



# MEMORANDUM

## LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

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**To:** Milwaukee Arts Board  
**From:** Tea Norfolk, Legislative Fiscal Analyst – Lead  
**Date:** September 21, 2018  
**Subject:** City flag history, cost estimate of replacement, adoption process in other cities

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This memo is in response to your request for the following information related to replacing the City flag:

1. An estimate of the cost of replacing the flag.
2. A summary of articles related to replacing the flag.
3. The Mayor's Office report on replacing the flag.
4. Other cities' adoption of new flag designs.

### ESTIMATE OF REPLACEMENT COST

In discussion with City departments, very few locations fly the City flag. There may be, at most, approximately 100 flags throughout City locations. Other than Department of Public Works (DPW), the departments do not use the City flag in printed material, signage, business cards, etc. The Police Department flies flags at approximately 12 locations and estimates that at \$85 per 3' x 5' flag, replacement would be approximately \$1,000 to replace all flags.

An estimate from the City Clerk's Office for flags purchased from Flag Center in Wauwatosa prices a 3' x 5' flag at \$19.95 per flag and a 4' x 6' flag at \$25.95 per flag, plus a small shipping charge. Given the relatively few number of flags in the City's possession, replacement of the largest flag at a quantity of 100 would cost \$2,595. DPW estimated a lower cost at \$1,000.

Based on an estimated number of 2,650 pieces of City equipment with current DPW seals on them (two per unit), and approximately 45 minutes to remove the old decals, prep the surfaces and install new decals, the cost would be as follows:

Labor only: \$63.25 for each piece of equipment x 2,650 = \$167,612.50

Decal costs: Estimated at \$16 each x 5,300 (2 per unit) = \$ 84,800.00

Total cost to retrofit new decals onto existing vehicles and equipment = \$252,412.50

Note, however, that although the current flag is part of the DPW symbol, given the variety of symbols used by City departments, it may not be necessary to rebrand all vehicles at one time. Logo replacement could occur as new vehicles come onboard.

## **SUMMARY OF FLAG REDESIGN ARTICLES**

On August 1, 2013, Jeff Sherman wrote for OnMilwaukee.com that in 2001, OnMilwaukee.com helped coordinate and promote a contest to select a new flag. Ultimately, the Common Council did not move forward. The article cites MKE Flag as a renewed effort seeking input into a flag redesign and shows a proposed design, which is a pair of arrows and five bars in alternating color. The article also seeks input from readers regarding whether a new flag is warranted.

On August 7, 2013, Dustin Weis wrote for OnMilwaukee.com that while critics say the City's flag is ugly and outdated, he believes those characteristics are its virtues. He states that the City's flag is "beautiful in its absolute scorn for the modern concept of beauty" and refers to the flag as "crusty." He further states:

We're Milwaukeeans. We don't give two hoots about someone else's 'rebranding' or their concept of what's 'in.' We crave what's real, and we can spot imposters like the 1994 Brewers logo and the 'new' Milwaukee flag Jeff Sherman's blog featured for exactly what they are – the watered-down product of committee-process, nose-in-the-air groupthink that's high on cutting-edge hype and low on substance.

Milwaukee Magazine published an article by Tim McCormick in its City Guide 2015. In the article, James J. Ferrigan III, spokesman for the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA) – a group devoted to studying flags – refers to the City flag as a "kitchen sink" flag because "they just put everything on there." The article further details the history of the current flag, which was the result of a citywide competition and former Ald. Fred Steffan compiling the best elements. Lee Tishler, a Milwaukee Public Museum employee came close to replacing the original design with his own, which he had entered into a 1975 contest and won. His flag was never officially adopted. Later, the Milwaukee Arts Board refused to adopt any of the 105 designs submitted in a 2001 contest. Three years later, NAVA, ranked Milwaukee's flag as 147<sup>th</sup> out of 150 nationwide city flag designs. The Milwaukee Police Department redesigned its patches to include symbols, like the Milwaukee Art Museum's Calatrava addition. The article refers to the images featured on the current flag as having been "long ago relegated to the dustbins of history." The article then places a call to action to contribute responses to [MilwaukeeMag.com/CityFlagPetition](http://MilwaukeeMag.com/CityFlagPetition) to register support for updating the flag.

On June 5, 2016, Katherine Michalets wrote in the Milwaukee County Post that Milwaukee resident Steve Kodis launched an effort to get the Milwaukee flag redesigned. He tied the redesign to the Milwaukee Bucks rebranding. Kodis is a graphic designer and stated the flag is poorly designed. He launched the website [www.milwaukeeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com). He envisioned the process as starting with community support through an online petition to get approval from city government to move forward with the redesign. He reached out to Ald. Zielinski, but no alderman endorsed the redesign. He stated in the article that after getting the City's approval, he would start a design submission process that would highlight the five principles of flag design and then a "small and qualified jury would select a design."

On October 28, 2015, Michael Holloway wrote in Urban Milwaukee that Milwaukee is one of the "absolute worst example[s] of a city flag." Roman Mars, a Ted Talk presenter, stated, "Nothing can quite prepare you for one of the biggest train wrecks in Vexillological history... Are you ready? It's the flag of Milwaukee, Wisconsin." He notes that one element on the flag is a picture of the Civil War battle flag of the Milwaukee regiment. There is a flag on the flag, which the presenters agree makes Milwaukee's flag almost a parody of itself. The article notes that Steve Kodis is paying for the flag redesign competition out of his own pocket and is working with Gravity Marketing LLC to connect with a non-profit agency that will help with getting sponsors and funding for manufacturing flags. The contest called for submissions from October 1 through November 30, 2015. There was no entry fee and the competition was open to anyone, including people who are not City residents. He planned to build the public's interest in the flag redesign after manufacturing the winning flag. His plan was to tap "design-minded, local businesses, trying to get it to them first, so people start seeing it." He would then name the winning flag "the People's Flag of Milwaukee," since it would not yet be official. He hoped that after generating enough public interest, the Common Council would accept it. The article concludes with a call to action to submit a design to the competition at [www.milwaukeeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com).

On March 24, 2016, Matt Wild wrote in the Milwaukee Record that efforts to redesign the flag since its 1955 adoption have been going on for almost as long as the adoption of the flag itself. He describes the flag as being "haphazardly stuffed with barley stalks, boats, and something that looks like a UFO." The article states that 88Nine Radio Milwaukee introduced The Greater Together People's Flag Competition, which was organized by the station, the Greater Together coalition, professional design group AIGA, and the "Milwaukee Flag Initiative." The competition accepted new flag designs until April 14, 2016, which would be whittled down via a panel of experts, and then the top five would be displayed in City Hall on May 14, 2015. The winner would be chosen at an event at Radio Milwaukee on June 14, 2016. Wild notes that Steve Kodis's efforts to redesign the flag go back to at least 2013, and that his most recent push was

inspired by Roman Mars's 2015 TED Talk calling Milwaukee's flag a "hot mess." Wild states that Kodis was a guest on a weekly WMSE talk show Wild co-hosts with Ryan Schleicher and Evan Rytlewski, wherein the hosts asked Kodis why Milwaukee needed a new flag, why he was qualified to lead the charge, and who the flag would represent. In the interview, Kodis acknowledges that the City has its official flag and that his flag design would be separate. Rytlewski states, "If you push something like this through, and there actually isn't broad city support across different demographics of the city, you're not representing the city." Kodis responded to Wild via e-mail that in the latest iteration of the design competition, the Greater Together partnership led several design workshops at UWM, MIAD, Mount Mary University, Washington High School, Bay View High, Bradley Tech, Ronald Reagan High, and MATC. He also stated he would meet with Ald. Kovac, who helped coordinate the exhibit on May 14.

On March 31, 2016, Molly Snyder wrote in OnMilwaukee.com that a contest was asking for submissions from people to design "The People's Flag of Milwaukee." She states that Fred Gillich designed a Milwaukee banner, which features the city's area code "414."

On April 9, 2016, Jason McDowell wrote in OnMilwaukee.com that "Milwaukee's flag history has been one of perpetual shoulder-shrugging and an aggressive lack of vision." The current flag "helped illustrate the definition of 'design by committee:' a jumbled mess of letters, numbers and outdated, confusing, lost, even outright racist symbols." McDowell's article is critical of Evan Rytlewski's opposition to the flag redesign. The article notes Kodis's plans to print and sell the new design on merchandise at the release party. McDowell states, "Milwaukee, a city that once had the vision to build the tallest building in the world, is currently united under a flag that demonstrates how little vision we have." The article also links a call to action to submit to the design competition.

On April 10, 2016, Bobby Tanzilo interviewed John Gurda and Steve Kodis in OnMilwaukee.com regarding the flag redesign competition. Kodis states that "community buy-in seems strong" and that nearly 600 designs have come from all over the Greater Milwaukee area and additional entrants include designs from Australia and Scandinavia.

On May 11, 2016, Molly Spicuzza wrote in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that Mayor Barrett stated the official flag was outdated. Mayor Barrett praised the effort, calling it "a great community engagement exercise to see whether we want to have this 'people's flag,' or even to consider changing our city flag."

On May 14, 2016, Jason McDowell wrote in OnMilwaukee.com that the five finalist designs from Kodis's competition would be voted on over the course of two weeks. Common elements in the semi-finalist designs included sports teams, architecture, the lake, arrows, wheat, gears,



beer, the three founders, the three rivers, the native people, and the letter “M.” Many chose blue, green, and yellow or cream for colors. City residents were invited to rate the five finalist flags from 1 to 10, and the most acceptable flag would be chosen based on the aggregate total. The winner would be revealed at the 88.9 RadioMilwaukee headquarters on June 14.

On May 15, 2016, Mary Spicuzza wrote in the Journal Sentinel that the five finalists were chosen from among more than 1,000 entries. Spicuzza notes that Marion Steffan Koch, Ald. Fred Steffan’s daughter, called Roman Mars’s comments about the current flag “an insult to the history of Milwaukee” and her father. She also stated that nobody has come up with a better design than her father’s design in the last 60 years. That flag was the result of 100 submissions.

On May 16, 2016, David Schuyler wrote in The Business Journal that the People’s Flag of Milwaukee initiative was not intended to result in an official change of the City flag. Instead, the initiative was meant to involve Milwaukee’s “urban and diverse youth involved in the conversation on what we, as residents, want the city of Milwaukee to become.” The article briefly synthesizes the competition timeline. Greater Together is called “a nonprofit organization that promotes racial and economic equality in the creative industries in the Milwaukee area.” The initiative held a dozen or so workshops at schools, Boys & Girls Clubs locations, and universities in the area. Approximately 20 percent of the entries came from the various workshops. The article states that while The People’s Flag of Milwaukee initiative is not officially sanctioned by the City, Ald. Hamilton was expected to appear at the upcoming event.

On June 4, 2016, John Gurda wrote an opinion piece that appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Gurda states that the City flag is “clunky.” He acknowledges, that “[a]lthough it has a certain retro charm, in the same way that orange shag carpeting and Formica countertops appeal to some baby boomers, the flag reads as a visual checklist of items that represented Milwaukee to our grandparents.... If it were any busier, Milwaukee’s flag would die of sheer exhaustion.” Gurda detailed the judging process: each judge picked the designs he or she found most appealing, which narrowed the field to about 120. The next step was to group those choices thematically (gears, waves, stripes, maps, stars, etc.) and pare them down to 50 semifinalists. From that pool, after spirited discussion, the judges picked five designs to be submitted to the public in an online poll. Gurda goes further into depth on some of the former flag design attempts, beginning with 1987, which yielded no results in official adoption of a flag. In 1927, a group of citizens attempted to promote a blue flag with the City seal printed in gold and orange as the official flag. That design was sent to the Police Department and later abandoned. In 1942, Ald. Fred Meyers called for an official flag, and it was not until 1950 that Meyers renewed his push and launched a contest. Four years later, Ald. Steffan took elements from the 1950 finalists to design the current flag. The Milwaukee Sentinel ignored the story,

and the Journal gave it two sentences in the local section. As the symbols on the flag became outdated (smokestacks went cold, Braves left, breweries closed, lake traffic diminished), there were more attempts to redesign the flag, including a 1975 contest that went dormant, a 1991 attempt that was abandoned, and a 2001 contest from which no entries were selected. The current campaign has generated more discussion, publicity, and entries than all of the preceding contests combined. Gurda states that “in some quarters, the current contest is a hipster plot to strip Milwaukee of a valued icon.” Gurda believes the process has been transparent and that the spirit of the organizers was openhearted throughout.

On June 14, 2016, Jason McDowell wrote in OnMilwaukee.com that Sunrise Over the Lake by Robert Lenz was voted People’s Flag of Milwaukee after weighing more than 30,000 rankings from over 60,000 voters. The runner-up was DeChazier Stokes-Johnson’s “M” Star.

On June 15, 2016, Urban Milwaukee quoted Commissioner of City Development Rocky Marcoux as saying the current City flag is “an inventory of what’s in the city that was dying under the weight of its symbols.” The article states that Greater Together organized panel discussions for businesses, encouraging them to tap into the talent of the inner city. Marcoux is quoted as saying about the winning design of the competition, “We need to continue to have conversations about inequity, and this flag is important because it is a symbol of diversity and togetherness.”

On March 5, 2018, Jim Carlton wrote in The Wall Street Journal that many Milwaukee residents only learned the City had a flag after it became a target of ridicule. Evan Rytlewski is quoted as saying, “I’m so mad right now... I didn’t know we had a Milwaukee flag. Then I discovered it and I truly fell in love. Everything about it is wrong and right at the same time.” In 2015, Provo, UT, adopted a new flag that depicts the sun rising behind lake-framed mountains. Sioux Falls, SD, empaneled a Committee to Establish a Suitable Flying Banner for the City of Sioux Falls. In 2016, Pocatello, ID, convened a Flag Design Ad Hoc Committee and asked volunteers for ideas to replace its flag, and out of 709 entries, the city selected a sun framed by snow-capped mountains. In 2016, Manchester, NH, held a meeting to approve its redesign efforts, and an alderman complained the process was wasteful and unnecessary. The city kept its old flag. In 2016, civic boosters in Joplin, MO, launched a contest to replace its flag out of belief the existing flag would not adhere to a requirement of the Vexillological Association. The winning flag out of 70 design entries was a blue and white flag depicting four roads intersecting at a city. The council has not acted on it, but the new flag has been circulated on T-shirts, stickers, and posters. Ald. Bohl is quoted as stating, “Having a new face for the city would be appropriate,” and calls the current flag a “mishmash” that has outlived its time. Ald. Zielinski said he wants to follow the wishes of his constituents, who have diverse opinions.

On March 6, 2018, Jim Stingl wrote in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that the People's Flag is growing on him. He admits that he mocked the design in 2016 and that it is easier to throw stones than to come up with a design that pleases everyone. He notes that familiarity makes people warm up to things, and seeing the design crop up in more places has the effect of him getting used to seeing it. The flags are available at local shops and on Amazon, stickers, patches, lapel pins, ornaments, bikinis, and socks have the image. The Milwaukee Brewers have incorporated it into shirts, caps, and hoodies. Anyone can use the flag design for any purpose without permission or money changing hands. It is public domain.

On March 14, 2018, Matt Wild wrote in the Milwaukee Record that he was interviewed by a Wall Street Journal reporter about the People's Flag. He states, "After nearly five years of getting worked up about the dubious effort/ contest to design a new Milwaukee city flag, and after nearly two years of living with the winning design... I'm officially giving up. I don't care anymore. The old flag is dead. The "People's Flag" has won. May its Corona beer label colors fly atop Milwaukee business and luxury apartment balconies for years to come." He admits he "still kind of hate[s] the thing" because of the original impetus behind it: "Hey! A guy with a podcast said our flag is terrible! Let's design a new one... let's slap it on every piece of merchandise we can imagine!" He notes that the reason for his surrender to the design is that it is everywhere. It's all over the East Side, Bay View, and downtown. It is on beer bottles and bicycles, businesses and residences. It has gone from a pet project to an ever-expanding default icon. More and more Milwaukeeans are embracing it. Wild notes that even Milwaukee Journal Sentinel columnist Jim Stingl is starting to see it everywhere. Wild questions whether many people even know the back story of the official flag or of the People's Flag or even care about the back story. He asks, "Isn't it enough that a new generation of Milwaukeeans finally have a symbol of their city pride? And that they're not afraid to show it?"

On May 31, 2018, Jeramey Jannene wrote in Urban Milwaukee that since its unveiling in 2016, the people's flag of Milwaukee has become ubiquitous. Ald. Johnson is quoted as stating, "Milwaukee needs a symbol that we all can be proud of and rally around." Jannene wrote, "even if the current flag's design wasn't an issue, it's no wonder the new flag has proliferated. Try to find design files for either version of the 1955 flag and the appeal of the royalty-free people's flag becomes immediately apparent."

On July 20, 2018, Mary Spicuzz and Ahmed Elbenni quoted the executive director of Greater Together in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel as saying the flag redesign competition has been "entire an exercise in civic pride." Ald. Coggs noted the similarity between the People's Flag and Reno's flag, but People's Flag advocates state their flag came first. The article states that Ald. Borkowski amended the proposal, setting a six-month deadline for the Arts Board to report back to the Common Council. The reporting deadline in the signed resolution is December 31,

2018. Ald. Stamper questioned the use of white on the people's flag, and why the designers described white as a symbol of "unity."

The articles for this summary are attached to this report in their entirety.

### **MAYOR'S FACEBOOK POST**

On June 24, 2018, Mayor Tom Barrett posted the following comment on his FaceBook page, along with a picture of the People's Flag: "I've seen this flag around our city more and more. Do you think it's time to make it the official flag of Milwaukee? Leave your thoughts in the comments. Learn more about the flag by visiting [milwaukeeeflag.com](http://milwaukeeeflag.com)."

The post received 888 click votes as follows:

- 734 thumbs-up (likes)
- 117 hearts (loves)
- 18 laughing faces
- 12 angry faces
- 7 sad faces

The post received 574 comments. Of those comments, 270 were in favor of adopting the flag, 217 were against adopting the flag, and the remaining comments did not indicate a preference. Comments against the design fell into the following general categories:

- There are more important things to do than worry about a flag
- The City already has a flag
- Like another flag better
- It looks like something else: Reno's flag, another flag, Comfort Inn logo, Corona logo, Minolta logo, Obama logo (Note that of the 60 redesigned flags surveyed, 12 have a circle or sun in the center, 15 use the colors blue, yellow, and white, and 8 have both a circle/sun in the center and use the colors blue, yellow, and white. See the attachment titled "Municipal Flag Improvement - Portland Flag Association.")
- Aesthetically unappealing
- It is racist/ not inclusive
- Too boring / generic
- Too many cities are jumping on the Roman Mars bandwagon
- Does not have the City's name / date on it
- Will look dated soon

Note that the holders of the People's Flag contest state that there were approximately 1,000 entries and 60,000 votes for the flag. By way of comparison, in the February 20, 2018 Spring Primary election, 35,792 people voted. In the April 3, 2018 Spring election, 58,384 people voted. In the August 14, 2018 Fall Primary election, 85,613 people voted.

A transcript of the comments on the Mayor's post is attached to this memo.

## **OTHER CITIES**

The recent wave of flag interest in North America stems from a 2004 publication of a guide called *American City Flags*, which is lauded as the first major work on the subject. It documents the municipal flags of 100 U.S. cities representing all 50 states. In 2010, journalist Roman Mars released an episode on his podcast 99% Invisible regarding the design failures of municipal flags. The podcast was turned into a 2015 TED Talk, and that TED Talk has been watched 3.7 million times.

Many of the flag competitions profiled below began with citizens motivated by the TED Talk to launch some form of public interest. While some competitions were held by City Councils, others were purely resident-driven. They tend to follow a similar format and ethos to the People's Flag of Milwaukee competition: Generate public interest with a competition, engage a panel of experts as a selection committee, hold a public vote that uses a ranking system, and select a winning flag. When those competitions have been City-driven, City Councils have generally approved the winning flag design and officially adopted it. When the competitions were purely resident-driven without gaining Council buy-in, a very small number of flags went on to be officially adopted.

Flag redesign efforts in other cities are summarized below.

### **Cedar Park, TX**

City Council members voted to consider a new design to replace a flag-redesign contest winning flag. Several residents expressed on social media their dislike of the flag, and Council members plan to take a public vote on the redesigned flag after other residents complained the selection process in choosing a new flag was not inclusive of the public. The new competition would be guided by the Cedar Park Parks, Arts, and Community Enrichment advisory board to winnow down the number of designs.

## **Columbia, MO**

The City held a flag design contest in 2014, receiving 84 entries from residents. After a public voting period, the Commission on Cultural Affairs and City staff reviewed entries and chose a group of finalists. The City Council reviewed finalists, selecting its top three. After a public comment period, City Council evaluated feedback, which overwhelmingly favored the winning design.

## **Coral Springs, FL**

The City conducted a flag redesign competition. It received 80 submissions and narrowed the field to six finalists. The Council adopted the winning design.

## **Dallas, TX**

One citizen redesigned the flag and started an online petition in support. The flag has not been adopted officially by the City.

