen.







# The Suit

## Diane Dufour

### What do you do?

I'm the founder and owner of Accurate Creative. We're a team of marcom advisors, directors, producers and digital designers. Our services include specialty skill sets in animation, video, and photography.

My role is strategic business consulting, aligning business goals with communication goals. My strength is in branding and how to structure and promote brands to keep businesses current, relevant and influential.

### Have you always lived in Ottawa?

Born and raised right here in Ottawa, I've travelled a lot and know there is no place I'd rather live. I love this city.

### How did you feel when you heard Accurate's concept was chosen?

I was beyond thrilled at even being chosen to submit. It was nail biting and gripping for me waiting to see "who won". I was blown away that Accurate's submission was chosen.

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It was so exciting, that we had secured the contract to roll out the full brand. This is big, this is the nation's capital!







## **Initial Products**

**parking flash / stationery / calendar / keepsake / recycling bin / id badge / ppt presentation template / signage / brochure / fleet sign / mousepad / web design / fire crest / communiques / news releases / cd cover and label / interior way-finder / ad templates / certificates / pins / keychain / t-shirt / shoulder flash / baseball hat / sweatshirt / coffee mug / travel mug / satellite signs / standards manual / coat of arms / temp pass / uniform / needle program / kit folder / plaques / displays / invitations / welcome sign /**





# The Mascot

## CODE

### What do you do?

I am an EMS mascot and first responder. I was created as a tool to help teach children what to do in an emergency situation.

### Have you always lived in Ottawa?

I have, in Nepean, in fact. In 2002, EMS asked Accurate's lead illustrator Louis Chan, to draw a few concepts of what I might look like! He was torn between a beaver, a squirrel and a dog. I am glad to say that the k-9 won out. Squirrels are too flighty and beavers already get enough press. I like to say the barks have it ; )

### What does the City of Ottawa mean to you?

The City of Ottawa is where I was born, raised, and of course, where I worked. I am retired now, but I feel a sense of pride in knowing I have helped many kids in my home town.

### How do you show your pride?

I have the logo on my shoulder all of the time. You can say it is "part of me" (chuckles). Have you seen my Safety Fun Book? We had a blast making that.

## What the logo means to me...

...my life goal. To remind the kids of Ottawa that most injuries and accidents can be avoided if you stay alert and stay calm.







## “O” Around Town

### Photos galore

From signs to brochures, guides and swag, this “O” is seen everywhere. Sometimes very unexpectedly.









indicate cooperation. The three maple leaves symbolize both Ontario and Canada, and the beaver, the national animal, represents Canada.

**HOW SELECTED:** At the 4 September 1973 Oshawa council meeting, a resolution was adopted for a flag design contest for the city's golden anniversary in 1974. The contest was open to students in all public, separate, and secondary schools in the city of Oshawa. Durham College also assisted with the sponsorship of the contest. The arms had been designed by Joan M. Book of Pickering, Ontario, and adopted by the city council 5 May 1972. The beaver was added 19 June 1967.

**DESIGNER:** Julia Lakas, a student at E. A. Lovell Public School.



**Ottawa, Ontario** 

**Population Rank:** Canada... 4  
Province... 2

**Proportions:** 1:2  
**Adopted:** 23 October 2000



**DESIGN:** The flag of the City of Ottawa bears a highly-stylized "O" symbol in white, touching the centres of the upper and lower edges of the flag at their midpoints, and dividing the field into blue at the hoist and green (nearly an aquamarine) within the "O" and at the fly. The "O" has three "streamers" emanating upward from the left side, with pointed ends; its central circle is two-thirds the height of the flag.

**SYMBOLISM:** The stylized "O" logo (for "Ottawa") represents the vibrancy and forward movement of the new amalgamated city. It also acknowledges Ottawa's status as the nation's capital with its three streamers forming a subtle and abstract suggestion of a maple leaf and a hint of local architecture, especially the Parliament Buildings. The streamers also symbolize hope, harmony, and working together toward a common goal. Green and blue are the colours of Ottawa. The flag was designed to reflect the landscape of the city. The green speaks of Ottawa's quality of life and the city's abundant green spaces. The blue symbolizes the rivers and waterways that are part of life in the Ottawa area.













