

SPECULATING THE TENTH

Excavating 2125 — Hamilton as Sentient City

Alejandro Hernandez Guzman

Development Phase 2 | Week 9 | Winter 2026

Research Question

How can speculative design be used to imagine Hamilton in 2092 as a model for an equitable, ecosocialist, more-than-human city — and what does this mean for the urban intersections we inhabit today?

Communicative Aims

COMMUNICATE

Make the 2092 world legible as a plausible, designed future

PROVOKE

Use fiction to interrogate present-day failures of public space

DEMONSTRATE

Produce a diegetic world that functions as a policy laboratory

Hamilton 2092

THE GENERATION

2092 = the 10th generation since Confederation (1867). The cycle of repair.

CANADA 2.0.9.2

Post-restructuring: ecosocialist governance, Indigenous land co-stewardship, decentralised infrastructure.

THE STEWARD ETHOS

Technology as custodian, not controller. Urban systems are living, responsive, mutual.

THE STALLED INTERFACE

Today's grey/beige transit hubs as sites of failure — paralysis between aging concrete and climate emergency.

"Design's most powerful function is not to solve problems as they currently exist — but to make visible the futures we have not yet had the courage to build."

Personal design position

What This Project Produces

01

Hamilton 2092 Guidebook

User Manual for the Sentient City

80–120 page hand-bound book. Chapters: Transit (The Hub), Residential (The Home), Civic (Public Intersections). Functions as both artifact and publication.

IN PRODUCTION

02

Physical Provotypes

Speculative Artifacts

The Steward (e-waste assemblage), The Multi-Lens (shattered optics), The Orenda Coil, Transit Hub Maquette, Living Architecture Fragment.

IN PROGRESS

03

Mini-Exhibition

Museum-Style Public Display

Large-format 3D spatial renders. Designed as a real exhibition space. The complete diegetic world presented as if curated from 2092.

UPCOMING

Research Informing Process

Discursive Design

— *Tharp & Tharp*

Every artifact is designed to provoke discourse. The Steward, Multi-Lens, and Orenda Coil are designed to be questioned, not used.

Ecosocialism

— *Löwy & others*

Structural lens for imagining collective, de-growth urban governance. Informs Guidebook's civic chapter.

Diegetic Prototyping

— *Malpass*

Artifacts exist as if made in 2092. Authenticity of material and patina matters — e-waste, shattered optics are not aesthetic, they are narrative.

Futures Cone

— *Dunne & Raby*

Frames 2092 as 'plausible' — not utopian fantasy. Grounds decisions in extrapolated trajectory from today's climate + policy data.

More-Than-Human

— *Haraway / Tsing*

Non-human entities as rights-bearing urban citizens. Shapes the Orenda Coil as a listening device for urban ecology.

The Dish With One Spoon

— *Haudenosaunee / Anishinaabe*

Indigenous stewardship principle. Embedded in the governance structure of 2092's civic spaces.

Phase 1 → Phase 2



Theoretical Framework

Complete — Discursive Design, Futures Cone, Ecosocialism, More-than-Human, Diegetic Prototyping

World Bible & Visual Identity

Complete — Hamilton 2092 lore, governance, aesthetics, typography system

Physical Artifacts

In Progress — Steward complete, Multi-Lens fabricated, Orenda Coil + Maquette underway

Guidebook Production

In Progress — Structure defined, chapter content being drafted, layout in InDesign

Physical Artifacts

Each provotype is designed as if fabricated in 2092 — using e-waste, found materials, and shattered optics as narrative, not just aesthetic. The artifacts exist to be questioned.

The Steward

COMPLETE

Urban Custodian / E-Waste Assemblage

Built from reclaimed electronics. Embodies the thesis that technology should serve as a caretaker of place, not a controller. The Steward monitors, tends, and defers.