## **Edmonton, Alberta, Canada**

An interested resident sets forth his plan for getting public buy-in to a flag redesign: a public contest, including information about good flag design and getting school-children involved; enlisting a panel of judges who are trained in good flag design to create a shortlist; and a public vote ranking their favorites.

## **Golden, CO**

The City held a flag contest for people to submit their designs. Twenty-three flag designs were submitted by people ranging from grade school children to professional designers. Thousands of people voted, and the top six designs were presented to City Council, who chose the winner, which was the flag that received the most citizen votes.

## **Lancaster, PA**

A flag design competition was held and a winner was chosen. City Council did not approve the redesign.

## **Los Angeles, CA**

A group of citizens created a Change.org petition to adopt a new city flag.

## **Madison, WI**

City Council members unanimously approved a modified design that removed a symbol that some said appropriated a Native American tribe's culture. The redesign kept most of the current elements of the flag but removed part of the center element that resembled an ancient sun symbol that originated from the Zia Pueblo tribe in New Mexico. The old flag was designed in 1962 and most of its elements remained intact.

Madison created an ordinance describing the official city flag and identified that the redesign would have "no fiscal impact."

## **Montpelier, VT**

The City announced a competition for a flag redesign. The winner was selected through an online vote. City Clerk John Odum stated "it cost the city nothing to create the new flag and it was worth the time that went into it."

## **Orlando, FL**

The Mayor's administration launched a contest asking members of the public to submit designs for a new flag. The contest remained open for one month. A panel of artists, history and design experts culled the 10 best flags for public vote online and at City Hall. Submissions were accepted by mail or dropped off at City Hall or one of several other locations listed on the city's website. Only hand-drawn designs were allowed and a 150-word or less paragraph explaining symbolism in the flag was required.

The City received more than 1,100 flag designs from 12 states and seven countries, including contributions from five local schools. The contest engaged more than 23,000 residents on social media, and the City received more than 10,000 votes and 2,200 comments from citizens as part of the contest's participatory phase. City Council approved the selected flag design.

## **Pocatello, ID**

An all-volunteer committee engaged in a process to redesign Pocatello's flag. The committee received 709 designs from over 26 countries and 30 states. An expert panel provided feedback

to get six final designs ready for public comment. Two former presidents of the Vexillological Association rated the finalists. The flag redesign did receive some pushback from residents expressing their distaste for the chosen design. Some residents expressed concern that the city's name was not on the flag. A council member stated the chosen design was not one of his favorites, but for the sake of consensus, he voted in favor of approving the resolution. The decision to change the flag was a result of Roman Mars identifying Pocatello's flag as one of the worst in the nation.

### **Portland, ME**

BDN Portland held a competition for a flag redesign. The group received 84 proposals, and judges narrowed down the selection to the 10 best designs. Voters selected their three favorite designs. The design competition was not City-sponsored, and the redesigned flag has not yet been adopted.

### **Provo, UT**

The City Council held meetings for one and a half years, accepting resident comments throughout the process. A three-person committee was tasked with recommending a design. A dispute arose between the city's resident vexillologist and a City Council member who was trained in graphic design and who had designed the flag to be replaced. The mayor's office proposed a design. Two council members outvoted the vexillologist. The flag design that was ultimately chosen was proposed by the council member who was a graphic designer.

### **Raleigh, NC**

The City Council stated it would consider redesigning the City's flag if it launched a branding effort.

### **Redding, CA**

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization hosted a flag competition and sells merchandise showing the winning flag design. The City Council adopted the winning flag design.

### **Reno, NV**

The City's Art & Culture Commission led a flag design competition. The effort included public education about flag design and Reno history. The Art & Culture Commission held two educational workshops on flag culture and design and had an open submission period for flag



designs that lasted three months. All submissions went through an initial review by the Reno Flag Committee, comprised of a flag expert, arts professionals, former mayors, and representatives from the community. The committee narrowed down the entries to 13 designs that went through an online public voting process for three weeks. From there, the commission selected three finalists. Those three finalists went to a City Council meeting, and the Council selected the final design, which was also a favorite in the public vote.

### **Rochester, MN**

A group of citizens developed a grass-roots campaign to design a new flag. The campaign consisted of a website and social media as well as a citywide contest that received dozens of entries. A group of local judges educated in flag design chose 12 finalists, and the public voted on their favorites, and the judges made the final selection. The competition was run in a similar fashion to many cities around the country.

The artist of the original flag stated that changing a flag just because it is dated does not make sense.

### **San Marcos, TX**

A council member stated that cost of replacing the flag should not be a problem because flags naturally get worn out and need replacement, so the cost of redesigning the flag should mirror the usual cost of replacement for worn-out flags.

### **Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (Canada)**

The City sought proposals for designs. It also looked to staff within City Hall to come up with a municipal flag design for the council to consider. A committee was formed to review flag proposals and make recommendations to the council for a new design.

### **South Bend, IN**

The City hosted a public contest to design a new flag. The City directed the competition by providing themes to draw upon. After selecting three finalists, gathering public feedback, and creating a composite design from the finalists, the City adopted a new flag design. Rather than advance the design the garnered the most votes, public feedback was used as input to a final design stage.

## **Tulsa, OK**

In November 2016, two Tulsa residents spearheaded an effort to redesign the City flag with City Council support. A design-gathering phase began in January and was extended to accommodate more residents who wanted to submit their flag-design proposals.

Approximately 600 submissions were placed into a few categories and culled down to three flags, which were presented for public voting. The Council plans to vote on whether to adopt a new flag.

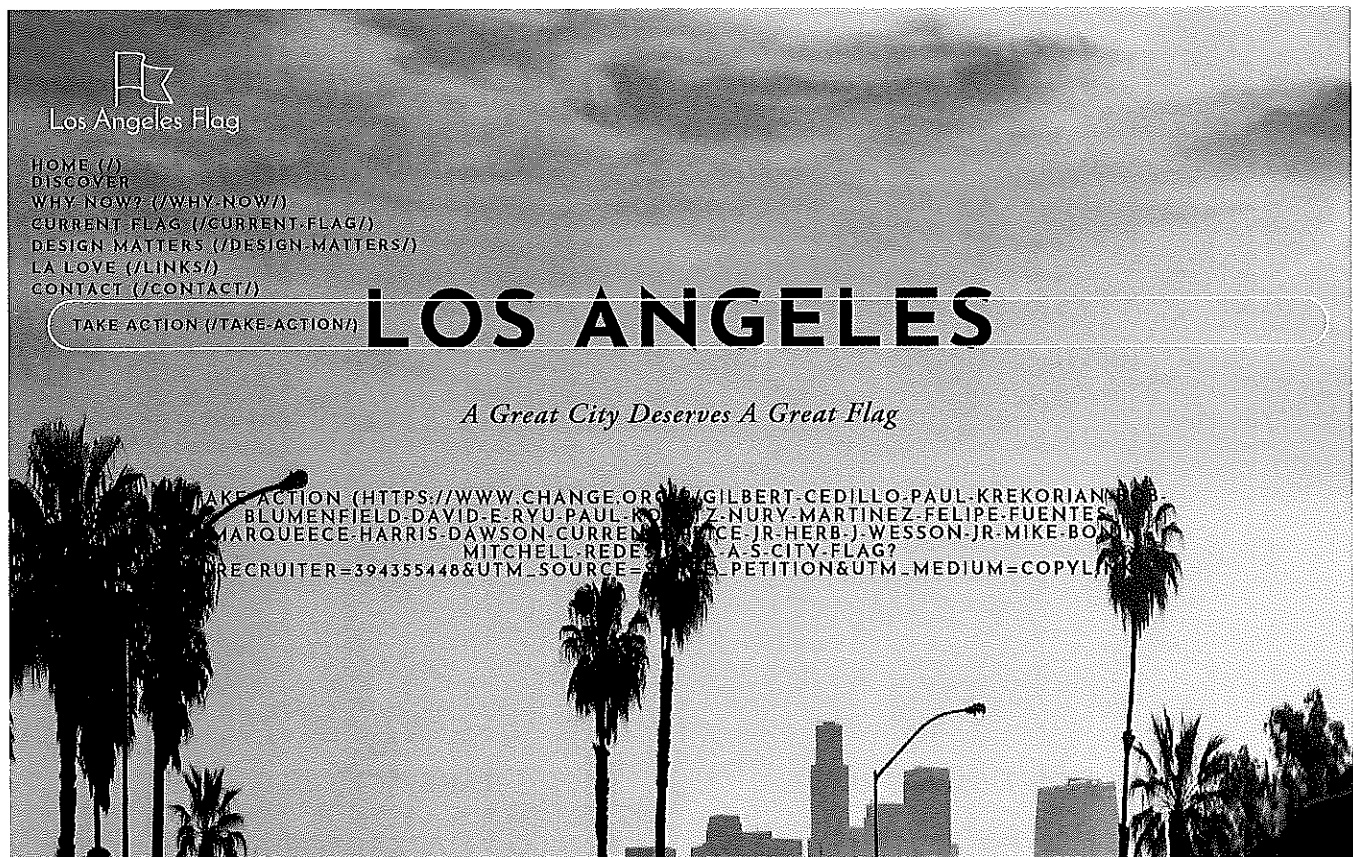
Many residents were not happy about the three final designs being considered for the flag. Many online comments were unkind. The organizers of the redesign effort cited the five Vexillological principles as guiding the three finalist designs. Brand experts, fashion experts, and art historians were on the selection committee. The citywide contest was privately funded. The City Council soured on the concept of changing the flag after residents called for keeping the current flag. Among concerns about the voting process was the lack of a “none of the above” choice and the requirement that residents text their vote from a cellphone.

After voting on the flag stalled, dozens of businesses started creating merchandise, ranging from shirts to shot glasses to tiny little gnomes, displaying the flag-design competition winner. Sports teams adopted the flag for their merchandise, as well. The flag was found flying all around the city, and some local politicians began using the flag in their campaigns.

## **Winston-Salem, NC**

Two students generated a Change.org petition and social media campaign to convince the City Council to approve a flag redesign contest. The students developed a proposed design, but do not necessarily advocate their design; they would prefer to open a public discussion and design competition.

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attachments

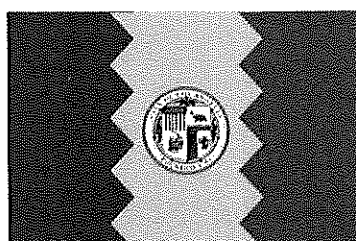


## A New Flag For A New L.A.

We are Los Angeles, one of the greatest, most influential cities in the world. We are fame and we are fortune -- big dreams and hard work. We are ever evolving, ever changing, and ever growing. To the rest of the world we are the goal, the movie in their minds, the essence of the American dream.

We are a great city, and every great city deserves a great flag. But our current flag is not great. It is neither recognizable, nor relevant, nor representative of us as a city or as Angelenos. Throughout the years our flag has all but faded into obscurity. People don't know it, and because they don't know it, they don't fly it.

But we can change that.



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*The current flag of Los Angeles. Have you seen it?*

If we had a great new flag under which to rally, we'd begin to see it atop our flagpoles. We'd fly it from our houses and stick it to our cars. We'd buy it and sell it and use it and wear it. An iconic new flag – one that is attractive, simple, and timeless, one that is immediately recognizable and unmistakably representative of the city – would serve as an emblem of unity and pride for millions of Angelenos. It would provide Los Angeles with a newfound identity. If we had a great new flag, the world would take note.

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*A great city flag is something that represents its city to its people,  
and its people to the world at large.*

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— Roman Mars

## WHY NOW? (/WHY-NOW)

Never has there been a better time to redesign our city's flag.

Find Out Why → (/why-now)

## TAKE ACTION

([HTTPS://WWW.CHANGE.ORG/P/GILBERT-  
CEDILLO-PAUL-KREKORIAN-BOB-  
BLUMENFIELD-DAVID-E-RYU-PAUL-  
KORETZ-NURY-MARTINEZ-FELIPE-  
FUENTES-MARQUEECE-HARRIS-  
DAWSON-CURREN-D-PRICE-JR-HERB-  
J-WESSON-JR-MIKE-BONIN-  
MITCHELL-REDESIGN-L-A-S-CITY-  
FLAG?  
RECRUITER=394355448&UTM\\_SOURCE=SHA](https://www.change.org/p/gilbert-cedillo-paul-krekorian-bob-blumenfield-david-e-ryu-paul-koretz-nury-martinez-felipe-fuentes-marqueece-harris-dawson-curren-d-price-jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?recruiter=394355448&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink)

Ready to help redefine Los Angeles? Join us by signing our  
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jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?  
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m=copylink](https://www.change.org/p/gilbert-cedillo-paul-krekorian-bob-blumenfield-david-e-ryu-paul-koretz-nury-martinez-felipe-fuentes-marqueece-harris-dawson-curren-d-price-jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?recruiter=394355448&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink))

13 2018

HOME (/HOME)

HOME (/)  
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# WHY NOW?

*It's Our Time*



## A City Reimagined

---

*Can you feel it? L.A. is changing. It's growing taller and denser, but more ambitious, too. In the next five years a slew of projects will reshape neighborhoods all around the city.*

---

— L.A. Magazine

Los Angeles is currently undergoing a profound transformation. We are in the midst of beautifying, unifying, and reviving this great city of ours; development is booming, neighborhoods are thriving, and the very heart of our city is growing and adapting to meet the needs of an ever-changing 21st century. We have set a course to strengthen and transform our city, to create a more sustainable LA, as evident by such initiatives as the LA River Revitalization project, the Sustainable City pLAn, the Great Streets Initiative, and the proposed overhaul of our transportation system with the Mobility Plan 2035. We are in the midst of a stunning revival and, as such, are currently the frontrunner to host the Olympic Games in 2024.

We are on the cusp of something big and the world is watching. It's our time, and a new flag is exactly what we need to show the world that we are, in fact, an exceptional city.

---

*Los Angeles is 72 suburbs in search of a city.*

---

— Dorothy Parker

Outsiders often mislabel Los Angeles as a fragmented, sprawling wasteland. Haters jump at any opportunity to criticize our vast and wondrous city, latching on to some imagined feud between eastsiders and westsiders, claiming we have no 'heart.' The truth is, however, that while Los Angeles may not have one central destination, there are scores of individual neighborhoods and enclaves teeming with art, culture, history, and beauty, from Ventura Blvd. to Venice Beach, Los Feliz to Larchmont Village. These urban gems might be separated by miles and miles of broken roads and crowded freeways, but they are all part of what makes Los Angeles complex, unique, and truly unparalleled.

A new flag — one that we can all rally behind — will serve as a symbol for *all* of Los Angeles, promoting and representing the city itself, while uniting millions of Angelenos around the world. As we continue to lead the way through the 21st century, a new flag will help show the world that, despite our expansiveness and our often-frustrating idiosyncrasies, we are *not* a disjointed suburban metropolis, but rather an awesome, nuanced, and self-respecting city.

*Often when city leaders say, 'We have more important things to do than worry about a city flag,' my response is: If you had a great city flag, you'd have a banner for people to rally under to face those more important things.*

— Ted Kuyke

C ([HTTPS://IAN-WILLIAMS-IR7E.SQUARESPACE.COM/CURRENT-FLAG](https://ian-williams-ir7e.squarespace.com/current-flag))  
CURRENT FLAG ([HTTPS://IAN-WILLIAMS-IR7E.SQUARESPACE.COM/CURRENT-FLAG](https://ian-williams-ir7e.squarespace.com/current-flag))

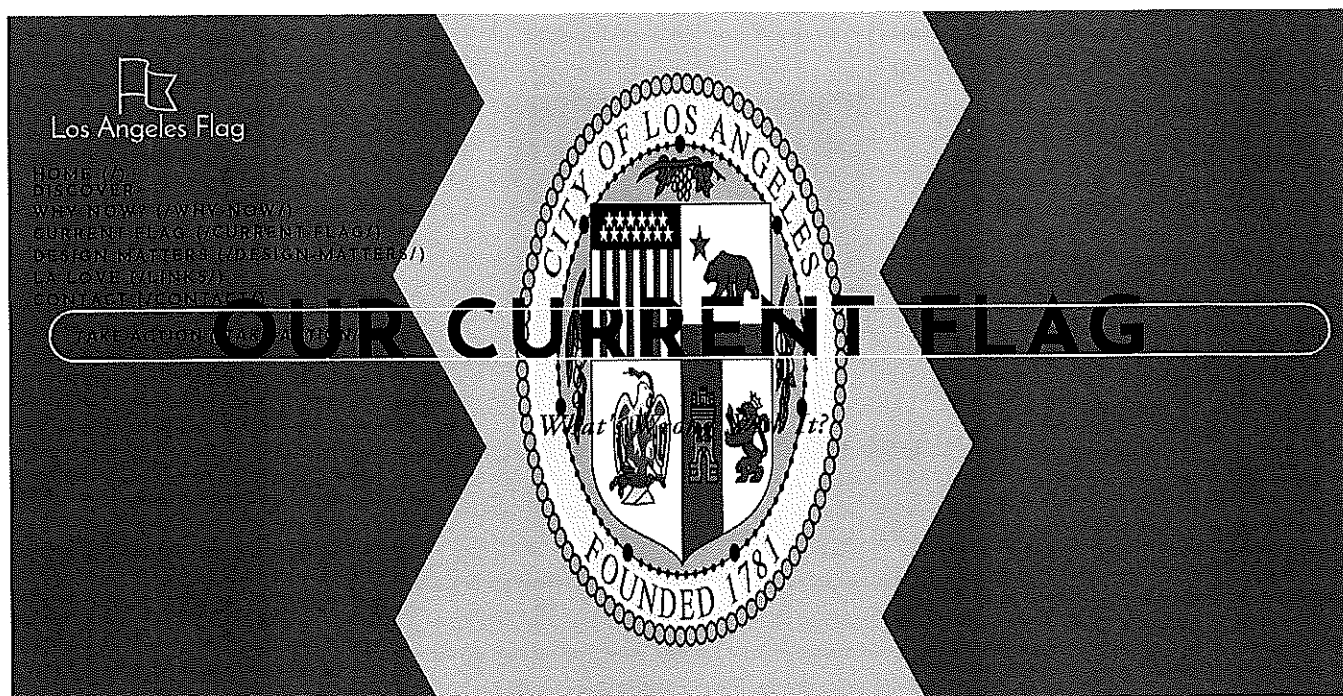
What's wrong with our current flag? Take a closer look to better understand why we need a redesign.

What's Wrong With What We Have? → (<https://ian-williams-ir7e.squarespace.com/current-flag>)

TAKE ACTION  
([HTTPS://WWW.CHANGE.ORG/P/GILBERT-CEDILLO-PAUL-KREKORIAN-BOB-BLUMENFIELD-DAVID-E-RYU-PAUL-KORETZ-NURY-MARTINEZ-FELIPE-FUENTES-MARQUEECE-HARRIS-DAWSON-CURREN-D-PRICE-JR-HERB-J-WESSON-JR-MIKE-BONIN-MITCHELL-REDESIGN-L-A-S-CITY-FLAG?](https://www.change.org/p/gilbert-cedillo-paul-krekorian-bob-blumenfield-david-e-ryu-paul-koretz-nury-martinez-felipe-fuentes-marqueece-harris-dawson-curren-d-price-jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?recruiter=394355448&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink)  
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## Why Isn't It A Good Flag?

Let's take a closer look at the current Los Angeles flag.

The five basic design principles of a good flag, as outlined by Ted Kaye, esteemed vexillologist and author of *Good Flag, Bad Flag*, are as follows:

1. Keep it simple.
2. Use meaningful symbolism.
3. Use two to three basic colors.
4. No lettering or seals.
5. Be distinctive or be relative.

At best, one could maintain that the Los Angeles flag breaks three of these five basic rules. We'd argue, however, that it violates all five principles:

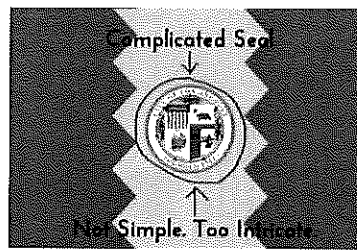
### 1. KEEP IT SIMPLE

*"The flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory."*

The municipal seal prominently featured in the center of the flag is complicated, intricate, and anything but but simple. More on this later...

Otherwise, sure, one could argue that, without the seal, the flag is rather simple: three

bars of color separated by two jagged lines. A kid could draw it.



## 2. USE MEANINGFUL SYMBOLISM

*"The flag's images, colors, or patterns should relate to what it symbolizes."*

The three prominent colors are supposedly representative of three major California crops: olive trees (green), orange groves (gold), and vineyards (red). I'm sure we can all agree that, while Los Angeles is known for many things, olive trees, orange groves, and vineyards are *not* at the top of the list. If we're talking about California as a whole, it'd be a different story. Even LA County, sure. But as a representation of the *city* of Los Angeles, this symbolism is weak and misrepresentative.

Furthermore, the distinct notched pattern, while recognizable, serves no meaningful purpose. It's a contrived element, designed simply for design's sake. The individual components of the jagged lines (such as the number of notches) don't stand for anything, nor does the overall structure or placement of the zig-zag lines. The jagged lines are a major focal point and perhaps the only distinguishing factor of the flag, and yet they're completely arbitrary, neither representative nor relevant to the city or its people.