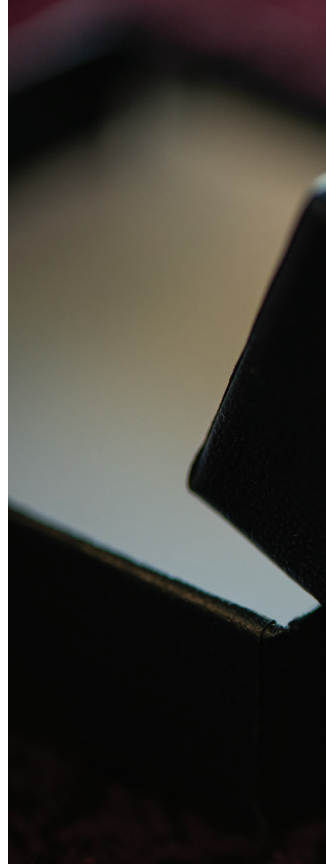
























Ottawa

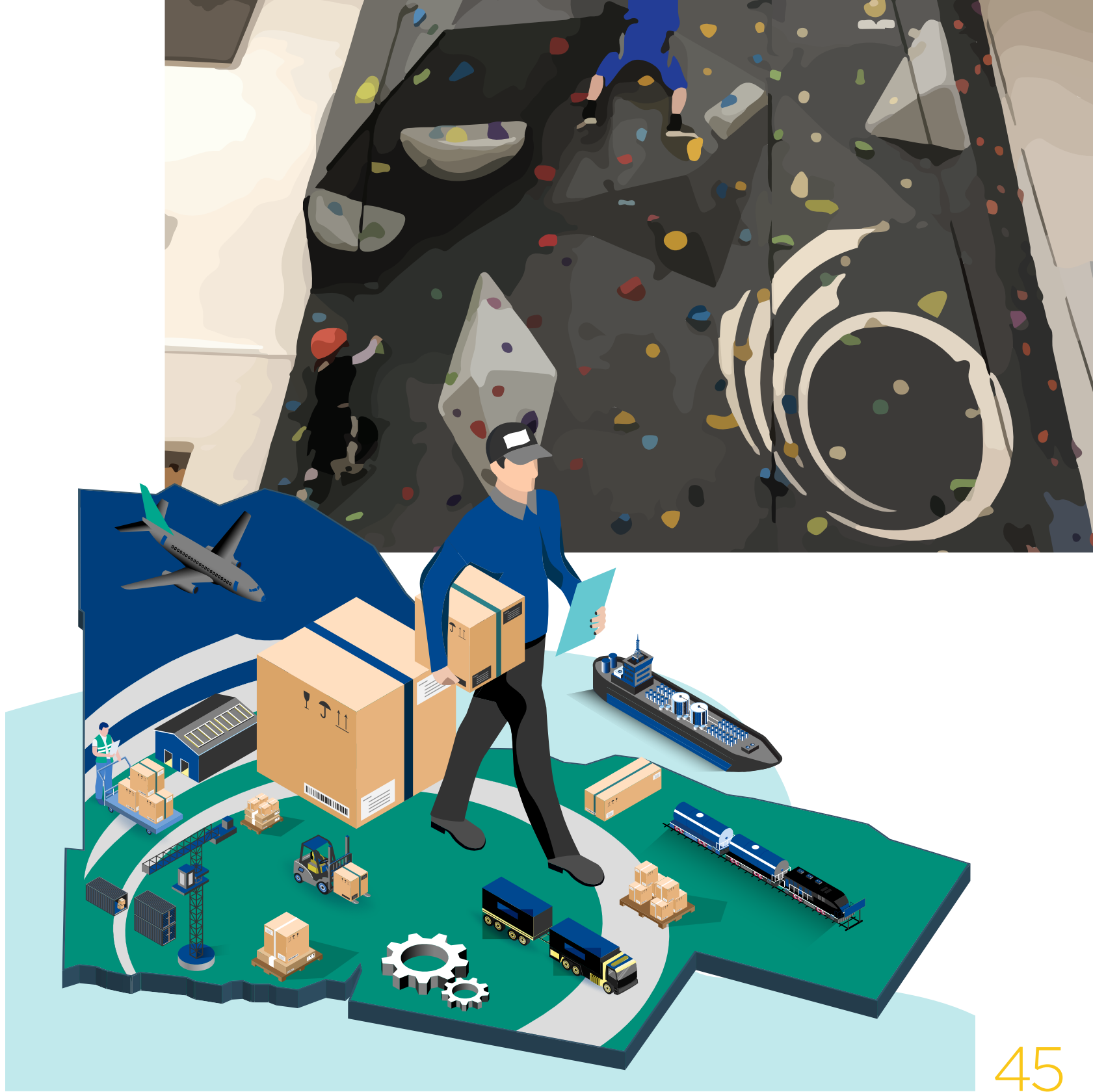
Ottawa

Ottawa





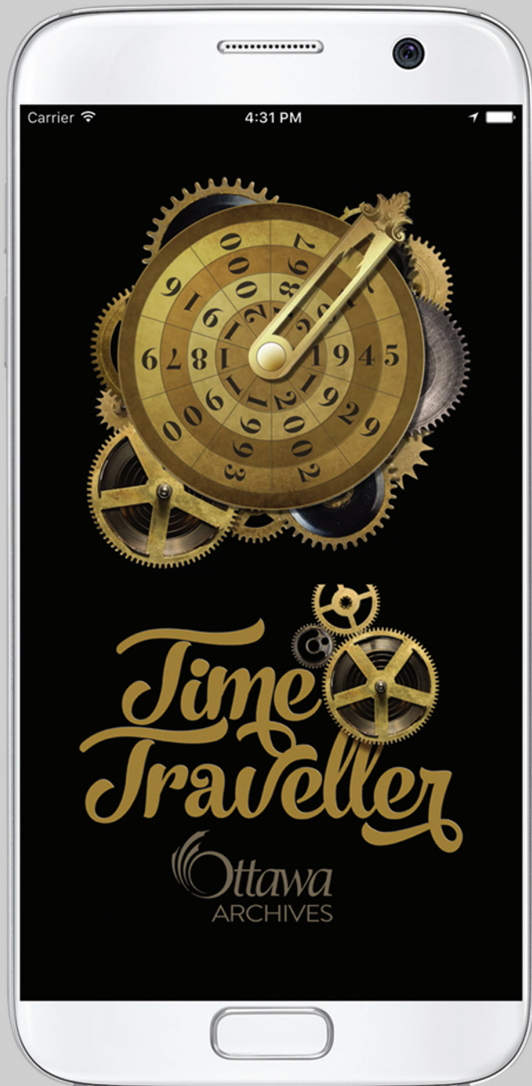
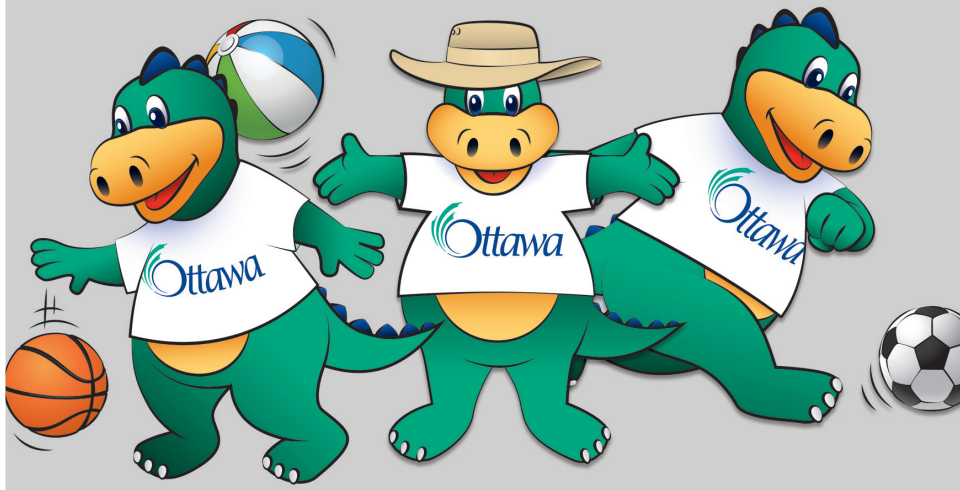














# The Top Fan

## The LJ

### What do you do?

I own two record labels, a very popular recording studio and am co-owner of a custom design brand. I am also a rapper, singer, beat maker and audio engineer with a lot of credits on my back.

### Have you always lived in Ottawa?

I was born in Ottawa and lived abroad in West Africa and Russia for a portion of my life. I moved back to Ottawa in 2009.

### What does the City of Ottawa mean to you?

The City of Ottawa means everything to me. It's my home and I always represent it wherever I go. Due to the way I carry myself and the extensive knowledge I have in my field, people often think I come from Toronto but I am quick to proudly tell them I am an Ottawa native.