The Multi-Lens

FABRICATED

Perceptual Tool / Shattered Optics

A lens array that fragments and recomposes urban vision. Designed for a citizen who sees multiple possible futures simultaneously — the condition of living in 2092.

The Orenda Coil

UNDERWAY

Urban Ecology Listener

Draws from the Haudenosaunee concept of Orenda — the life-force in all things. A coil that 'listens' to the more-than-human presences of urban space.

Transit Hub Maquette

IN PROGRESS

Spatial Model / Phase 2

A 1:50 model of the Hamilton 2092 Transit Hub. Key node in the Guidebook's Transit chapter. Demonstrates spatial transformation from 'stalled interface' to sentient infrastructure.

Hamilton 2092 Guidebook

User Manual for the Sentient City | 80–120 pages | Hand-bound

Ch. 01

TRANSIT — The Hub

~35 pages

- › Site audit: Hamilton transit hubs today
- › The Stalled Interface analysis
- › 2092 Transit Hub redesign + Maquette documentation
- › Material systems: responsive infrastructure
- › Citizen interaction scenarios

Ch. 02

HOME — The Residential

~30 pages

- › Living Architecture Fragment
- › More-than-human cohabitation models
- › Material ecology: bio-plastics + reclaimed
- › The Orenda Coil in domestic context
- › Future household speculations

Ch. 03

CIVIC — Public Intersections

~30 pages

- › Hamilton's civic plazas: present failure
- › Dish With One Spoon governance model
- › Ecosocialist public space design
- › The Multi-Lens as civic tool
- › Exhibition documentation

Research Documentation

The Process Document is a living research archive — not a retrospective record, but an active tool for thinking. It documents:

Site Audits

Hamilton transit hub photography + annotation. Identifying the 'Stalled Interface' in existing infrastructure.

Theoretical Mapping

Visual maps linking Tharp, Dunne & Raby, Löwy, Haraway, and Indigenous governance frameworks.

Material Experiments

Documentation of e-waste sourcing, optical material tests, bio-plastic trials from Ex-Lab.

Artifact Development

Sketches, fabrication notes, and material decision logs for all four provotypes.

World-Building Archive

Hamilton 2092 lore documents, timeline, governance structure, and visual identity exploration.

SUBMISSION

Format	PDF to Slate
State	In-Progress
Basis	25% of Phase 2 grade
Reflects	Creative exploration + research depth

The Process Document submitted today reflects Thesis I + early Thesis II documentation. Active updates underway for final submission.

Path to Final Submission

Wks 9–10

Complete Artifact Fabrication

Finalise Transit Hub Maquette structural assembly · Complete Orenda Coil + document with photography · Photo session: all four artifacts in context

Wks 9–11

Guidebook Content + Layout

Draft all three chapter texts (Transit, Home, Civic) · Place content into InDesign layout system · Integrate artifact photography + spatial renders

Wks 10–11

Process Document Update

Add Term 8 research documentation to existing document · Map theoretical framework visually · Document Phase 2 design decisions

Wk 12

Print, Bind & Mini-Exhibition

Final print run for Guidebook (hand-binding) · Set up Mini-Exhibition spatial layout + large-format renders · Prepare final Slate submission package

I Need Your Input On:

Q1 Guidebook Tone

The Guidebook reads as a real-world publication from 2092. Should it maintain a fully diegetic voice throughout (written as if by residents of 2092), or should it break frame to explain design decisions to the contemporary reader?

Q2 Artifact Legibility

The provotypes are designed to be ambiguous — you're not sure if they're tools, sculptures, or machines. Is that productive ambiguity, or does it risk losing the viewer before they engage with the concept?

Q3 Exhibition Structure

The Mini-Exhibition presents Hamilton 2092 as if it were real history. How do you suggest I handle the transition point — where the viewer realises this is speculative — in the spatial and curatorial design?

*"The 10th generation inherits what we
build today."*

Alejandro Hernandez Guzman

DESN 43509 — Thesis II | Development Phase 2 | March 2026