## 3. USE TWO TO THREE BASIC COLORS

*"Limit the number of colors on the flag to three, which contrast well and come from the standard color set."*

Technically there are three prominent colors: green, gold, and red. The inclusion of the seal, however, introduces an additional five colors (white, blue, yellow, brown, and black) bringing the total color count up to eight.



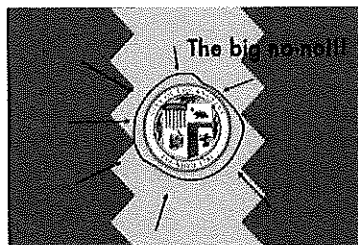




#### 4. NO LETTERING OR SEALS

*"Never use writing of any kind or an organization's seal."*

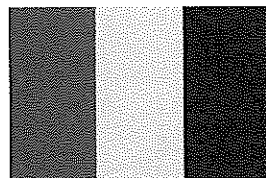
One of the biggest, most fundamental problems with our flag is the city seal featured prominently at its center. Municipal seals are designed for pieces of paper. They are intricate and meant to be viewed inches from your face. When a seal is placed on a flag a hundred feet away flapping in the wind, the seal is rendered illegible and the flag unrecognizable, thus defeating the purpose of both seal and flag altogether.



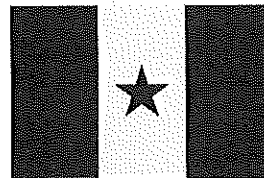
#### 5. BE DISTINCTIVE OR BE RELATIVE

*"Avoid duplicating other flags, but use similarities to show connections."*

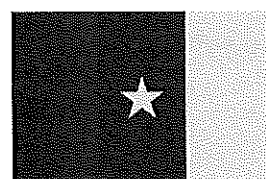
A quick fix for the Los Angeles flag, one might think, would be to simply remove the municipal seal. While this would be a big step in the right direction, we would still be left with a rather indistinct flag. The way the three colors play together, in conjunction with their placement across the flag is neither unique nor representative of Los Angeles. In fact, its inadvertent similarity to other unrelated flags (e.g. Mali, Senegal, Guinea) seems to draw an unfounded relationship with places that actually have very little to do with Los Angeles.



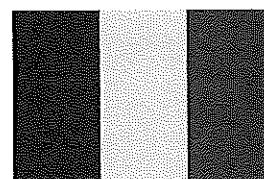
*Flag of Mali, Africa*



*Flag of Senegal, Africa*



*Flag of Camaroon, Africa*



*Flag of Guinea, Africa*

## In Short, We Can Do Better.

### DESIGN MATTERS (/DESIGN-MATTERS)

City flags are important. Find out why, and discover why good design matters.

[Learn More → \(/design-matters\)](#)

### TAKE ACTION

(HTTPS://WWW.CHANGE.ORG/P/GILBERT-CEDILLO-PAUL-KREKORIAN-BOB-BLUMENFIELD-DAVID-E-RYU-PAUL-KORETZ-NURY-MARTINEZ-FELIPE-FUENTES-MARQUEECE-HARRIS-DAWSON-CURREN-D-PRICE-JR-HERB-J-WESSON-JR-MIKE-BONIN-MITCHELL-REDESIGN-L-A-S-CITY-FLAG?RECRUITER=394355448&UTM\_SOURCE=SHARE\_PETITION&UTM\_MEDIUM=COPYLINK)

Ready to help redefine Los Angeles? Join us by signing our petition to adopt a new city flag.

Get Involved → ([https://www.change.org/p/gilbert-cedillo-paul-krekorian-bob-blumenfield-david-e-ryu-paul-koretz-nury-martinez-felipe-fuentes-marqueece-harris-dawson-curren-d-price-jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?recruiter=394355448&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink](https://www.change.org/p/gilbert-cedillo-paul-krekorian-bob-blumenfield-david-e-ryu-paul-koretz-nury-martinez-felipe-fuentes-marqueece-harris-dawson-curren-d-price-jr-herb-j-wesson-jr-mike-bonin-mitchell-redesign-l-a-s-city-flag?recruiter=394355448&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink))

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[LINKS \(/LINKS\)](#)

[CONTACT \(/CONTACT\)](#)

[TAKE ACTION \(/TAKE-ACTION\)](#)

[NEWLOSANGELESFLAG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NEWLOSANGELESFLAG@GMAIL.COM) ([MAILTO:NEWLOSANGELESFLAG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NEWLOSANGELESFLAG@GMAIL.COM))



**Los Angeles Flag** started this petition to Mayor of Los Angeles Eric Garcetti and 16 others

**Los Angeles needs a new flag.** There is no doubt that we are one of the greatest, most influential cities in the world. Wired Magazine recently named us the *"#1 City of Tomorrow,"* and even the New York Times admitted, *"Los Angeles is enjoying a renaissance with a burgeoning art, fashion and food scene that has become irresistible to the culturally attuned."* **But the one thing we're missing, the one thing every great city deserves, is a great flag. Our current flag is neither recognizable, nor symbolic, nor representative of us, as a city or as Angelenos. Most people don't even know it, and because they don't know it, they don't fly it. But we intend to change that.**

Los Angeles is currently undergoing a profound transformation. Development is booming, neighborhoods are thriving, and the very heart of our city is growing and adapting to meet the demands of an ever-changing 21st century. We are not just home to celluloid dreams and iconic landscapes, but also to a growing tech industry, world-class cultural centers, and the fastest growing mass transit system in the country. We are in the midst of a stunning revival and, as such, are currently the frontrunner to host the Olympics in 2024. **We have set a course to strengthen and transform our city, to create a more sustainable L.A., and right now all eyes are on us. It's time we show the world how beautiful, creative, and united we truly are.**

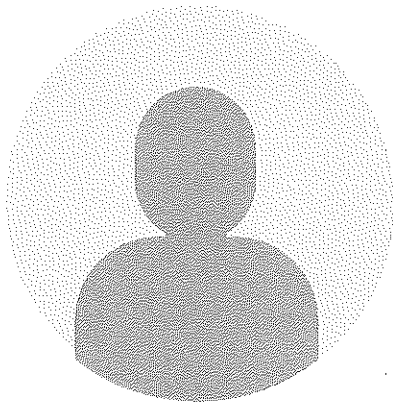
With your help we can gather the support needed to redesign and adopt a new city flag -- a flag we can all be proud to fly, a flag to promote and represent our city, and unite millions of Angelenos throughout Los Angeles and around the world.

Join us in urging Mayor Eric Garcetti and members of the Los Angeles City Council to change our flag.

## Updates

1. 2 years ago  
250 supporters
2. 3 years ago  
Los Angeles Flag started this petition

## Reasons for signing



dylan williams · 3 years ago

I'm signing this petition because LA needs a distinguished flag - a GREAT FLAG to reflect it's positive impact and the new chapter it is writing as it crosses the threshold of change!

•  
• 3

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Article printed from OnMilwaukee.com:



09:20 a.m. Aug. 01, 2013

## Does Milwaukee need a new flag?

by Jeff Sherman



The current Milwaukee flag.

In 2001, OnMilwaukee.com helped coordinate and promote a contest to select a new flag for our fine city.

Ultimately even though five finalists were selected from more than one hundred submissions, the Common Council decided not to move ahead with a new banner.

Have you seen Milwaukee's flag? It was designed in 1955 and is a collage of historical and then-current city symbols and buildings: stuff like the Milwaukee Arena, County Stadium and images of manufacturing, shipping and brewing industries.

Obviously, Milwaukee has changed a lot since 1955. But, do we need a new flag? And if so, how do we best represent Milwaukee's new image, people, spirit and buildings?

A new movement, MKE Flag, is flying online and seeks your input, support and even offers its new take on what our flag should look like.

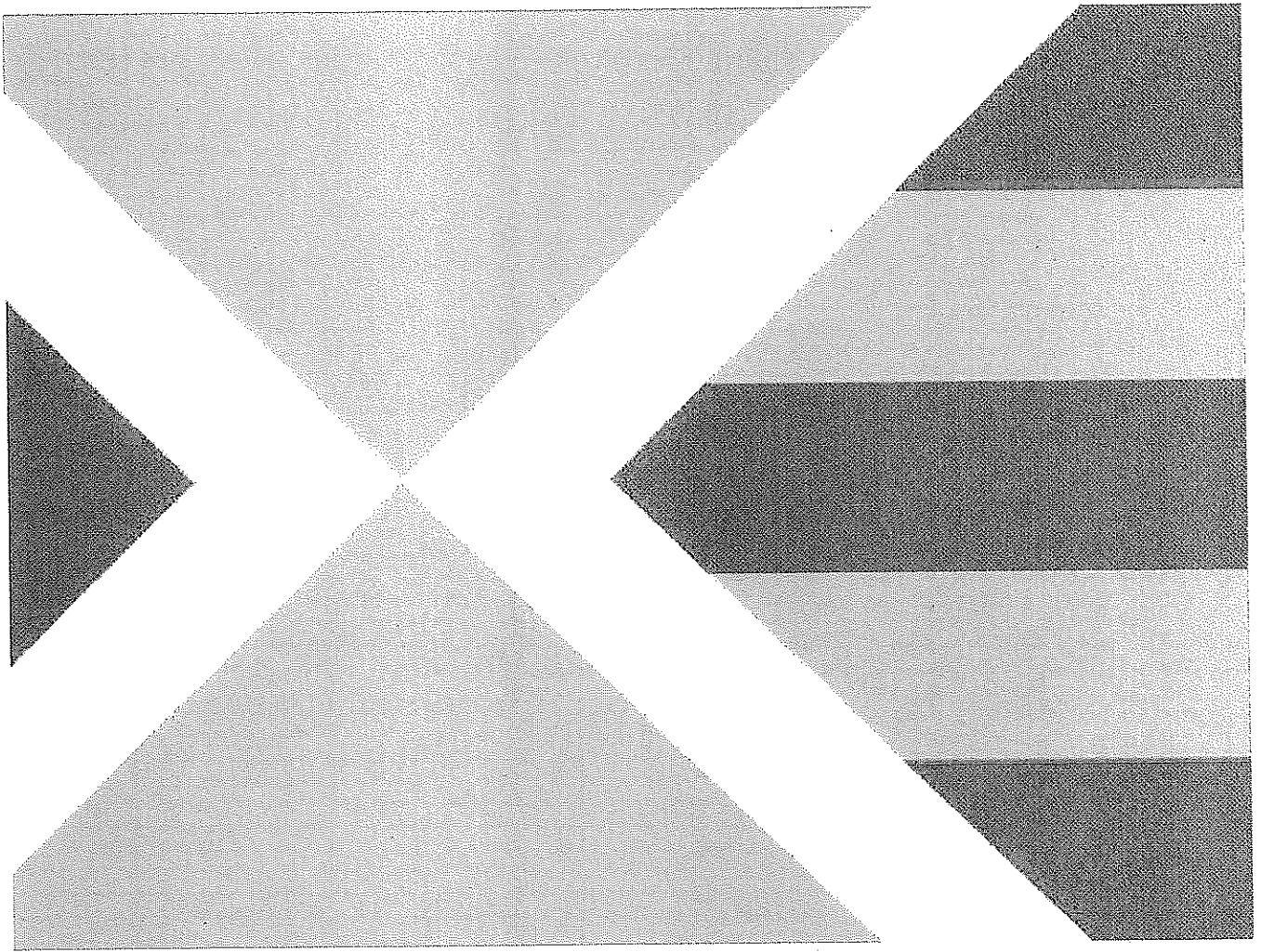
I'm not sure this is the city's most burning issue, but it's fun to discuss. The current flag is old school, to say the least. It's actually kind of charming. But, it's pretty ugly. This new design is bold and colorful, but may not scream Milwaukee.

Via Facebook, the designers explained it this way, "Unlike the current flag, we have chosen not to limit our city to icons. The triangular shapes represent movement and growth, which is a constant for the city. The stripes give reference to water as well as agriculture, something that relates us to our state as well. As we continue to grow and innovate, we come together as a community, represented by the intersecting point in the flag."

One idea? Use the old MECCA floor design and call it a new flag day. Your thoughts? Do we need or even want a new Milwaukee flag?

**Web address:**

**<http://onmilwaukee.com/articles/newmilwaukeeflag.html>**



Article printed from OnMilwaukee.com:



09:04 a.m. Aug. 07, 2013

## In defense of Milwaukee's flag

by Dustin Weis, Special to OnMilwaukee.com



Critics of our regal city flag say that it's "ugly" and "outdated." I say, "exactly."

"You know what? It's been 222 years since there were 13 states in the Union. Isn't it time we got rid of those outdated stripes on the American flag?"

... said no one. Ever.

Far be it from me to suggest that the absurdity (and possibly sacrilege) of such a statement is even approached by suggestions that the City of Milwaukee should look into designing a new city flag. I do believe, however, that notions like those highlighted in Jeff Sherman's recent [blog post](#) to OnMilwaukee.com lose sight of the point of having a city flag in the first place.

Critics of our regal city flag say that it's "ugly" and "outdated." I say, "exactly."

I first laid eyes upon "Ol' Blue" a little less than a year ago. I was a Milwaukee neophyte, recently transplanted to our fair city and a little unsure of what to make of my newly-adopted hometown. A native Wisconsinite returned from far-off lands, the city's rich history, stubborn pride and uncompromising sense of obtuse individuality all appealed to me greatly, but I had yet to find a symbol for these feelings and emotions.



That changed when I was given my first tour of the Milwaukee Common Council chamber in our iconic, historic City Hall. Hanging at the front of the chamber, house right of the president's dais, I spied a faded, gold-fringed blue banner. I unfurled it, and honestly, I chuckled a little bit. This was Milwaukee, summed up for me.

Like the city, it makes no pretense at simplicity and is a little rough around the edges. Like Milwaukee's population, it's unconcerned with being fashionable and proudly holds dear to the icons that define the city – even icons like County Stadium and the Milwaukee Arena that have long since disappeared.

But most importantly, Milwaukee's flag is in-your-face in its authenticity. I remember gazing at it for the first time and thinking, "Someone, sometime, for some reason wanted this thing to represent their entire city, and that is mind-bogglingly awesome." Maybe it's a little bit of the East Side hipster in me, but I think Milwaukee's flag is beautiful in its absolute scorn for the modern concept of beauty.

Look at it this way. In 1994, the Milwaukee Brewers made the oft-panned decision to do away with their beloved mitt and ball logo for the soulless, cold gothic abstraction that represented them for the duration of the '90s. Critics said it was time to do away with the blue-and-gold glove because it was "outdated" and "hokey," but almost 20 years later, a stroll around Miller Park will reveal more of this "classic" Brewers apparel than any of the more recent iterations of the team logo.

We're Milwaukeeans. We don't give two hoots about someone else's "rebranding" or their concept of what's "in." We crave what's real, and we can spot imposters like the 1994 Brewers logo and the "new" Milwaukee flag Jeff Sherman's blog featured for exactly what they are – the watered-down product of committee-process, nose-in-the-air groupthink that's high on cutting-edge hype and low on substance.

Just as the Brewers' mitt and ball are retro enough to appeal to our sense of what's fun and functional decades later, so too is Milwaukee's crusty old flag right on the verge of making the leap from "old" to "vintage." With a little more love and attention, the flag stands to become as iconic a symbol of the city as any of the monuments it features.

Heck, I'd wear it on a T-shirt, proudly. And obstinately. Say what you will about its appearance, but it stands for something real.

Like Milwaukee's Third Ward and the renaissance that has taken place there – like the neighborhoods of Bay View and Riverwest and Bronzeville and Walker's Point and every other deeply-rooted place that stubborn Milwaukeeans have dug their heels into and called "home" – the city's flag doesn't need to be burned to the ground and rebuilt from scratch.

It needs to be rediscovered, dusted off and celebrated as a part of our history, a part of what makes us unique and a part of us that we're too proud and obstinate to ever bury.

**Web address:**

**<http://www.onmilwaukee.com/articles/flagdefense.html>**

# RUNNING IT UP THE FLAGPOLE

Has our city banner reached its expiration date?

BY TIM McCORMICK



**I** call these things the 'kitchen-sink' flags – they just put everything on there." Such is the verdict handed down by James J. Ferrigan III when it comes to Milwaukee's official city flag. With decades of experience working with other municipalities on flag designs, Ferrigan serves as spokesman for the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA), a group devoted to the "study of flags and their cultural, historical, political, and social significance." And it's hard to argue with his opinion. Brew City's banner is chock full of symbols that reflect the state of the

city circa 1955, about the time local leaders discovered we were one of just a handful of metropolises in the country without a flag to unfurl.

After a citywide competition, former Ald. Fred Steffan, a member of the city's art commission, compiled "the best elements" of the flag designs submitted into a municipal hodgepodge. To wit, the mashup included City Hall, County Stadium, the Milwaukee Arena (aka MECCA Arena, aka UW-Milwaukee Panther Arena), a Native American, a house, a church (which might just be an illegal endorsement of religion) and barley

We want a flag that will unite its people and inspire them to greatness.

(which almost definitely is not illegal but might be mistaken by some for a menorah).

To say that the flag has never been well-received would be an understatement. A 2001 *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article details the plight of Lee Tishler, a Milwaukee Public Museum employee who came close to replacing the original design with his own, the victor in another city-wide flag contest, this one organized in 1975. For reasons that remain murky, Tishler's flag was never adopted, though he did receive the contest's prize, a \$100 savings bond. In 2001, another contest went for naught after the Milwaukee Arts Board refused to endorse any of the 105 designs submitted. Which was too bad, because three years later, NAVA rated Milwaukee as 147th (out of 150) in a nationwide ranking of city flags.

Recently, the Milwaukee Police Department redesigned the patches its officers wear on their arms, updating the emblems to include such modern symbols as the Milwaukee Art Museum's Calatrava addition. So we think it's high time to do the same for the city. Surely, a call to action would bring out the city's many vexillographers, amateur or otherwise.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We don't purport to know what the new flag should look like, folks. We're just here to get the wheels moving (again). Anyone with the faintest desire to contribute to the effort should visit [MilwaukeeMag.com/CityFlagPetition](http://MilwaukeeMag.com/CityFlagPetition) and register your support for updating and redesigning our banner. We want a flag that will unite its people and inspire them to greatness.

To be sure, there are more pressing matters that face our city, but how can we stand united to battle those ailments when our overarching banner features images long ago relegated to the dustbins of history?

As Ferrigan puts it, "A great city deserves a great flag," and we couldn't agree more. ■

*Rain or Shine* → In 2008, a 5-inch hailstone landed in **WAUKESHA COUNTY**, the third-largest ever discovered in Wisconsin. The biggest, 5.7 inches, hit **WAUSAU** in 1921.

June 5, 2015



Submitted photo.

The City of Milwaukee flag has been called cluttered and outdated, with Milwaukee County Stadium still in the picture. Steve Kodis of Milwaukee is working to get it replaced.

## Waving the flag to draw attention to replace city's banner

By KATHERINE MICHALET'S  
Conley News Service

**MILWAUKEE** — The Milwaukee flag depicts many aspects of the city, some of which no longer stand such as County Stadium, and lacks others that have grown in prominence such as technology industries.

Milwaukee resident Steve Kodis has launched an effort to get the Milwaukee flag redesigned to more properly reflect the changing city.

He acknowledges he's likely the third or fourth person to attempt a redesign, but it's even more relevant now that the Milwaukee Bucks have launched a rebranding effort and the new Northwestern Mutual headquarters building will greatly change the city's skyline when completed. In addition, he said the city is in a transitional period.

Right now the flag is fairly cluttered with elements that represent beer brewing, manufacturing, native residents, the port, waves for Lake Michigan and even includes the word "Milwaukee."

A flag, Kodis said, should be simplistic and use color, patterns and shapes to symbolize aspects of the city and not specify as much as the current flag does. One city that has created a flag known far and wide is Chicago. That flag has three white stripes alternating with two blue stripes and four red stars in the center white field.

"A flag is meant to be an emblem or a symbol of the people," he said. He questions if

the existing flag properly represents the city and its people.

Kodis, who is a graphic designer, said he became aware of how poorly the flag was designed after watching a technology entertainment design talk with Roman Mars discussing design and flags. In late May, Kodis worked to get a website launched, [www.milwaukeeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com).

He envisions the process of changing the flag starting with gathering community support through an online petition and to get approval from city government to move forward with the redesign. Kodis said he reached out to his alderman, Tony Zielinski, but so far no Milwaukee alderman has endorsed a redesign.

After getting the city's approval, Kodis said he would start a design submission process that would highlight the five principles of flag design and then a small and qualified jury would select a design.

"It's something that can bring people together and give us something to unite us," Kodis said of a flag.

Thomas D'Amico, owner of American Flags Express in Butler, has put his support behind the redesign. He said he sells more Chicago flags than Milwaukee flags, and with a background in design, he thinks the city's flag needs a refreshed look.