### When did you get the tattoo?

I got the tattoo done in July 2016 at Knux Studio on 135 Bank St.

## The logo means to me...

...home and unity to me. The fact that we have a flag we can fly and represent is everything to me. I always rep Ottawa, whether it's when I'm in LA or when I was living abroad, or in my music. You will always hear me talk about OTT and how I have it tatted on my shoulder, I am a role model for the youth.





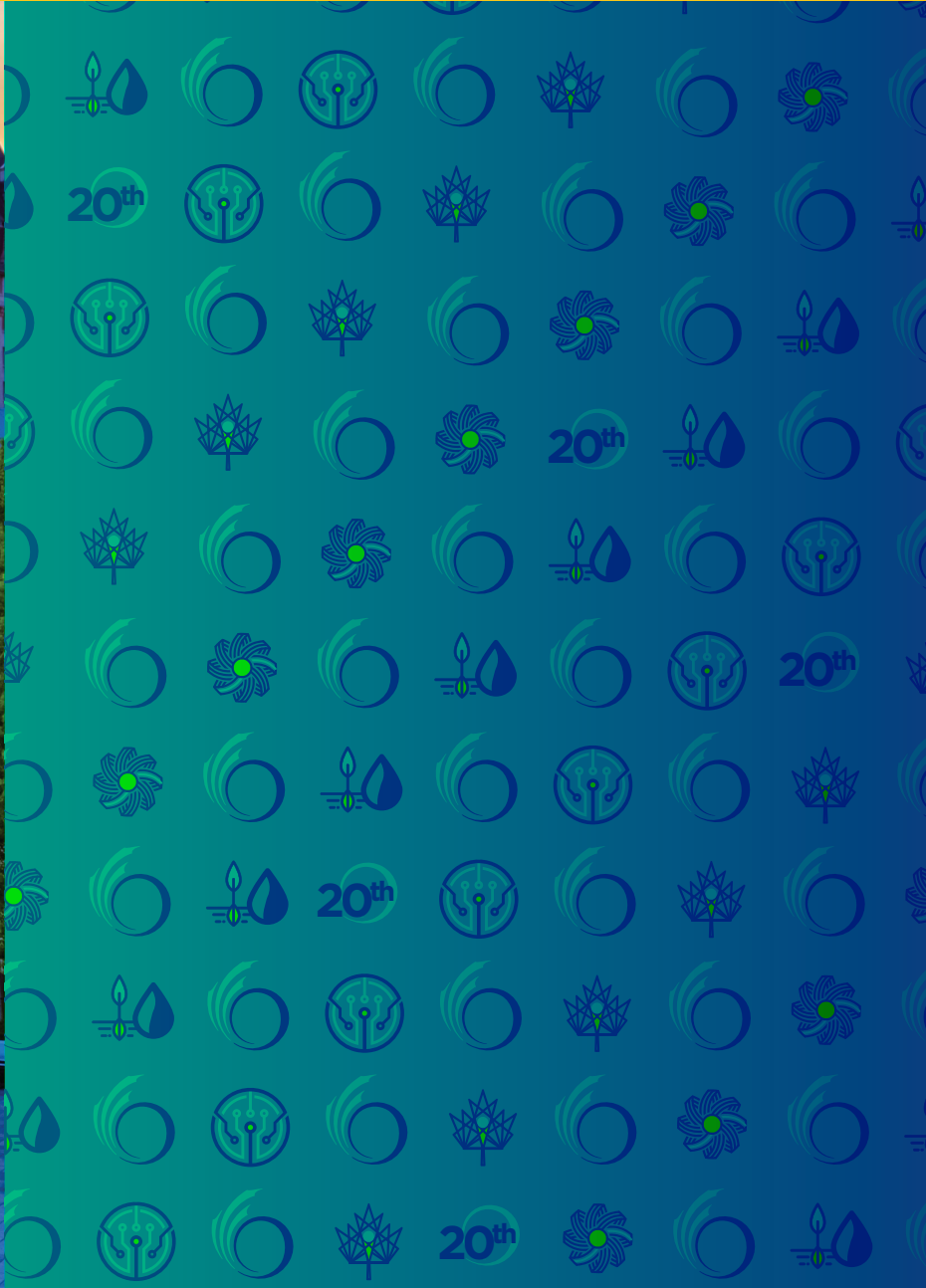


On behalf of Accurate Creative, thank you...

**Happy 20<sup>th</sup>, City of Ottawa!**









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