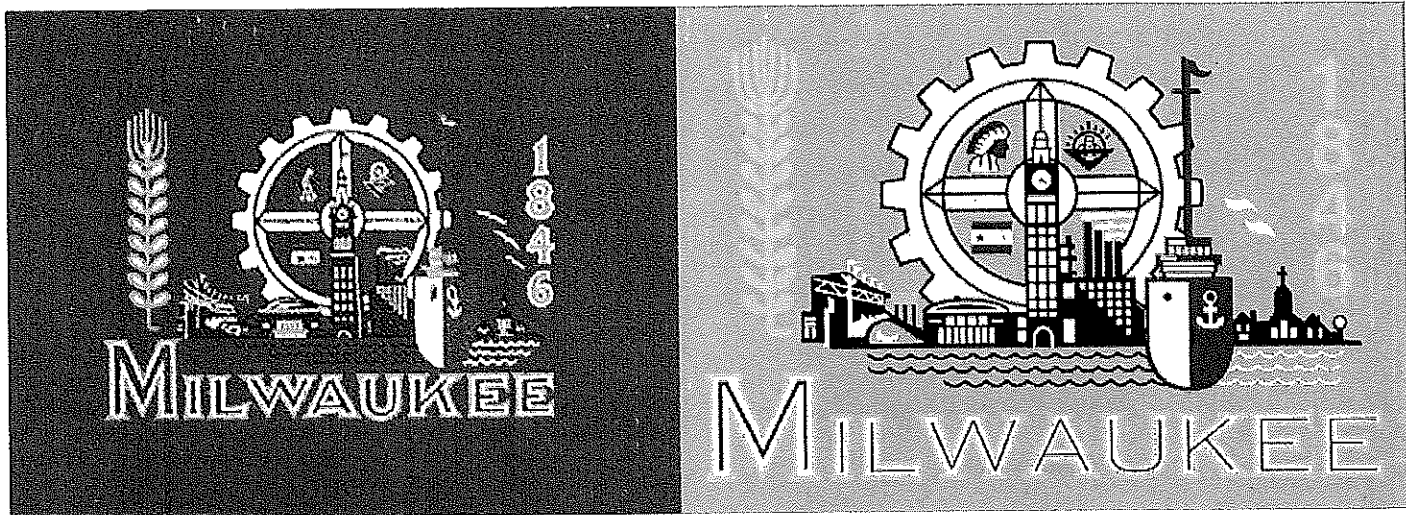
A well-designed flag, D'Amico said, can serve as a "rallying point" for people.

Email: [kmichalets@conley.net](mailto:kmichalets@conley.net)

# The Worst City Flag in America?

Milwaukee's is the absolute worst, experts say. But a new contest could change that.

By Michael Holloway - Oct 28th, 2015 - Urban Milwaukee



Two Milwaukee Flags (original on left)

The topic was vexillology — the study of flags — and a recent Ted Talk on this subject saved Milwaukee as the absolute worst example of a city flag. “Nothing can quite prepare you for one of the biggest train wrecks in Vexillological history,” declared **Roman Mars**, to the audience’s laughter. “Are you ready? It’s the flag of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.”

“It’s a kitchen sink flag,” continued Mars, an expert who has edited a scholarly journal on flags. “There’s a gigantic gear representing industry, there’s a ship recognizing the port, a giant stalk of wheat paying homage to the brewing industry. It’s a hot mess.”

Mars was joined by Milwaukee resident and graphic designer **Steve Kodis**, who wants Milwaukee to adopt a new design for its flag. Kodis noted that the flag was created in 1955, and Mars and him marveled at the result:

Mars: “The city ran a contest and gathered a bunch of submissions with all kinds of designs.

Kodis: And an alderman by the name of **Fred Steffan** cobbled together parts of the submissions to make what is now the Milwaukee flag... It’s really awful...

Mars: But what puts the Milwaukee flag over the top, almost to the point of self-parody, is on it is a picture of the Civil War battle flag of the Milwaukee regiment.

Kodis: So that's the final element in it that just makes it that much more ridiculous, that there is a flag design within the Milwaukee flag.

Mars: On the flag. Yeah. Yeah. (Laughter) Yeah."

The Milwaukee flag, a collage of symbolic images representing various parts of Milwaukee's history on a baby blue background, probably couldn't be recognized by 99 of 100 city residents and isn't flown all that much. Steffan took what he believed to be the best six designs, and combined various elements of each in order to create the flag. In 2001, another contest was held to try and establish a new design for the flag. Over 105 submissions were received, yet the Milwaukee Arts Board concluded that none of the submissions were better than the current flag.

Mars explained there are five principles to good flag design according to the NAVA (North American Vexillological Association):

1. A flag should be so simple a child could draw it from memory.
2. Use meaningful symbolism.
3. Use two-to-three basic colors from the standard color set.
4. No lettering or seals. Never use writing of any kind.
5. Be distinctive.

It seems safe to say Steffan was not aware of these principles.

Kodis, who attended UW-Milwaukee and graduated in 2009 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, had been researching flags when he looked up Milwaukee's out of curiosity. "I cringed a little bit," Kodis says.

Kodis contacted **Ted Kaye**, a representative of NAVA, the North American Vexillological Association. Kodis originally wanted to propose a redesign of the flag himself, but Kaye suggested that a political issue should be resolved democratically. Kodis then decided a contest would be held once again in hopes of changing the flag. Kodis believes this contest has a better chance of succeeding.

"The biggest difference is that we have the power of social media and the power of a tightened community here where I've been having a lot of conversations with organizations that have a voice," he notes.

While Kodis is paying for this project out of his own pocket, he is working with Gravity Marketing LLC to hopefully connect with a non-profit agency that will help with getting sponsors and getting the funding required for projects such as the manufacturing of the flags.

The contest has called for submissions from artists from October 1<sup>st</sup> until November 30<sup>th</sup>. There is no entry fee and anyone can submit, even if they aren't a resident of Milwaukee. Kodis suggests artists consider using some of what is on the Milwaukee flag, but simplifying it.

"Our current flag, while it is very busy, there are a few things that I believe are very 'Milwaukee'. The baby blue, the yellow golden rod color. Those colors instinctually feel 'Milwaukee'," Kodis says.

Kodis suggests focusing on just one of the many images the current flag has, such as the barley leaf representing Milwaukee's many breweries, or the gear representing industry. During his Ted Talk, Mars suggested drawing a one- by one-and-a-half inch rectangle on a piece of paper and then fitting a design inside of it.

"A 3x5 foot flag on a pole 100 feet away looks about the same size as a one- by one-and-a-half inch rectangle seen about 15 inches from your eye," Mars said.

The contest will be judged by Kodis himself and Kaye, who will either be flown in from Portland or will participate through online means. After three-to-five finalists are picked, Kodis plans to open up the final judgement to the public. His plan is to then start manufacturing the flags and build the public's interest. He wants to do this "by tapping design-minded, local businesses, trying to get it to them first, so people start seeing it."

Kodis will name the winner "the People's Flag of Milwaukee," since it won't be official at that point. He hopes that after generating enough public interest, the Common Council will accept it as the new official flag.

"What this is about is giving Milwaukeeans a reason to unite and rally under a symbol," Kodis says. "I'm so passionate about this city, and I believe that we deserve so much better, and we can have something so much better. We the people have a voice, and if we think (the flag) is not worthy of our pride, then we should change it."

To submit a design, head over to [www.milwaukeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeflag.com).

## Update: The Real Flag

Turns out there is quite the controversy over what the real flag even looks like. As [an active debate on Facebook](#) and in our comments section has pointed out, the version we originally shared with this article is actually a knock-off of the original.

If you look closely at the flag above, versus the original version below you can spot a number of differences. Most notably, the iconic Milwaukee City Hall tower appears to have been substantially value

engineered. Kudos to Matthew Prigge who was the first to point out this issue, as well authoring an article on the topic in July.

Confused? Even City of Milwaukee appears to be. In an article in defense of the flag on OnMilwaukee.com, Public Relations Supervisor Dustin Weis shows a photo of the updated, illegitimate flag inside the Milwaukee City Council chambers. — *Jeramey Jannene*



Original Milwaukee Flag

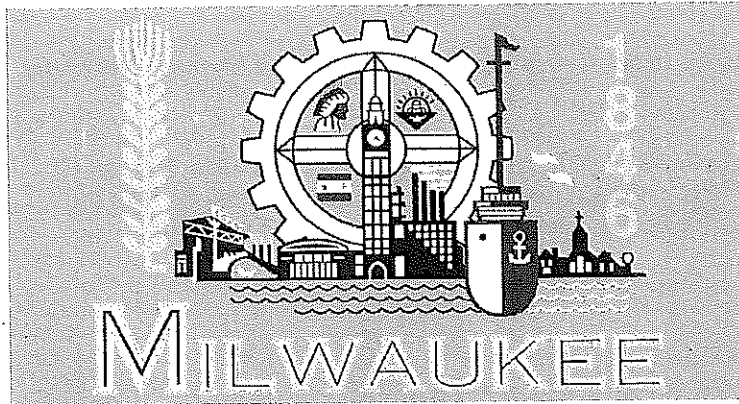




The "official" flag of the City of Milwaukee.



Milwaukee Record  
March 24, 2016



## Is the "redesign the Milwaukee flag" thing REALLY trying to redesign the Milwaukee flag?

By Matt Wild

The official flag of Milwaukee was adopted 61 years ago, in 1955. Efforts to redesign the flag—a flag haphazardly stuffed with barley stalks, boats, and something that looks like a UFO—have been going on for almost as long. A push to freshen up the flag in the '70s was followed by another push in 2001, which was followed by a slew of similar efforts in recent years. Since 2013, multiple "change the flag" websites have been launched, a handful of Change.org petitions have been created, and countless Milwaukeeans have discovered that, yes, Milwaukee has an official flag, and that, yes, it *must be changed*. Despite all the hoopla, however, nothing, to date, has happened.

Now, yet *another* campaign to change the Milwaukee flag has been launched, and *this* one will finally do the trick. Maybe. Yesterday, 88Nine Radio Milwaukee introduced **The Greater Together People's Flag Competition**, a campaign organized by the station, the **Greater Together** coalition, professional design group **AIGA**, and the "**Milwaukee Flag Initiative**." The competition will accept new flag designs until April 14 (Milwaukee Day), whittle them down via a panel of experts, display the top five in City Hall on May 14 between 5-8:30 p.m., and choose a winner at an event at Radio Milwaukee on June 14 (Flag Day). And then Milwaukee will have a new flag.

Or not. In addition to the fact that the campaign is nothing new, it's also a bit misleading. Is the "redesign the Milwaukee flag" thing REALLY trying to redesign the Milwaukee flag? Let's investigate!

First of all, the main driver behind the competition and the "Milwaukee Flag Initiative" is graphic designer **Steve Kodis**, whose efforts to change the flag—including websites and petitions—go back to at least 2013. Kodis' most recent push was inspired by a **2015 TED Talk** in which designer and podcast host Roman Mars called the Milwaukee flag a "hot mess" and one of the worst in the country. Kodis' past efforts have received plenty of press, but have not, in fact, lead to a new and improved Milwaukee flag.

Then there's the question of whether or not any of Kodis' "change the flag" campaigns would have the power to, you know, change the flag. Last November, Kodis was a guest on *The Disclaimer*, the weekly WMSE talk show I co-host with Ryan Schleicher and Evan Rytlewski. It was an **unusually chippy episode**, one that found us grilling Kodis about why Milwaukee needed a new flag, why he was qualified to lead the charge to change the flag, and who the new flag would represent. It's that last question that lead to a particularly telling revelation. Skip to the 7:00 mark:

Evan: "So there's no real momentum to behind actually changing the flag, right?"

Steve: "The official flag? No."

Wait...wha? Confused, I asked Kodis to elaborate. Jump ahead to 8:50:

Matt: "Let's back up. You mentioned this is not a push to redesign the *official* city flag. Would this be an *alternate* city flag?"

Steve: "Consider this: the city has its official city flag, and it does fly in limited instances, and it does exist in other forms—T-shirts—that's a great use of it, because of its intricacies. But the people really need their flag, and that's what we intend to create: the 'people's flag' of Milwaukee."

And now jump back to 7:55:

Evan: "The optics here truly disgust me, because you're flying two different flags. You're saying we have two different cities. The whole point of a flag is that it should be this inclusive banner for everybody. If you push something like this through, and there actually isn't broad city support across different demographics of the city, you're not representing the city. What I do like about our flag is it represents the city. For all of its design flaws, it does capture the city's culture at a point in time, and that's something I think we can all get behind, right? Why not just embrace the flag we have?"

I agree with Evan that the idea of creating an alternate flag, one that would practically fly in *opposition* to the original, is bizarre at best and gross at worst. Not only that, creating a secondary flag would render the very name of this latest competition—The Greater Together People's Flag Competition—meaningless. How does an alternate flag represent a sense of "togetherness" and the "people"?

But maybe things are different this time. I reached out to Kodis via email and asked him what, if anything, had changed since I last spoke to him in November. With heavy hitters like 88Nine and Greater Together backing his latest push, might it actually lead to a new *official* Milwaukee flag? Here's what he said:

"I partnered with Greater Together, started by Ken Hanson of Hanson-Dodge Creative, which has brought with it a team of folks to help with our initiative. We have led, and are leading, several design workshops across the city: UWM, MIAD, Mount Mary University, Washington High School, Bay View High, Bradley Tech, Ronald Reagan High, and MATC. Our submission count is just shy of 500 flag designs now. The deadline for submissions is April 14.

We're flying Ted Kaye in from Portland to act as a consultant for the judging process. John Gurda will be one of our five judges. Judging will commence on April 23.

Then, we have a City Hall exhibit on May 14 to showcase the top 50 designs, which will include the 5 finalists. Those 5 finalists will go up for a public vote. On June 14 (Flag Day) we will unveil and announce the winner at 88.9's headquarters downtown.

The city is involved, I'm meeting with Alderman Kovac tomorrow morning actually, and [he] helped us coordinate the exhibit on May 14. We will be presenting the finalist to them for consideration/adoption but **have not** [Kodis' emphasis] received the definite "yes" that they will do so. I believe they're patiently waiting to see how this all unfolds, and rightfully so."

So...maybe?

To be clear, everyone's heart is obviously in the right place with this. For all its charm and history, the Milwaukee flag *is* a mess. I wouldn't mind seeing some small updates—County Stadium is still on there, for Christ's sake—but an entirely new flag? I dunno. An alternate flag? No thanks.

And hell, if you're truly looking for a clean, modern design that "the people" can rally around, I submit that Milwaukee already has one: the ubiquitous **MilwaukeeHome** T-shirts. There. Done. Milwaukee! Do we really need to reinvent the wheel *again*—even if that wheel is old, outdated, and has a weird UFO in it?

OnMilwaukee



EDDY AWARD WINNER - BEST DIGITAL MAGAZINE 2010



Wave it loud and proud, Milwaukee.

## 414: the new official-unofficial Milwaukee flag?

by **Molly Snyder**

Published March 31, 2016 at 4:32 p.m.

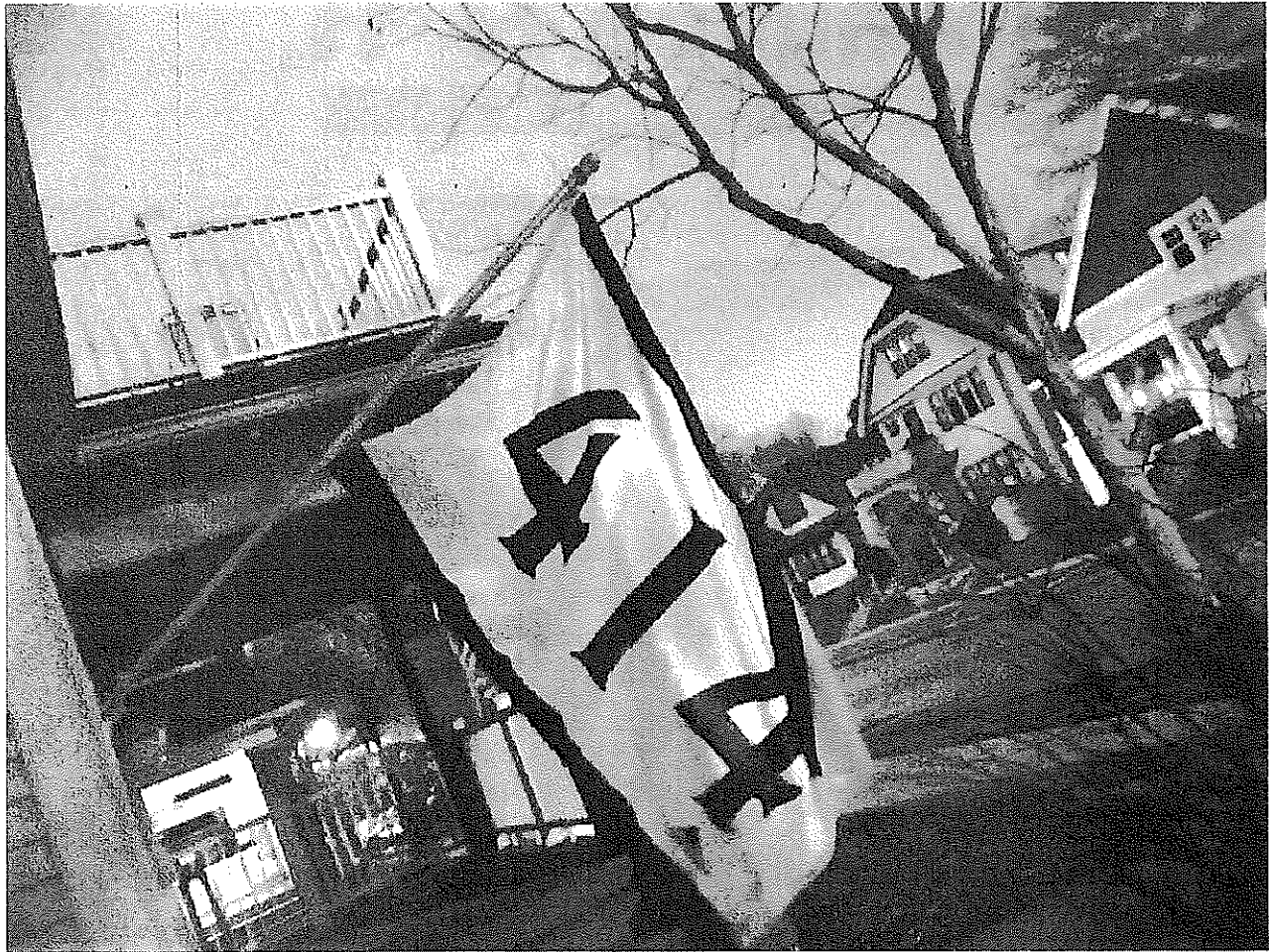
Milwaukee's official flag was adopted in 1955, and since then, has received a fair share of criticism, including as being identified as one of "the worst designed flags in the entire nation" by flag expert / vexillologist Roman Mars during a TedTalks ([https://www.reddit.com/r/videos/comments/3ymywl/the\\_worstdesigned\\_thing\\_youve\\_never\\_noticed\\_roman/](https://www.reddit.com/r/videos/comments/3ymywl/the_worstdesigned_thing_youve_never_noticed_roman/)).

In light of these facts and accusations, there is a contest currently underway (<http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com>) asking for submissions from people to design "The People's Flag of Milwaukee."

Coincidentally, Fred Gillich also designed a Milwaukee banner and is selling it through his business, Too Much Metal (<http://toomuchmetal.com/414-milwaukee-flag/>), located on the Third Floor of the Marshall Building, 207 E. Buffalo St.

The clean design features the city's area code "414" which for Gillich also loosely serves as a

play on the words "one for all and all for one."



"Using the classic Milwaukee house address tile font, we've repurposed the 414 into a proud flag," says Gillich. "I'd love to see this as the unofficial-official flag of Milwaukee."

The flags, which are 3-feet-by-5-feet, were created locally at the Milwaukee Flag Center. They are hand sewn and have two grommets for easy hanging.

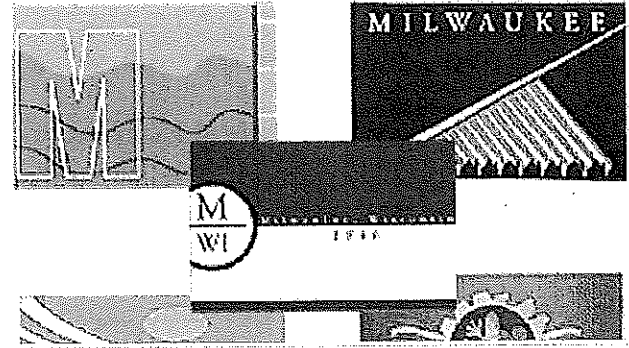
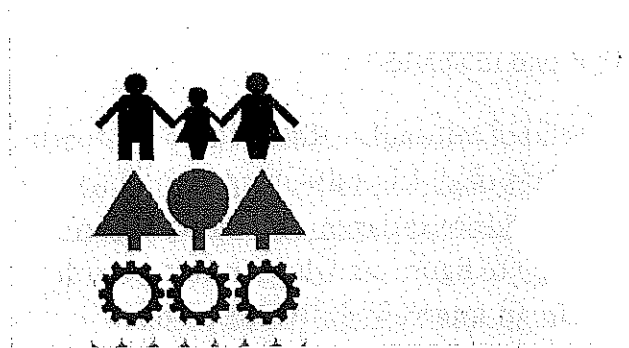
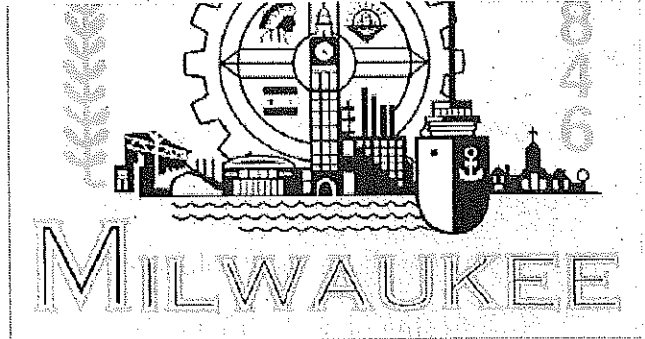
"They're ready to be clipped to anything, including the back of your Harley," says Gillich.

To promote the Brew City banner, Gillich released a video, created by Ken Kornacki. The background music is a new song by local musician Mario Lanza. The full version of the song, complete with lyrics, will be released on April 14, which is 414 Day in Milwaukee.

"I want to see a sea of 414 flags on Milwaukee day," says Gillich.

# OnMilwaukee

EPHY AWARD WINNER BEST DIGITAL MAGAZINE 2010



Milwaukee's flags, adopted and abandoned through history. Nearly all of fail the basic tenets of good flag design.

## Without a doubt, Milwaukee needs a new flag

by **Jason McDowell**

Published April 9, 2016 at 12:02 p.m.

Milwaukee's flag history has been one of perpetual shoulder-shrugging and an aggressive lack of vision. The city's initial flag was conceived via an 1897 Milwaukee Journal contest, but the design was never used and it took 50 more years for its citizenry to gather enough interest to attempt to tackle the project once more. But the design — which currently flies on our flag today — also helped illustrate the definition of "design by committee:" a jumbled mess of letters, numbers and outdated, confusing, lost, even outright racist symbols.

Since then, three [more flag design contests and winners have come and gone](http://www.borchertfield.com/2016/01/flying-milwauees-flag.html) (<http://www.borchertfield.com/2016/01/flying-milwauees-flag.html>), but have ultimately made no impact. But that's not stopping graphic designer [Steve Kodis](https://stevekodis.com) (<https://stevekodis.com>) from trying again. As the city recovers from a decades long slump, maybe citizens are more open to symbols of civic pride.

Flags have always been a way for disparate groups of people to unify and define themselves,

and these days, thanks in part to social media, the general public is much more open to the idea of personal brand identity, and they understand how simple logos can capture big ideas and feelings. A flag should almost be an empty vessel with just enough design to be distinctive, yet can embrace the ideas of all citizens, and represent the past while being open to the future.

But according to the few tenets of good flag design, our current flag fails to tick most of those boxes.

1. Keep it simple (our current flag is anything but)
2. Use meaningful symbolism (many are racist, outdated or lost)
3. Use two or three basic colors (our current flag does not)
4. No lettering or seals (we use numbers – with outlines! – and letters – double outlined!!)
5. And finally be distinctive (well, we've got that one in spades)

Evan Rytlewski of the Shepherd Express and Matt Wild of Milwaukee Record have approached Kodis on a couple (<http://milwaukeearecord.com/city-life/okay-lets-talk-about-changing-the-milwaukee-flag-again/>) of occasions (<http://milwaukeearecord.com/city-life/redesign-milwaukee-flag-thing-trying-redesign-milwaukee-flag/>) to figure out what's going on with this whole flag thing, and they didn't spare the salt. In an interview on WMSE's *The Disclaimer* (<https://soundcloud.com/thedisclaimer/okay-lets-talk-about-changing-the-milwaukee-flag-again>), Rytlewski scoffed at the idea of a new flag, clutching the cluttered mess as if a new flag would nullify his love for the current one, while simultaneously insisting that flags are boring and pointless. "It seems like another example of the millennials coming in, shaping the city in its own image, without that regard for history (6:38)."

Later he suggests that "people would not wear a flag on a T-shirt instead of a 'Milwaukee Home' T-shirt. A flag doesn't have words on it (15:30)," which is a baffling statement in and of itself, but it's made all the more confusing if you remember back to the beginning of the episode where Rytlewski proudly admits he owns a Milwaukee flag T-shirt. Contradictions and conjectures like these run loose and fast through the entire chat. At 17:11, Rytlewski says that he has "very little faith in designs to stand the test of time..." and in the same breath asks – rhetorically, mind you – "Should [the flag] be overhauled every eight years as tastes change?"

And despite his strong desire to keep the flag as is, Rytlewski had a hard time justifying the "goodness" of the current flag. At 10:12, he asks, "Isn't [our] history already celebrated on the flag, though? You've got Milwaukee's history of industry on the flag. You've got its use of the lake. You've got the Milwaukee Arena. You've got workers. You've got hops (it's actually barley). You've got a church [laughs], for some reason you've got a spaceship [laughs] with Aladdin's lamp on it, which is the most Illuminati thing you'll ever see on a flag" and "its past symbol of native Americans." Never mind how racist that last one is.

I wouldn't bother linking to the uninformed debate, except that I was impressed with Kodis'

ability to handily acknowledge and answer every question. If you are looking for proof that Kodis is the person to shepherd this project to the finish line, that episode is it.

Despite admitting "I don't come from a design background," Rytlewski insisted definitively that, "no other flag could possibly convey that depth of information" and later asks "If we deserve to have [a new flag], wouldn't there be more of a push to actually get it? Wouldn't there be some kind of momentum behind some kind of campaign to actually change the flag?"

Well, we're about to find out.

If you have a fresh vision for a new Milwaukee flag, you can join the already 566 other submissions (as of this writing), but be warned, time is running out. The final deadline (which, note, has shifted since the linked broadcast of The Disclaimer) is timed to coincide with Milwaukee Day on April 14, with an official reveal slated two months later in the 88Nine Radio Milwaukee headquarters. Among the five qualified judges who will weigh the designs are Kodis himself, Milwaukee historian John Gurda and Ted Kaye, a representative from the North American Vexillological Association. The last two judges have yet to be decided, but let's hope they're smart enough to keep the notorious flag-ruiners (aka the politicians) out of it.

In an effort to avoid losing momentum (as with nearly every other flag redesign effort) and keep up excitement for the new design, Kodis already has plans to print and sell the new design on merchandise at the release party. The citizen's new flag will appear on items such as t-shirts, stickers and, yes, actual flags. And perhaps buoyed by newfound interest (aka merch money), Kodis will make a formal presentation to the city to officially adopt the new design.

Personally I love the idea of a new flag, and to help honor the competition and inspire contributions, over the coming week OnMilwaukee will be featuring the 21 most important events that helped shape Milwaukee into what it is today.

Milwaukee, a city that once had the vision to build the tallest building in the world, is currently united under a flag that demonstrates how little vision we have. If this new flag doesn't succeed, it won't be due to lack of effort. But it will answer Rytlewski's question of whether we deserve to have a new flag, and it will reflect whether the city is ready to recover its ability to lead.

Web address: <http://onmilwaukee.com/articles/milwaukeeflagcompetition.html>





Long may she wave?

## Gurda and Kodis discuss the Milwaukee flag

by **Bobby Tanzilo**

Published April 10, 2016 at 8:03 a.m.

As OnMilwaukee prepares to toss its hat into the ring – that is, into the Greater Together Coalition contest to redesign the City of Milwaukee flag (<http://www.milwaukeeflag.com/>) – we asked John Gurda, the guru of Brew City history, and a judge in the contest, and the contest organizer Steve Kodis about the history of the current flag, what came before it and what ought to come next.

**OnMilwaukee: What's the history of the current flag? Who designed it, when, etc.?**

John Gurda: The flag dates from 1955 – could you tell? – and it was designed by an alderman (Fred Steffan).

**Did the city have a flag before that? What was it like and why was it scrapped?**

JG: I don't believe Milwaukee had one before 1955, but I'm not at all sure. (NOTE: In fact, a flag was designed in the 1890s but was never adopted. The 1950s flag was adopted when city leaders realized the city was one of only four big U.S. cities with no banner.)

### **What's fueling the idea of replacing the current flag?**

JG: I think the current campaign began as a bee in Steve Kodis' bonnet and has buzzed outward from there.

Steve Kodis: In trying to saying EVERYTHING about Milwaukee, it really says nothing and in turn doesn't have the ability to live on as a symbol of the city.

### **OnMilwaukee: What has the community buy-in been like for the new flag designs?**

SK: Community buy-in seems strong. We've garnered just shy of 600 designs plus we've lead almost a dozen flag design workshops at local high schools and colleges. The final workshop is Tuesday at Bay View High. Submissions have been coming from all over the Greater Milwaukee area. We've even received submissions from overseas; Australia and Scandinavia.

People are ready and waiting for the next phase and we've been aligning with local businesses who are ready to buy and fly the flag once the winner is announced.

### **There have been previous pushes to redesign the flag but they didn't lead to a new design. Any idea why?**

JG: Getting consensus on something that attempts to stand for all of us is notoriously difficult. I hope this effort succeeds where others have failed.

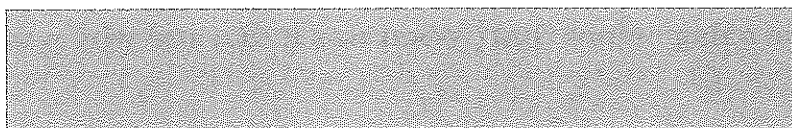
SK: I'd like to reaffirm that this project wouldn't be where it is without the help of Greater Together. It's no longer just me working on this. There's a team of roughly 12 folks actively volunteering to set up these events, the design workshops, and partnerships. They definitely deserve credit.

### **Do you think the people at the city level are interested in this possibility?**

SK: We've had meetings with a few alderman, most recently Nik Kovac. They've acknowledged that we're taking submissions from the community and City Hall also helped us set up our exhibition, on May 14, showcasing the top 50 designs. Within that top 50 will be 5 finalists that will go up for a public vote.

### **According to you, what makes a great flag?**

JG: It should be something simple, original, and genuine. I think of New Mexico's state flag (below) as pretty successful.



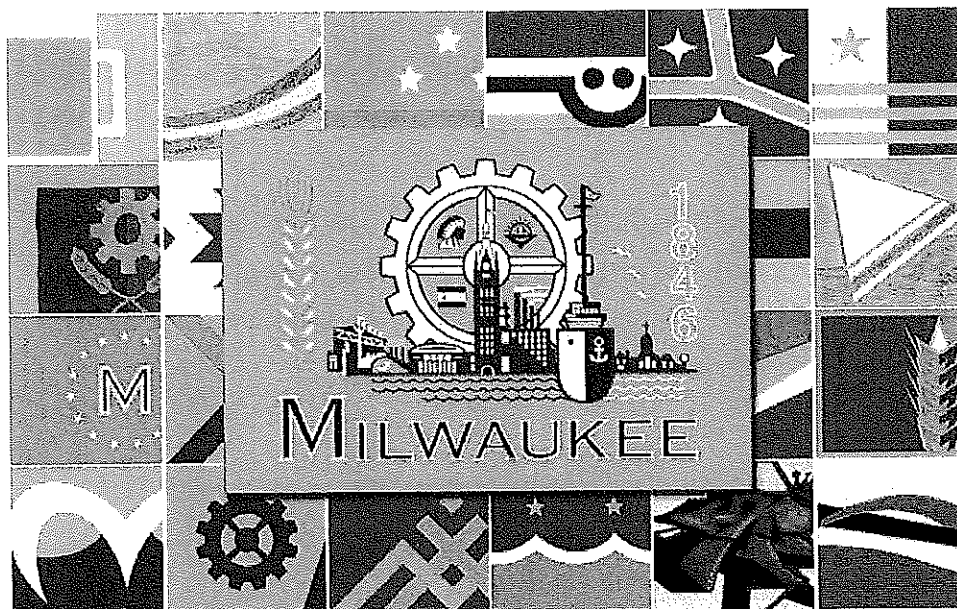


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NEWS

# Design contest hopes to improve Milwaukee's 'hot mess' of a city flag



Milwaukee's current flag is superimposed over images of several of the 1,006 designs submitted.

*By Mary Spicuzza of the Journal Sentinel*

11:14 a.m.

Most people don't realize the City of Milwaukee has an official flag.

And many who've seen it are not impressed.

Milwaukee's baby blue flag, which is packed with a barrage of images ranging from a ship to the old County Stadium to a giant stalk of wheat honoring the city's brewing industry, has been called "a hot mess."

That description came from Roman Mars, a radio host and design expert with a self-described flag obsession, who has labeled Milwaukee's flag one of the worst he's ever seen. But Mars has stirred a new passion for the study of flags, known as vexillology, and a wave of efforts to redesign some of the uglier specimens.

"Nothing can quite prepare you for one of the biggest train wrecks in vexillological

history," Mars said in a 2015 presentation. "Are you ready? It's the flag of Milwaukee, Wisconsin."

"Lighten up, man," Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett joked. "It's not that bad."

But the mayor added that the official flag is a bit dated.

"I will say I think the city flag is outdated, certainly to the extent that it includes County Stadium on it," Barrett said.

Inspired by Mars, a local graphic designer named Steve Kodis is now on a mission to create a new flag for the city.

"I stumbled onto Milwaukee's flag," Kodis said. "Internally, when I saw it, I just sort of said, 'Man, we could have something so much better. We could have such a cooler flag.'"

Kodis has since devoted much of the last year to an effort to redesign a new flag. He launched a website chronicling the movement, The People's Flag of Milwaukee, and teamed up with Ken Hanson, the executive director of Greater Together, a nonprofit organization devoted to promoting racial and economic equality.

Together, they organized an ambitious contest to design a new flag for the city.

"I could have never, ever done it on my own," Kodis said.

He said the effort went beyond simply redesigning the flag to helping create a "beautiful connection between the city and its people."

Organizers held a number of design workshops around Milwaukee, at locations including Washington High School, Bay View High School, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.

After receiving more than 1,000 entries — 1,006 in all — the contest organizers named a team of judges to narrow the field down to the top 50 designs, plus another 15 honorable mentions.

They will be on display at City Hall starting Saturday, when the five finalists will also be unveiled. That same day they are sent to launch an online rating process so the public can help pick a new flag.

The winner will be named in June.

There are five principles of flag design, according to the North American Vexillological Association. Keep it simple (The flag should be so simple that a

child can draw it from memory). Use meaningful symbolism. Use two or three basic colors. No lettering or seals. Be distinctive or be related.

Hanson said they decided to add one more principle.

"What's the symbol for the city that we want to become," he said. "What would symbolize the city that we want to go toward, that we aspire to?"

It remains to be seen whether this flag will become the official city flag, or simply become the unofficial "people's flag."

Barrett praised the effort.

"I view it as a great community engagement exercise to see whether we want to have this 'people's flag,' or even to consider changing our city flag," the mayor said. "But it is a high bar to change it, just so you know. It would take (Common) Council action with a pretty strong super majority to change it."

The official flag, adopted in the mid-1950s, was created after the city organized a contest, gathered about 100 submissions, and then an alderman pulled together a bunch of designs onto one flag.

"I do really think it's a good opportunity to engage people, which is what they have done already, to talk about the symbol of the city," Barrett said.

The contest organizers had little praise for the current flag.

"It didn't rise up out of the people in any way," Hanson said.

"With the best intentions I'm sure, it was designed by an alderman," Kodis added. "It wasn't even really designed by the people."

Kodis and Hanson acknowledged there other pressing problems facing the city, but said a new flag could help.

"Flags are meant to unite and rally the people, in times of celebration and in times of strife. And I think every city, every big city, has its problems, has its ailments. We're not different because of that. But if the city has a really great flag, they can use that flag to rally the people," Kodis said. "And really (taking) actions to fix these problems."



#### About Mary Spicuzza

Mary Spicuzza covers politics and breaking news for the Journal Sentinel.

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# OnMilwaukee

EMMY AWARD WINNER BEST DIGITAL MAGAZINE 2015



The final 5 flags to be voted on before May 31.

## The five People's Flag of Milwaukee finalists revealed

by **Jason McDowell**

Published May 14, 2016 at 9:40 p.m.

The foyer of City Hall was packed in as residents and politicians arrived to take in the best of the best of the current efforts to design a new People's Flag of Milwaukee. Each of the top 45 semi-finalists designs, plus 15 other designs that received honorable mentions, were strung across the length of the room, each displaying a brief sentence or two describing the idea behind the designs. The rest of the 1,006 designs were projected for a few seconds behind the guest speakers. All this in anticipation of the final reveal: the last five designs, which will be voted on over the next two weeks.

Noticeably absent from Milwaukee's most prominent political establishment was the civic flag of Milwaukee, which was neither torn down to make way for the new designs, nor ever truly displayed in the hall with pride.

Of the semi-finalists and honorable mentions, there was a lot to be excited about and a lot to weigh. Nearly all of the designs leaned away from literal representation. Some of the semi-finalists referenced classic sports teams as inspiration, some referenced architecture and nearly all mentioned the lake. Many had arrows, wheat and gears. Also common: beer, the three founders, the three rivers, the native people and the letter "M." Many chose blue, green and yellow/cream. It was fascinating to see the ideas blend together into a cohesive story of Milwaukee, past and present.

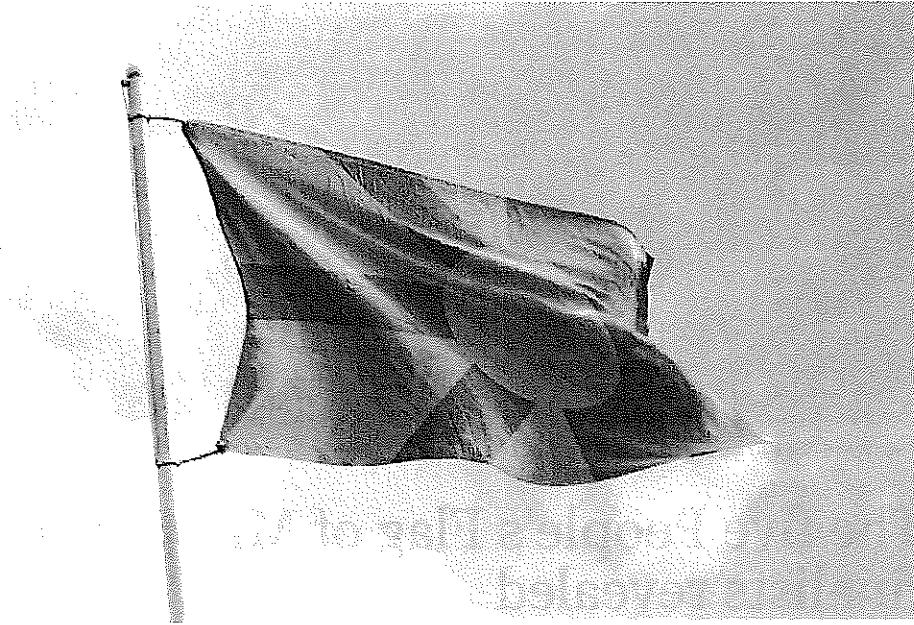
Several thoughts passed through my head: This design is striking. Do these colors mean Milwaukee to me? What was this person thinking? How is this related to the city? I never would have picked these colors, but it's bold, so I think I like it. This one is bold, but it misses the mark. I wonder if the final five can be as good as this one.

Viewers pointed out designs they liked and hated, and all had gut-level justifications of how they felt each flag could represent the city. One child got his picture taken below his design. He seemed nervous, so I cheered him on. "Nice work, dude! My design didn't get in, but I don't care because yours is so good!"

And then the final five were revealed...

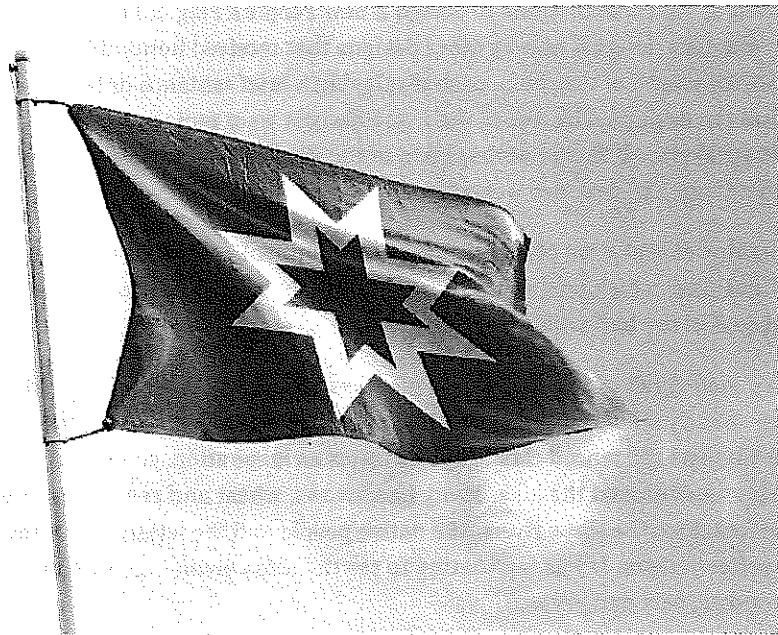
**Three Rivers by Cameron Pothier**

Milwaukee's three rivers flow from the land into the lake, with a large disc representing the city united and our brewing history.



**"M" Star by DeChazier Stokes-Johnson**

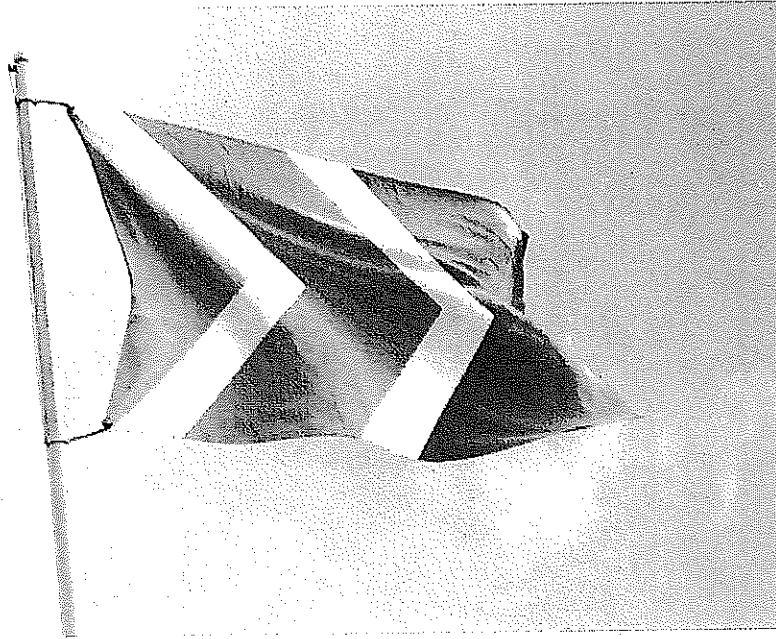
Four "M"s connect to form a cream-colored star representing Milwaukee on the blue lake, its Native American roots and symbolizing the city's bright future.



**Golden Arrow by Chanya Hughes**

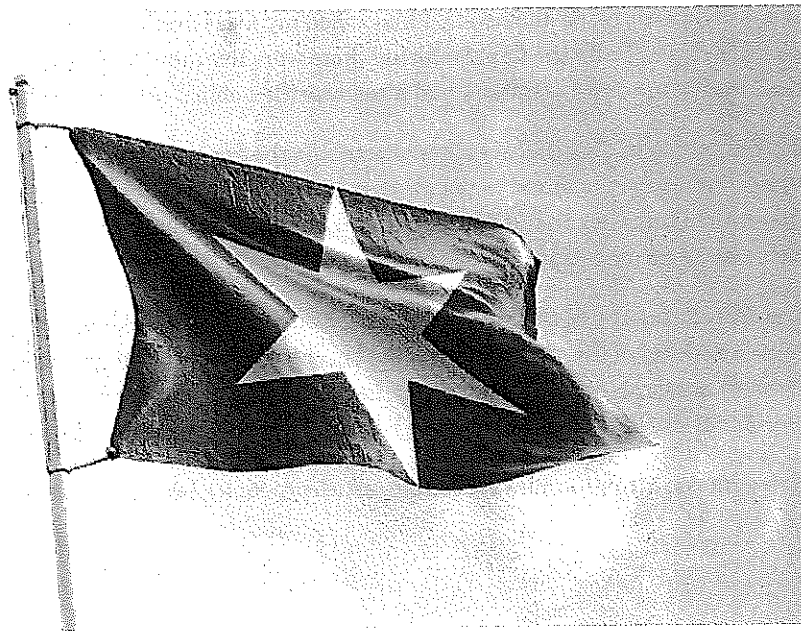
Milwaukee's past, present and future moving in a positive direction, symbolized through its rivers, brewing history and the lake, with white echoing the art museum.





**"Cream City" Star by Jon Grider**

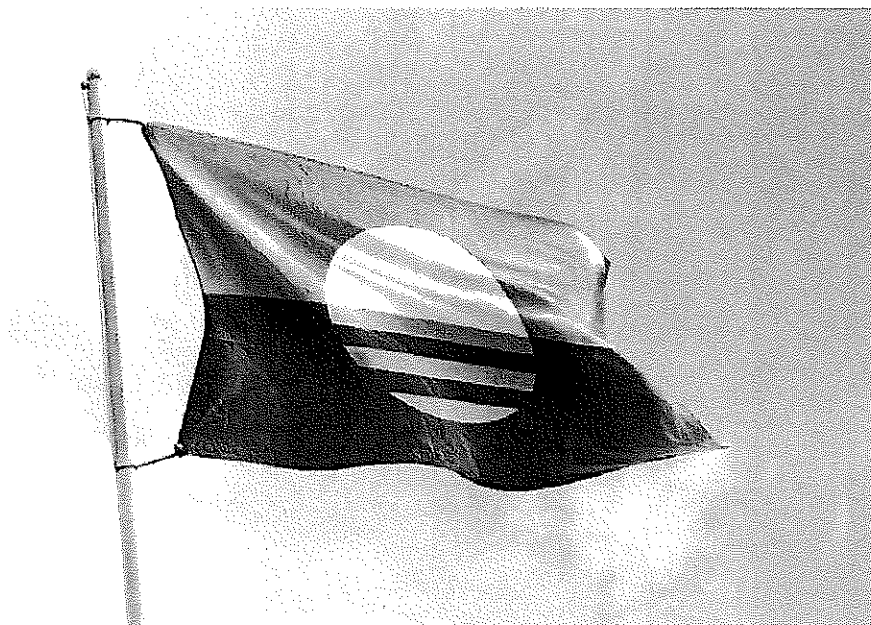
The six points of the star symbolizes the three original sections of the city, its three rivers, and representing Milwaukee as the "Cream City" and the largest in Wisconsin.



**Sunrise Over the Lake by Robert Lenz**

The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers and founders.





Flag renderings courtesy of the Peoples' Flag of Milwaukee

After all five had been released, I had mixed feelings. I had just spent a couple of days looking over the other 60 flags and had already started falling in love with some select choices. Before, as we stood waiting for the reveal, I had rolled my ideas over and over in a rock tumbler as to what needed to be on the flag. Suddenly there were five more to choose from, and they all conflicted with what I wanted. I had already settled on my own special loser.

But the people in City Hall set about discussing the five that mattered. From the representation of the literal to the abstract, the letters to the arrows, the colors to the orientation, line weight and figure size, and even the seasons in which the flag would fly and the name of the flag as it rolls off your tongue.

Now Milwaukee residents have two weeks, until May 31, to weigh in their opinion on all five flags. Residents of the city can rate each flag (<http://tinyurl.com/pfomrating>) from 1 to 10, and the most acceptable flag will be chosen based on the aggregate total. The winner will be revealed at the 88.9 RadioMilwaukee headquarters on Flag Day on June 14.

Web address: <http://onmilwaukee.com/articles/peoplesflagofmilwaukeefinal5.html>

## 5 finalists unveiled for city flag | Winner to be - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI) - May 15, 2016 - page 02

May 15, 2016 | Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI) | MARY SPICUZZA, mspicuzza@journalsentinel.com | Page 02

And then there were five. It's down to just five finalists in the "People's Flag of Milwaukee" design contest.

The finalists, chosen from among more than 1,000 entries, were unveiled during a Saturday evening ceremony at City Hall. They went on display along with the other 45 top entries and 15 honorable mentions.

People can now rate the finalists online. The winner will be announced on June 14 - yes, on Flag Day.

It remains to be seen whether the contest winner will actually replace the official flag, a blue flag featuring a montage of images, which was adopted during the mid-1950s. That decision is up to the Common Council.

One prominent radio host and design expert named Roman Mars has called the official flag a "hot mess" and "one of the biggest train wrecks in vexillological history." His criticism of the city's flag is what inspired local graphic designer Steve Kodis to create a new flag for the city.

Kodis has since devoted much of the last year to an effort to redesign a new flag, and teamed up with Ken Hanson, the executive director of Greater Together, a nonprofit organization devoted to promoting racial and economic equality.

But the flag, which was designed by former Ald. Fred Steffan, has its defenders.

Marion Steffan Koch, Steffan's daughter, called Mars' comments "an insult to the history of Milwaukee" and her father.

"The symbols on the flag represented Milwaukee heritage," she said in an email. "Yes, the flag is outdated. BUT nobody has come up with a better design in the last 60 years, so I wouldn't call the flag a 'train wreck.'" The official flag was created after the city organized a contest, gathered about 100 submissions, and then Steffan pulled together multiple designs onto one flag. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett acknowledged that the flag is a bit outdated, but laughed off Mars' harsh criticism of it.

"Lighten up, man," Barrett joked. "It's not that bad."

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The Business Journal  
May 16, 2016

## **Organizers of design initiative not out to change Milwaukee's flag, but ...**

By David Schuyler

One of the first things the organizers of the People's Flag of Milwaukee initiative want city residents to know is that it is not intended to result in an official change of the city of Milwaukee flag, recently recognized as one of the worst flags in the country.

The initiative could perhaps best be described as a movement to get Milwaukee's urban and diverse youth involved in the conversation on what we, as residents, want the city of Milwaukee to become.

"What is the symbol of the city that we aspire to be?" asks Steve Kodis, a Milwaukee designer and art director who has been promoting a change in the current city of Milwaukee flag for more than two years.

Kodis can be credited as the spark behind People's Flag of Milwaukee, an initiative of Greater Together and AIGA Wisconsin, an association of design professionals.

The People's Flag of Milwaukee initiative will hold an exhibit at Milwaukee City Hall this weekend to display the 50 finalists and 15 honorable mentions in a city flag design competition. Organizers will unveil five finalists at the event, which runs Saturday from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. A winner will be selected in June following two weeks of online voting by the public.

Greater Together is a nonprofit organization that promotes racial and economic equity in the creative industries in the Milwaukee area, led by executive director Ken Hanson, who is CEO of Hanson Dodge Creative, a Milwaukee marketing and advertising agency.

Kodis appeared on Hanson's radar more than a year ago when Hanson was seeking a project that would fulfill Greater Together's mission of promoting diversity in the creative industries, Hanson said. The flag project appeared an ideal way of starting a conversation about what kind of city Milwaukee could be through the use of design. It enabled design professionals to get out into the field and meet and talk with young people of color, said Hanson.

The initiative held a dozen or so workshops at schools, Boys & Girls Clubs locations and universities in the area, informing students and young people about what it means to design a flag and provide historical context for the city. In all, more than 1,000 entries were submitted with about 20 percent of the entries coming from the various workshops. A panel of judges that includes Milwaukee historian John Gurda and Ted Kaye, author of the flag-design guidebook "Good Flag, Bad Flag" who was cited in the 2015 Roman Mars TED Talk that featured Milwaukee's flag as one of the worst, whittled the field to the finalists being unveiled Saturday.

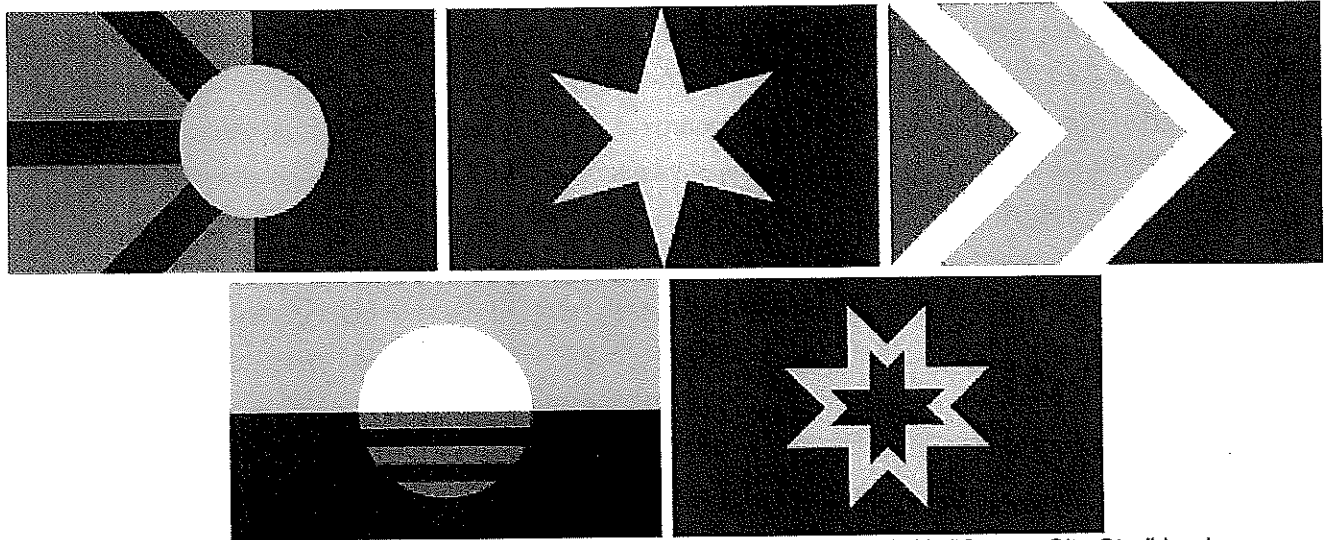
What happens once the winner is unveiled is to be determined, Kodis said. The People's Flag of Milwaukee initiative is not officially sanctioned by the city of Milwaukee, although Ald. Ashanti Hamilton is expected to appear at the event Saturday. It likely would take an act of the Common Council to adopt a new flag officially.

With the city heading for a redesigned skyline, Kodis said, perhaps it's time for a change.

"With all of the development, we as Milwaukeeans are yearning for a civic symbol," he said. "A flag is supposed to rally the people in times of celebration."

## OPINION

## Milwaukee looks to redo its 1954 flag mashup



Milwaukee flag finalists: "Three Rivers" by Cameron Pothier (top row, from left), "Cream City Star" by Jon Grider, "Golden Arrow" by Chanya Hughes, "Sunrise Over the Lake" by Robert Lenz (bottom row, left) and "The 'M' Star" by DeChazier Stokes-Johnson.

**John Gurda -**

**In My Opinion -**

June 04, 2016 – Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

What's in a flag? It depends on who's doing the saluting. For some of us, a flag — whether a nation's, a state's or a city's — is one of the accouterments of civilized society, something you're supposed to have, like libraries, stop signs and postage stamps. For the most ardent patriots among us, a flag is nothing less than an outward symbol of their innermost identity. Flags are tattooed onto biceps, carried into battle and draped over caskets. People die for flags.

It's hard to imagine anyone dying — or even tearing a cuticle — for Milwaukee's current city flag. Adopted in 1954, our official banner is, well, clunky. Although it has a certain retro charm, in the same way that orange shag carpeting and Formica countertops appeal to some baby boomers, the flag reads as a visual checklist of items that represented Milwaukee to our grandparents. A gear for industry? Check. A barley stalk for beer? Got it. City Hall for good government? Front and center. Down the list it goes: a church, smokestacks, a boat, County Stadium, the Arena, an Indian chief, a military service flag (yes, a flag on a flag), an oil lamp, and waves on Lake Michigan. If it were any busier, Milwaukee's flag would die of sheer exhaustion.

Small wonder that the campaign for a new Milwaukee flag has generated such enthusiasm. Nearly two years ago, a young graphic designer named Steve Kodis heard a podcast on flags presented by cultural pundit Roman Mars. His interest quickened, Kodis started to investigate. He discovered that Milwaukee's

flag was a visual antique and resolved to try, if he could, to bring the city's banner into the 21st century. (How many people knew Milwaukee even had a flag is open to question.) Kodis' motivation was simplicity itself. "I'm proud to be a Milwaukeean," he said. "A great city deserves a great flag."

The young man soon became Milwaukee's own Betsy Ross in blue jeans, but he wasn't toiling alone. Greater Together, a nonprofit group that promotes diversity in Milwaukee's creative community, joined the cause, and word of a design contest began to spread by word-of-mouth and social media. The result was a powerful example of civic engagement. Hundreds of Milwaukeeans, many of them young adults, spent hours crafting what are basically expressions of love for their city. The contest generated more than a thousand flag designs submitted by well over 500 individuals vying for nothing more tangible than bragging rights.

I was one of the volunteer judges charged with choosing five finalists from that mountain of submissions. Our group included three young designers (including Kodis, now 29) and two older history types: myself and our leader, Ted Kaye of Portland, Ore. Kaye was there as a specialist whose title is hard to spell and even harder to pronounce: a vexillologist, or flag expert.

The five of us spent seven hours on a sunny spring Saturday inside the Hanson Dodge ad agency on Buffalo St. The process was orderly and interesting. We began by spreading printouts of the submissions in rows of two across the hardwood floors — a lineup that was ultimately longer than two football fields. The entries had a remarkably consistent color palette — lots of blue for water, plenty of cream for brick — and a strong emphasis on threes, for Milwaukee's three rivers, three pioneer settlements and three founders.

Each judge then picked the designs he or she found most appealing, which narrowed the field to about 120. The next step was to group those choices thematically — gears, waves, stripes, maps, stars, etc. — and pare them down to 50 semifinalists. From that pool, after plenty of spirited but respectful discussion, we picked five designs to be submitted to the public in an online poll. By the time we finished, all of us were convinced that any one of the finalists could creditably represent our city.

(The contest is now closed, but everyone's welcome to the announcement of the winner on June 14 — Flag Day, of course. Details are on the [milwaukeeflag.com](http://milwaukeeflag.com) website.)

I left the Third Ward that Saturday evening with a new respect for the various Milwaukeeans who had tackled the same task in earlier years. Picking a flag design is not easy. The city lacked an official banner for the first 108 years of its existence, and it was not for lack of trying. As documented by Chance Michaels, there were attempts to pick a flag as early as 1897. That effort came to nothing but, generation after generation, the campaign was renewed.

In 1927, for instance, Milwaukee considered a design submitted by "public-spirited citizens" that featured "a field of Alice blue on a double silk background, with the city seal in the center, imprinted in golden orange." Although it was described in the press as "Milwaukee's new civic flag," the design was shunted over to the Police Department and ultimately abandoned.

In 1942, not long after Pearl Harbor, Ald. Fred Meyers declared that Milwaukee needed a banner by the time of its 1946 centennial. "As a great convention city," Meyers opined, "as a city whose factories are making parts for every type of weapon and other materials used by our armed forces, as a city with an outstanding enlistment record in the armed forces....Milwaukee should have an official city flag."

Other concerns took precedence, notably World War II, and it was not until 1950 that Milwaukee looked up and noticed that its flagpole was still empty. Meyers renewed his push, launching a contest that drew more than 150 entries. None proved completely satisfactory. Four years later, Fred Steffan, another alderman, took the odds and ends from the 1950 finalists and created a composite design. That's our current flag, and the Common Council made it official on Sept. 21, 1954.

The decision was greeted with a collective yawn. The Milwaukee Sentinel ignored the story completely, and the Journal gave it all of two sentences in the local section. The afternoon paper did donate copies of the flag to every Milwaukee junior and senior high school, hoping they would "hang in a prominent place and be used as a basis for study of Milwaukee's civic and cultural history."

As the 1954 flag slipped steadily out of date — smokestacks went cold, the Braves left, breweries closed and lake traffic diminished — there were periodic attempts to breathe new life into our civic banner. A 1975 contest almost yielded another study in composites. According to the Milwaukee Journal, that year's entries leaned heavily to "beer steins and beer bottles, the Summerfest smile, the Harbor Bridge, the Mitchell Park Conservatory and the lakefront." The judges recommended that the various elements "be incorporated into a single flag," but cooler heads prevailed. The issue lay dormant until 1991, when yet another attempt proved abortive. A 2001 contest that drew 105 entries ended with a unanimous verdict of "none of the above."

Fifteen years later, the current campaign already has generated more discussion, more publicity and more ideas than all the preceding contests combined. Not surprisingly, it also has prompted a new surge of interest in our old flag. Even though the 1954 banner was largely unknown and unflown, the retro look is cool these days, and the existing flag, I freely acknowledge, is endearingly tacky. In some quarters, the current contest is a hipster plot to strip Milwaukee of a valued icon.

I have no such concerns. The process has been transparent and the spirit of the organizers openhearted throughout. The contest yielded five strong finalists: an "M" star, a lake sunrise, three rivers, a chevron and a six-pointed star. They may seem simple, even generic, at first, but that was the intention. A good flag, all five judges agreed, should in fact be simple — as well as memorable, colorful and specific to its setting. Milwaukee's 1954 banner is essentially a time capsule of artifacts from a dead generation. Led by our younger residents, the city is ripe for a new design that evokes our place rather than describes it, that provides us with inspiration rather than an inventory.

What's in a flag? More than meets the eye. A new banner won't bring back Allis-Chalmers or turn the north side into River Hills, but it can give Milwaukee something valuable nonetheless: a touchstone of identity that all of us can salute.



A rendering of Sunrise Over the Lake. Design by Robert Lenz.

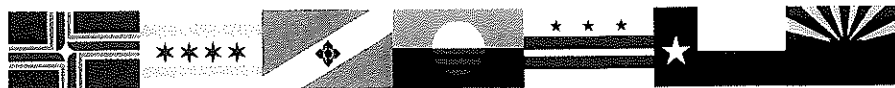
## The sun rises over Milwaukee as the People's Flag is revealed

by **Jason McDowell**

Published June 14, 2016 at 8:15 p.m.

After weighing more than 30,000 rankings from over 6,000 voters, Sunrise Over the Lake, the design by Robert Lenz, was voted People's Flag of Milwaukee by its citizens. The winning flag design was announced by Greater Together and the Milwaukee Flag Initiative on Tuesday, June 14 at the 88.9 RadioMilwaukee headquarters in Walker's Point.

The flag design bears an abstracted sun rising in a yellow field from beyond Lake Michigan's deep blue horizon. The sun is reflected in the waves of the water, producing three lighter blue lines, which are meant to represent the city's three rivers and three founders. It's very clean, easy to draw, quick to understand and unique, yet it would still be right at home with some of the best designed, most iconic flags in the country.

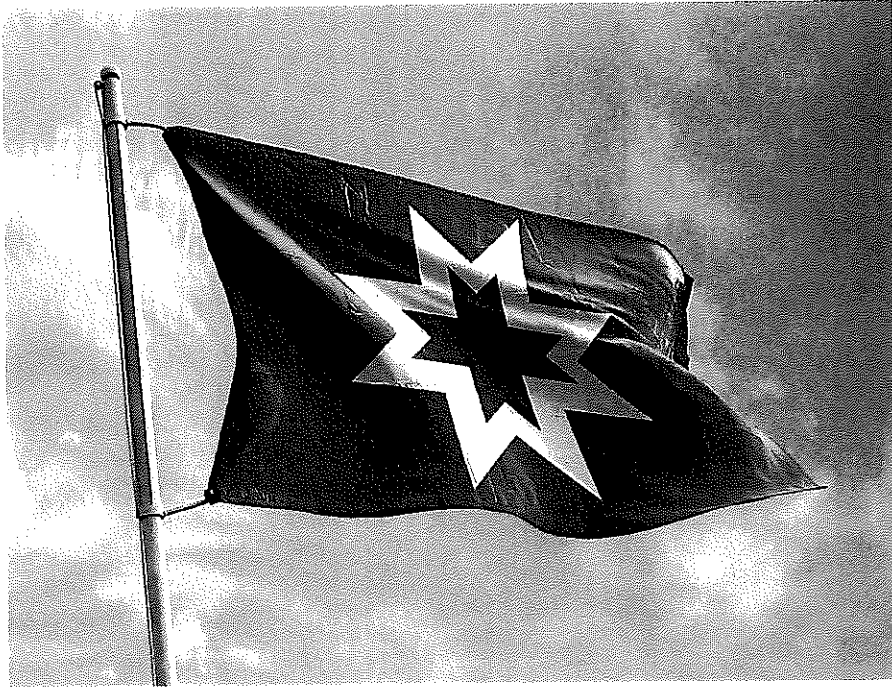


(/images/articles/static/flag2016final/m-star.jpg)

The flags of Portland, Chicago, Madison, Washington DC, Texas, and Arizona surround the new Sunrise Over the Lake design.

The fact that Sunrise won the popular vote is no surprise to me. When the five flags were originally unveiled (/buzz/articles/peoplesflagofmilwaukeefinal5.html) I immediately pegged it as the winner. I also assumed it would run away with the victory, but apparently the race was quite close and Sunrise only narrowly beat out the runner-up (and my personal fave), DeChazier Stokes-Johnson's "M" Star design (/images/articles/static/flag2016final5/flag5-2.png).

Still, Steve Kodis of The Milwaukee Flag Initiative said that even if voting was extended, it would have only solidified Sunrise as the winner and "M" Star as the close second.



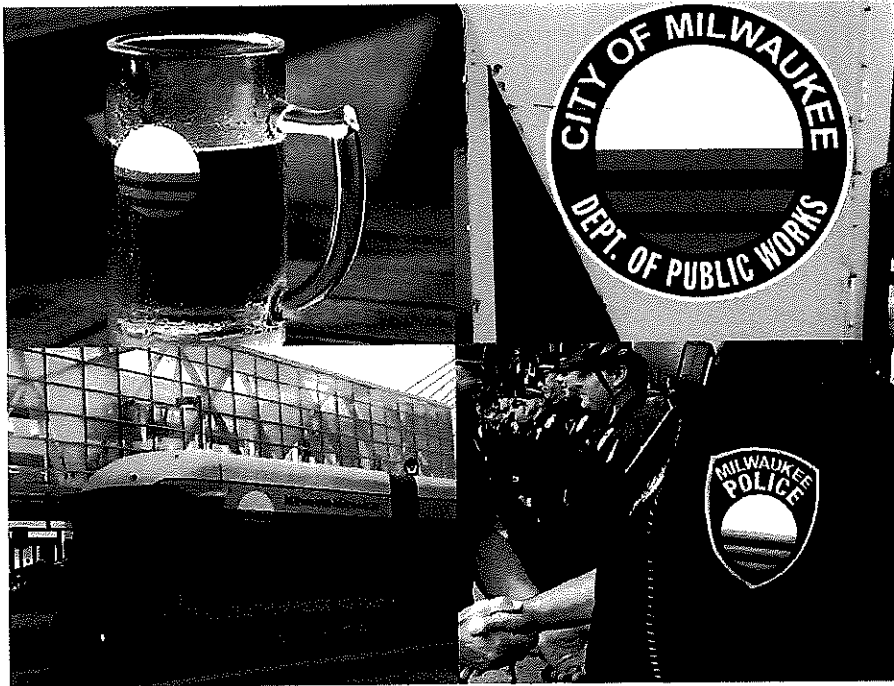
[\(/images/articles/static/flag2016final/m-star.jpg\)](#)

**The "M" Star design by DeChazier Stokes-Johnson was a solid runner up.**

Sunrise offers a safeness, a literal-ness and a relatability that is easy to grab onto. It's very easy to understand. This is a sentiment that is shared by the pro-civic flag crowd (aka the current city flag), who are drawn to that design because they understand what the flag represents without having to care about symbology or open a history book.

The shape and colors of the Sunrise design are also very inviting.

"M" Star, on the other hand, is an entirely new symbol that required a larger leap of faith that it would eventually embody the city and culture. It asked for a bit more patience. And the design, in contrast to the sun, is perhaps a little colder and edgier. These reasons, by the way, are why I appreciated it.



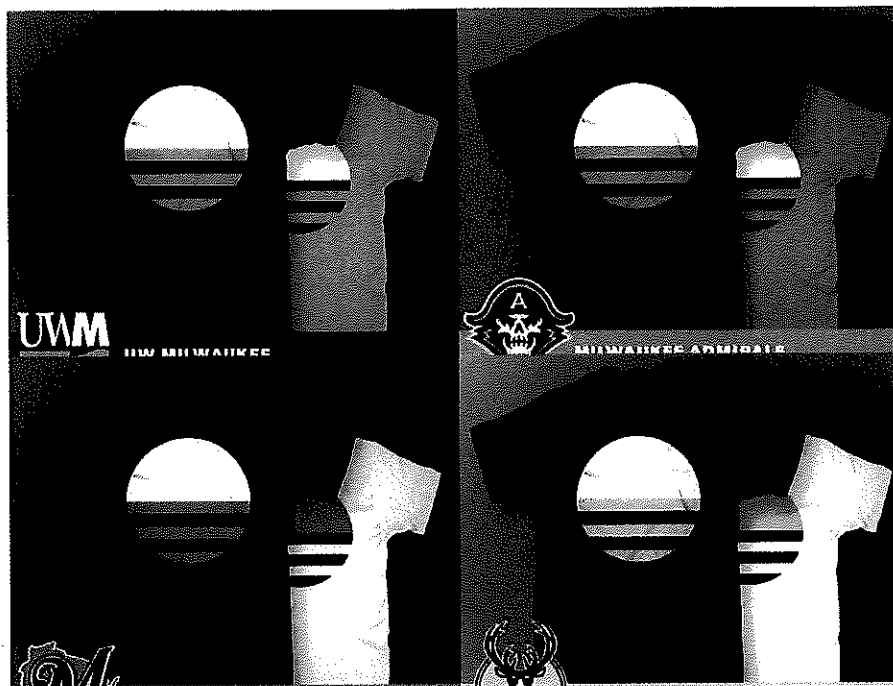
[\(/images/articles/static/flag2016final/sunrise-merch.jpg\)](#)

**The new flag design working in fun and official capacities. It's hard to imagine the civic flag working together with its subjects in as clear and streamlined a way.**

Over the course of voting, Lenz also did a bang-up job of promoting his Sunrise design and



showing exactly what his flag could mean to the city. He addressed a common complaint: citizens didn't see Milwaukee in the new designs. They were uncomfortable with the newness because the designs didn't carry the weight of history and nostalgia. They felt empty. Lenz replaced that discomfort with possibility, via mock-ups on his Sunrise Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/sunriseflag/>). Stokes-Johnson tried to do the same on the "M" Star Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MSTARFlag/>), but Lenz's efforts really worked.



(/images/articles/static/flag2016final/sunrise-teams.jpg)

**Making clear the possibilities for remixing and re-appropriating via the city's sports teams.**

Now that Sunrise has been finalized as the People's Flag it's time to get to work replacing those mock-ups with reality.

The first run of standard 5' x 3' flags were available for purchase at the release party. Future merchandise will be available shortly through Greater Together's online shop (<http://greatertogether.me/shop>). And since the design was released into the creative commons, other Milwaukee companies, artists, teams, designers and citizens are welcome to start appropriating the design at will.

Additionally, if you see this design as the way forward vexillogically-speaking, Greater Together and the Milwaukee Flag Initiative are also asking fans to contact their local representatives on the Common Council (<http://www.milwaukeeflag.com/commoncouncil/>) to adopt the new design in a more official way.



[\(/images/articles/static/flag2016final/sunrise-slogan.jpg\)](http://images/articles/static/flag2016final/sunrise-slogan.jpg)

**Sunrise as slogans.**

Whether you like or hate the design of either flag, it's unquestionable that the contest has fueled a new level of discourse and passion about both flag designs, the city itself, its representation and its problems and possible solutions. I look forward to seeing how the city and its citizens continue to push, shape and refine its sense of self.

Web address: <http://onmilwaukee.com/articles/peoplesflagofmilwaukeewinner.html>

# All Hail Milwaukee's New City Flag

Posted: 15 Jun 2016 – Urban Milwaukee



Peoples' Flag of Milwaukee. Photo from [www.milwaukeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeflag.com).

Last night at the headquarters of 88.9 Radio Milwaukee, a new "Peoples' Flag of Milwaukee" was unveiled, replacing the 1954 flag that **Roman Mars** bemoaned in his TED Talk as "**one of the biggest train wrecks in vexilological history.**" The older Milwaukee flag was designed by Alderman **Fred Steffan**, who cobbled together submissions from Milwaukee residents, squeezing together depictions of City Hall, County Stadium, a ship, a church, a factory, grain for brewing, a giant gear, and much more into one cluttered creation. It's been called the **worst city flag in America**. At last night's unveiling of the new flag, Commissioner of City Development **Rocky Marcoux** offered his own take down, deriding the old flag as "an inventory of what's in the city that was dying under the weight of its symbols."



Official Milwaukee Flag

The project to design a new Milwaukee flag was spearheaded by graphic designer **Steve Kodis**, who partnered with nonprofit **Greater Together**. Greater Together is a subset of AIGA (a national association for professional designers) that works to promote racial and economic equity in Milwaukee. Both Kodis and Greater Together believed that a new flag would only get widespread support if the community itself was engaged in the design process. So Greater Together organized flag design workshops for youth around the city, both to introduce young people to the idea of design as a possible career path, and to convey how powerful design can be. They also organized panel discussions for businesses, encouraging them to tap into the talent of the inner city. Graphic designer **Xavier Ruffin** described the flag initiative as a “symbol of hope and togetherness,” and a way for residents to “take ownership of their city.”

In the end, 1,006 flag entries were received, from a mixture of the public, youth, and professional designers. These were whittled down to 45 semi-finalists and five finalists by a panel of five judges (local historian **John Gurda**, flag expert **Ted Kaye**, designers Ruffin, Kodis, and **Jena Sher**). The five finalist flags were flown in May at City Hall, and Milwaukeeans were encouraged to vote for their favorites.

Over 6,000 votes were cast before last night’s announcement, and the final winner was “Sunrise over the Lake” by **Robert Lenz**. His flag features a white sun emerging out of a dark blue lake into a golden sky. The bottom half of the sun is covered by three light blue horizontal stripes, which Lenz says symbolizes both the three rivers in Milwaukee, and the city’s three founders. The gold of the sky represents the city’s brewing history, and the white is meant to symbolize the unification of Milwaukee. According to Lenz, “This flag is all about unity and coming together within the city. The founding fathers didn’t like each other and built streets at odd angles to each other, but now we are coming together.”

Mayor **Tom Barrett** and Common Council President **Ashanti Hamilton** attended the unveiling of the five finalists in May, and Barrett has called the city's current flag "outdated," but it remains to be seen if the Common Council officially adopts the new flag.

During his speech, Marcoux declared, "Until you can travel the lengths of North Avenue and National Avenue from east to west and see the same relative level of affluence throughout, our work is not done. We need to continue to have conversations about inequity, and this flag is important because it is a symbol of diversity and togetherness."

And also a heck of a lot more attractive than the old flag, he might have added.

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

MARKETPLACE

## **Surprise! Your City Has a Flag And It's Really Terrible --- Milwaukee's 'hot mess' of a banner is getting a redesign; 147th place out of 150**

By Jim Carlton

5 March 2018

A1

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MILWAUKEE -- Defenders of the Milwaukee city flag love its picturesque collage of factories, Lake Michigan, a church, giant barley stalk, clock tower, steamship, sports stadium, Indian chief and genie's lamp.

Haters point to the same things.

"It's a hot mess," said flag-obsessed designer Roman Mars, in a TED talk critique that drew more than three million views on YouTube.

The North American Vexillological Association, which tracks flags, ranked Milwaukee's 147th worst out of 150 cities surveyed. Only three were worse: Rapid City, S.D., Huntington, W.Va., and Pocatello, Idaho.

"Nothing can quite prepare you for one of the biggest train wrecks in vexillological history," Mr. Mars said of Milwaukee's flag.

Stung by the criticisms, Milwaukee set out to overhaul a municipal symbol that many residents learned about only after it became the target of ridicule.

Graphic designer Steve Kodis is ready to plant the "People's Flag of Milwaukee," a gold and navy banner with a white orb and three blue lines, an image of the sun rising over Lake Michigan meant to symbolize the city's rising economy.

Two years ago, it was the top vote-getter in a contest to choose a new symbol for the city. It won the most votes out of 1,006 entries, and Mr. Kodis and his supporters were thrilled the city might finally get a new symbol.

"Milwaukee is a great city and deserves to have a great flag," said the 31-year-old Mr. Kodis.

Supporters of the original Milwaukee flag aren't, well, flagging.

"I'm so mad right now," said Evan Rytlewski, 36, editor for an alternative weekly. "I didn't know we had a Milwaukee flag. Then I discovered it and I truly fell in love. Everything about it is wrong and right at the same time."

Tyler Maas, co-founder of a Milwaukee news blog, is more than a little attached to the old flag.

"It's not this perfect thing" but it reflects the city's industrial past, Mr. Maas said on tape as a tattoo artist etched its image into his skin. In a recent email, Mr. Maas said he stands by the flag. "No regrets at all. I love the tattoo."

Provo, Utah, unfurled a more appealing flag in 2015 after its old banner depicting simply the name "Provo" with a swoosh was ranked as 143rd worst. The new flag depicts the sun rising behind lake-framed mountains.

Provo's then-Mayor John Curtis said such a low ranking wasn't becoming of a city which has been named as seventh happiest in the U.S.

Sioux Falls, S.D. decided it needed professional help to redesign its flag, and so empaneled the Committee to Establish a Suitable Flying Banner for the City of Sioux Falls.

After being ranked 150th, Pocatello, Idaho, convened a Flag Design Ad Hoc Committee in 2016 and asked volunteers for ideas to replace a flag with the words "Proud to Be Pocatello" squished between two trademark symbols of differing color and design.

Out of 709 entries from around the globe, the city last July selected a more soothing image: the sun framed by snow-capped mountains.

"You never want to be dead last at anything," said Logan McDougall, chair of the committee.

At a Manchester, N.H. city meeting in 2016 to approve its redesign efforts, Alderman Nick Pappas complained the process was wasteful and unnecessary.

"I would be shocked if 90 percent of the people in Manchester know we even have a city flag," Mr. Pappas complained. The city still flies its old flag.

The flag of Joplin, Mo., didn't make the worst flag ranking list, but civic boosters in 2016 launched a contest to replace it out of belief it wouldn't adhere to a requirement of the Vexillological Association -- namely, that it be so simple a child could draw it from memory.

"Most people couldn't tell you what our flag looked like, because it was too complex," Jeremy Haun, a local illustrator who led the #joplinflag effort, said of a flag which features stripes, a map, city symbols and Latin phrasing.

The winner selected from more than 70 entries was a blue and white flag depicting four roads intersecting at a city. Although the council has never acted on it, the new flag has circulated on hundreds of T-shirts, stickers and posters.

Milwaukee, for now, flies two flags. The city has yet to take official action on replacing its old banner. Advocates for new flag and the original are lobbying the City Council.

"Having a new face for the city would be appropriate," said Milwaukee Alderman Jim Bohl, who calls the old flag a "mish mash" that has outlived its time.

Another alderman, Tony Zielinski, said he wants to follow the wishes of his constituents, "and right now they are all over the place.

The original flag still flies over some businesses downtown and at least one college campus. The alternate Milwaukee flag has spread all over town -- it now hangs in shops and restaurants, and flies over some gas stations.

The new flag's image is emblazoned on bottles of a new IPA released by the Milwaukee Brewing Co.

Marketing director Hannah Falk talked her team into adopting the flag logo after seeing its burgeoning popularity. "It just kind of spoke to us," she said.



CITY HALL

## Will People's Flag Become Official Milwaukee Flag?

Trio of council members introduce resolution to change city flag.

By Jeramey Jannene - May 31st, 2018 – Urban Milwaukee



Peoples' Flag of Milwaukee. Photo from [www.milwaukeeeflag.com](http://www.milwaukeeeflag.com).

Since being unveiled in June 2016, the people's flag of Milwaukee has become ubiquitous. In addition to hanging from flagpoles across the city, you can find the design on beer bottles, bicycles and as of last week on Milwaukee Brewers merchandise.

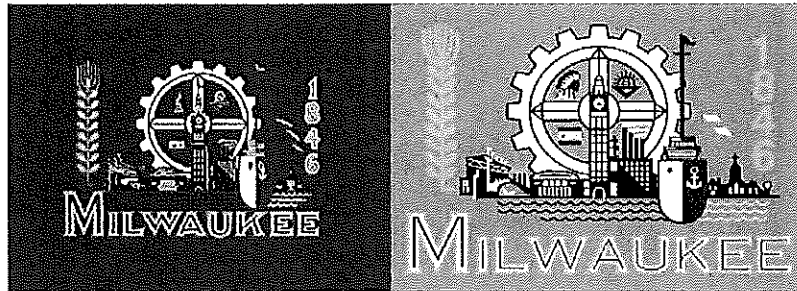
There is one place you can't find it – on any official city document. The city has yet to formally adopt the new flag.

Designed by graphic designer **Robert Lenz**, the new flag symbolizes a number of tried and true Milwaukee elements. The gold represents beer or wheat. The circle represents the sun rising over Lake Michigan. The blue represents the city's connection to water, with the lake and Kinnickinnic, Menomonee and Milwaukee rivers. The three lines represent the city's three founders, **Solomon Juneau**, **Byron Kilbourn** and **George Walker**, and how they merged their communities together to form Milwaukee.

A group of Common Council members has introduced a resolution to make it official. Aldermen **Khalif Rainey**, **Cavalier Johnson** and **Robert Donovan** are listed as sponsors on the measure. When asked what led him to sponsor the measure, Johnson stated: "Milwaukee needs a symbol that we all can be proud of and rally around."

The new flag, selected from a design competition led by **Steve Kodis**, would replace a hard-to-find city flag that dates back to 1955. Kodis, a graphic designer, was inspired to lead a contest to create a new flag as a way to engender civic pride.

The 1955 flag was designed by Alderman **Fred Steffan**. The alderman took elements from submissions to a design contest and mashed them into one flag. **Matthew J. Prigge** attempted to dissect all of the elements in 2015, including County Stadium and City Hall, but the history buff found himself stumped by at least one element. Further compounding the confusion surrounding the current flag, no one seems to have a record of when the design was value engineered, with City Hall and other elements in the flag took on a much simpler design.



Two Milwaukee Flags (original on left)

The existing flag became the subject of ridicule in 2015 when **Roman Mars** singled it out in a TED talk as the worst designed civic flag. "Nothing can quite prepare you for one of the biggest train wrecks in Vexillological history. Are you ready? It's the flag of Milwaukee, Wisconsin," declared Mars before playing a clip of Kodis describing the flag. The two jointly ridiculed how the flag design goes far enough to include an image of a flag on the flag.

But even if the current flag's design wasn't an issue, it's no wonder the new flag has proliferated. Try to find design files for either version of the 1955 flag and the appeal of the royalty-free people's flag becomes immediately apparent.

The 1955 flag does have its defenders, although **Matt Wild**, one of the most high profile critics of Kodis' effort to change the flag, has recently given up.

The measure is slated to be reviewed by the Steering and Rules Committee on June 7th. The full council could adopt the flag at their regularly scheduled meeting on June 20th, less than a week after Flag Day.

## A new city flag? Council sends issue to Arts Board - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI) - July 20, 2018 - page A6

July 20, 2018 | Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI) | Mary Spicuzza and Ahmed Elbenni | Page A6

Milwaukee may soon have a new flag.

But will the city actually make the change? The answer is blowing in the wind.

Rather than voting on a proposal to make the "People's Flag of Milwaukee" the official flag of the city, members of a Common Council committee on Thursday sent the issue to the Milwaukee Arts Board for its consideration.

Council members said they would ask the Arts Board to report back by Dec. 31.

If the measure is eventually approved by the full council and Mayor Tom Barrett, the People's Flag would replace the current flag - which has flown for more than six decades.

The People's Flag, a design known as "Sunrise Over the Lake" by Robert Lenz, won a 2016 contest and has since become ubiquitous around the city - appearing on bicycles, beer cans and bottles, Koss headphones, cars and even Milwaukee Brewers baseball caps.

Supporters of the People's Flag gathered at City Hall for Thursday's Steering and Rules Committee meeting to help lift the flag's chances of getting council approval.

"Flags really do have power," said Steve Kodis, a graphic designer who is leading the flag effort.

He described the flag as the sun rising over Lake Michigan, "symbolizing a new day." Kodis said Milwaukee has long struggled with its identity, and would benefit from a unifying image to bring the city together.

"The brand of Milwaukee is beginning to change. For the better," Kodis told council members.

Kodis read a statement from John Gurda, a Milwaukee-born writer and historian, who urged city officials to "make it official."

And Ken Hanson, the executive director of the Greater Together nonprofit, stressed that this has been "entirely an exercise in civic pride."

Ald. Robert Bauman insisted that the measure should go before the Milwaukee Arts Board, which could consider the proposed design - and whether Milwaukee needs a new official flag. He said the flag design should be a more inclusive process, adding that some of his constituents have been "offended by the design."

Ald. Milele Coggs noted how similar the new flag is to the Reno flag, but People's Flag advocates say their flag came first.

Ald. Mark Borkowski amended Bauman's proposal by setting a six-month deadline for the Arts Board to report back to the Common Council.

Lenz said he was just glad "that we're here at City Hall talking about it; that's a huge step." He said he was "totally fine" with the decision to send the flag to the city Arts Board. However, he didn't agree with concerns raised about the flag's similarity to Reno's flag.

"There's a lot more similarity between the American flag and other flags," said Lenz.

Kodis was disappointed but "sort of expected this to be the case." He was adamant that every effort was made to include the community in the process, noting that "we received submissions from all over the world."

The streamlined yellow, blue and white design would replace Milwaukee's baby blue flag - which is packed with a montage of images including a ship, the old County Stadium, a Native American, and a giant stalk of wheat honoring the city's brewing industry.

Ald. Russell W. Stamper II questioned the use of white on the people's flag, and why the designers described white as a symbol of "unity."

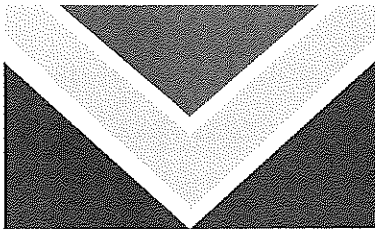
Milwaukee's current flag has gotten some national attention in recent years - but not in a good way.

Roman Mars, a radio host and design expert with a self-described flag obsession, once labeled Milwaukee's flag "a hot mess" and the worst he's ever seen.

But some have rallied in support of the existing flag, which was designed by former Ald. Fred Steffan.

Marion Steffan Koch, Steffan's daughter, called Mars' comments "an insult to the history of Milwaukee" and her father.

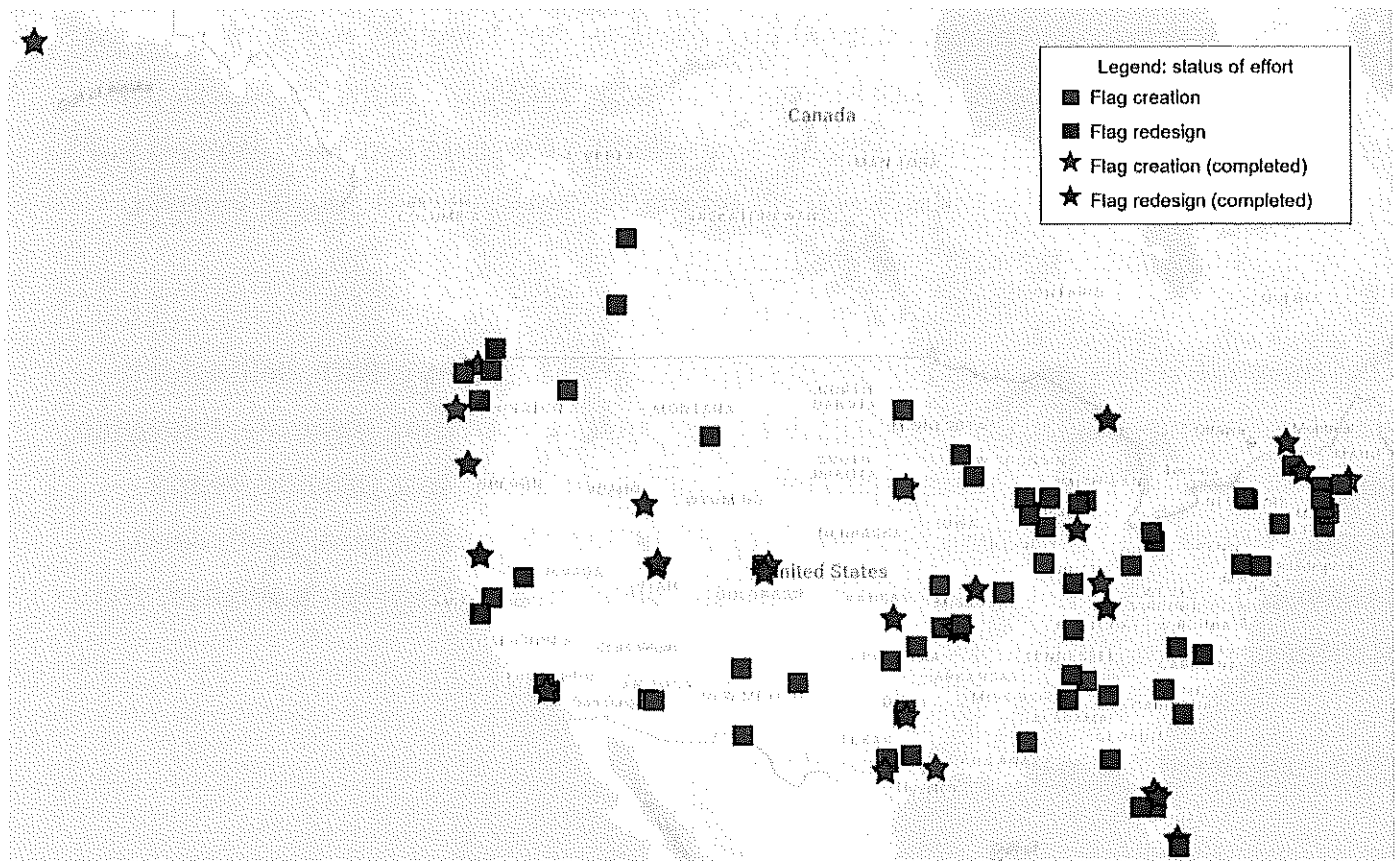
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## Portland Flag Association

Vexillologists and Flag Enthusiasts of Portland, Oregon

# Municipal Flag Improvement



Thanks in large part to a popular 2015 TED talk by Roman Mars (and Ted Kaye) on the shortcomings of many city flag designs, there are efforts in many North American cities, towns, or other municipalities to improve their flag designs — or to adopt flags for the first time.

Here are the 104 efforts we know about (as of 16 February 2018): Aberdeen, WA; Akron, OH; Albany, OR; Albuquerque, NM; Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Barrington, RI; Bath, ME; Bellingham, WA; Billings, MT; Birmingham, AL; Bloomington, IN; Boston, MA; Bowling Green, KY; Boulder, CO; Brandon, SD; Bryan, TX; Burlington, VT; Calgary, AB; Cedar Park, TX; Charleston, SC; Cleveland, OH; Clovis, NM; Columbia, MO; Columbia, SC; Columbus, OH; Concrete, WA; Coral Springs, FL; Dallas, TX; Dardenne Prairie, MO; Davis, CA; Edmonton, AB; Elk Ridge, UT; El Paso, TX; Fargo, ND; Firestone, CO; Fort Payne, AL; Golden, CO; Grand Rapids, MI; Harrison, OH; Hattiesburg, MS; Haysville, KS; Holland, MI; Hope, BC; Huntsville, AL; Janesville, WI; Joplin, MO; Kansas City, MO; Kansas City, KS/MO; Kingston, NY; Laconia, NH; Lancaster, PA; Lake Wales, FL; Lexington-Fayette, KY; Liberty, TX; Liberty Lake, WA; Los Angeles, CA; Lowell, MA; Madison, WI; Manchester, NH; Manlius, NY; Miami, FL; Milwaukee, WI; Minneapolis, MN; Montpelier, VT; Montreal, QC; Mount Dora, FL; Naperville, IL; Nixa, MO; Oklahoma City, OK; Orlando, FL; Peoria, AZ; Philadelphia, PA; Plano, TX; Pocatello, ID; Portland, ME; Provo, UT; Raleigh, NC; Redding, CA; Reno, NV; Republic, MO; Rochester, MN; Rockford, IL; San Francisco, CA; San Marcos, TX; Santa Clarita, CA; Sault Ste. Marie, ON; Scottsdale, AZ; Seward, AK; Sioux Falls, SD; South Bend, IN; Springfield, MO; Sunnyvale, TX; Syracuse, NY; Tacoma, WA; Tallahassee, FL; Tampa, FL; Tulsa, OK; Urbana, IL; Victoria, BC; West Hollywood, CA; and Winston-Salem, NC.

72 of these efforts are ongoing. For the 30 cities of Aberdeen, Albany, Bath, Bellingham, Brandon, Columbia (MO), Coral Springs, Elk Ridge, Golden, Harrison, Haysville, Janesville, Lexington-Fayette, Liberty, Montpelier, Montreal, Mount Dora, Nixa, Orlando, Peoria, Pocatello, Provo, Redding, Republic, Sault Ste. Marie, San Marcos, Seward, South Bend, Sunnyvale, and West Hollywood efforts have succeeded in new flags being adopted. The Manchester effort has failed.

Click [click here for a map](#) of all these efforts.

The following are the current flags (if any) for each municipality. If the design effort is centered around a single proposal, it is also shown. Click the city name to learn more about the redesign effort, including multiple proposals that may be under consideration.

Aberdeen, Washington:



# MEMORANDUM

## LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

WWW.MILWAUKEE.GOV/LRB

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**To:** Milwaukee Arts Board  
**From:** Tea Norfolk, Legislative Fiscal Analyst – Lead  
**Date:** September 17, 2018  
**Subject:** Mayor's FaceBook Post Regarding Adoption of the People's Flag

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On June 24, 2018, Mayor Tom Barrett posted the following comment on his FaceBook page, along with a picture of the People's Flag: "I've seen this flag around our city more and more. Do you think it's time to make it the official flag of Milwaukee? Leave your thoughts in the comments. Learn more about the flag by visiting [milwaukeeflag.com](http://milwaukeeflag.com)."

Following is a transcript of the comments on the Mayor's post.

**Nic Cole** Yes. Time for a resolution to get this adopted!

**Jen Bennett** Yes!!

**Solana Patterson-Ramos** No, I think an official city wide flag contest should happen that involves Milwaukee public schools and other organizations.  
Give everyone in Milwaukee a chance to submit ideas.

Most people didn't really know about the flag contest that this flag came from til they had their finalists. There needs to be more of a fair flag contest that everyone can be a part off.

**Anna Maria Contreras** Totally agree

**Crystal Hampton Hines** 100%

**Mike Erickson** So because you weren't paying attention, you think it's unfair?

**Michelle Hines** I'm a MKE native living in NYC and even I knew about this contest! This got a ton of press - not to mention the tons of social media coverage it received

**David Kiefer** Milwaukee dose not need a new flag. We are not a communist socialist city we are a democratic city no new flags.

**Richard Schwalb** David Kiefer Huh? What does communist or socialist or democratic have to do with getting a new flag or not? And we were a socialist city for most of the time between 1890 and 1960

**Michael Nischke** This flag was created through a contest, and there was plenty of publicity for it. Just because you weren't paying attention doesn't mean we should do it again. This flag should be made official.

**Bo Sheriff** Richard Schwalb true

**Ryan Yatso** THIS FLAG WAS PICKED BY A CONTEST. YOU JUST WEREN'T PAYING ATTENTION. IT NEEDS TO BE MADE OFFICAL.

**Steven Steven** Let's do it. This one will win.

**Christopher Rucinski** Solana Patterson-Ramos I hear "Let's waste taxpayer money" when a new government-supported flag contest is suggested.

The previous contest was privately held, went fairly viral, and was completely open to the public. I have been living in Korea for a few years now and I was fully aware of this contest. So the government doesn't need to waste money here.

Once this flag is selected as official, then within a year, most people won't even complain anymore. For example, Seoul had a city motto contest. There was a lot of backlash with the selected motto, but after a month I never heard anything bad about the motto anymore.

**Robin Lee Reed** We also have MIAD and UWM Design Departments!

**John Ehn IV** Most graphic designers and graphic design students knew about the contest. I doubt that letting 2nd graders draw a flag in crayon would have made much of a difference.

**Rebecca Silber** Many graphic designers choose to not participate in contests because it cheapens the profession. The publicity surrounding the contest isn't the issue, the issue was that there was a contest at all and that it was promoted by the Wisconsin Chapter of the AIGA. "Going forward designers—individually and as a community—must continue to communicate the worth of investing in design services, always offering a sense of the value created for the client from hiring a qualified professional designer, and by explaining that the client is the one who loses out with crowdsourcing or spec competitions." --Richard Grefé, director emeritus of the AIGA

**Linda Gonzales** Ryan Yatso A very limited contest, however...

**Andrew Hoffmann** Rebecca Silber Nice I never considered the effect of design contests on the industry. TIL

**Jessica Heiden** Ya, that would be great!

**Andrew James Shelp** Second graders could literally come up with a more creative and distinct flag than this garbage. Also, it looks like a free design because it WAS a free design. It's clip art at best. Pay some folks to come up with some real designs. Sheesh...

**Ian Powell** Rebecca Silber I agree to a certain point but in a way the client was the people of Milwaukee and so a contest we're they vote on what flag they thought best represented the city feels like a legitimate strategy to decide on a design. And honestly the new flag is better than the everything but the kitchen sink flag we have now.

**Rebecca Silber** Ian Powell I'm going to keep standing up for my profession because no one else in Milwaukee is doing so. This would have never flown with the AIGA in Chicago or New York or Minneapolis. There are standards to the profession—if a



finance person organized a contest to re-do the city's budget, I would hope true professionals would be leery about participating.

**Daul Pettmann** It was a public contest with a public comment period and a public vote. We really don't need to go through it again.

**David Kiefer** Richard Schwalb good to know comrade.

**Daul Pettmann** Rebecca Silber it wouldn't have happened at all without the contest. Your profession can get over it.

**Irene Parthum** No. It looks like a signal flag on a boat. The City flag is old fashioned, diverse, and a little bit hokey. Just like my hometown. #OldSchoolMilwaukee

**Joe Holla** Yup. Hokey. That explains it all. Smh.

**Andrew Martins** The old flag looks like a second grader's homework assignment.

**Steve Kodis** Culturally insensitive too.

**Ian Powell** And just bad design.

**Jeff Oeth** YES!

It's a powerful, elegant and iconic design that represents the best of what Milwaukee is and can be.

**Rocky Chronister** Apparently, the best Milwaukee is and can be is a cartoonish sunrise 🌅; half optical illusion. 😊

**David Kiefer** Look at it those symbols are Chinese or Japanese in nature. No new flag. Don't like it here move.

**Scott Gondek** It's a fucking circle. It's not iconic.

**Jeff Oeth** The fear of change is strong in this city. And apparently the trolls here don't get out of their parents' basements very often. Historically, flags throughout the world have been intentionally simple for a number of reasons.

If you don't know anything about a subject, maybe keep your mouth shut next time.

**Rocky Chronister** 🌅 forgot one 😊

**Rocky Chronister** Scott Gondek Well, a ☐ would be iconic. However, it's interesting that people hoping to establish this flag keep using the word "iconic". Usually an icon is well established. This must be the flag of Milwookies that don't read good. #MPS 😊

**Jeremy Mattson** you seem to be confusing 'iconic' for 'generic'.

**David J Kane** Jeff Oeth calm down Jeffy, it's a flag!

**Deja Blue** What does this say about Milwaukee? Besides seeing the sun and maybe a lake! Stupid design!

**Scott Gondek** I like telling other places that Milwaukee is so boring, that we could only come up with a circle for an idea for a flag. Want to know how to improve this flag by 1,000%? Have a shadow of the Hoan going over it.

Despite what you may think, I'm fine changing the flag as long as something actually iconic, like the Hoan, The Domes, etc is actually on it. We're more than just a city by the lake. Take some pride in your city. A fucking circle doesn't do it justice.

**Erik Roadrash** Smith Scott Gondek nailed it.

**Mike Fischer** Rocky Chronister if you're so disdainful of Milwaukeeans, maybe your opinion of how to represent them isn't the best one to reference.

**Rocky Chronister** Mike Fischer I'm not at all disdained with Milwaukeeans. I am one!

I'm quite happy to have transplanted here. It's very apparent that some in city government cannot see the city past downtown. I moved here in part for its small town charm.

The actual flag seems just fine to me. I like it. Is it a national icon like Chicago's flag? No. Chicago has branded everything with their flag. I actually thought for some time that the Calatrava has the icon of the city. It's even on official city documents. The flag is no where to be found beyond a few smaller city buildings.

In the context of having lived in bigger cities, the Mayor seems quite odd. He fits right into the local political landscape. I love the city. The local politicians and political activists are comically bad at their roles.

**Mackenzie Curry** David Kiefer circles are Asian symbols now?

**Ian Powell** Deja Blue u don't even live in mke so u don't get a vote

**David Denomie** I understand our current flag looks "busy." But this looks too much like clip art to me. Could be a thousand different cities.

**Christopher Rucinski** Technically speaking, the US Flag can be said to look like clip-art, too. It's just a box with stars and stripes. Almost the definition of clip-art. Look at most Country Flags and they look like clip-art or they have simple designs.

**Steve Schrab** I think what your trying to say is that it looks like a flag versus a Denny's placemat.

**Chris Scott** The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The light blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers (Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic) and three founding towns (Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, Walker's Point). Gold represents our brewing history and white symbolizes unity.

**Greg Cardarelle** Chris Scott thank you Chris...if people would actually take the time to understand and learn things and not just react in 2 seconds, we would all be be better off

**Chris Scott** Greg Cardarelle truer words my friend!

**Scott Mittelsteadt** The current flag isn't too busy, you know what it's showing. If you ask 1000 people what this flag is for they will have 1000 different answers, not one will say milwaukee. Maybe it should be brown and flown at MMSD.

**Scott Mittelsteadt** Chris Scott interesting but who will ever get that unless they talk to you??

**June Wessa** Depends on how it's interpreted, I think. Maybe I see a sun, maybe that's the lake. . . I think perhaps something with a bit more definition might be in order. And, just for the record, I think the mayor of Milwaukee probably has the ability to address serious questions (such as poverty and racism, etc.) while also addressing something not nearly as vital as whether or not we need a new flag.

**David Kiefer** No new flags.

**K Michael Eastburn** He has the ability but not the integrity

**June Wessa** K Michael Eastburn I would disagree. However, I think it is extremely difficult for ANY politician to retain his or her integrity in today's world.

**Chris Scott** I can't think of anything more important right now on his agenda than growing the unity in a town that has seen so much inner conflict. I LOVE that it is called The People's Flag, and I LOVE that so many are flying it with just such an intent of unity and love for our cities people.

**Jim Wuerl** I think something with a street car flanked by construction barrels would be more timely!

**Scott Mittelsteadt** Chris Scott would you donate the rights to the city ??

**Jerod Freitag** even though it's a sunrise, psychologically, it could be interpreted as a sunset, for those feeling despondent. I'm sure this comment will be mocked, but this could be a hopeless flag for many

**Nick Iannone** Yes, but focus on helping fix joblessness and homelessness on the North Side before you waste our time on insignificant flag politics

**Martin Moore** #truestory you can focus on more than one thing at a time.

#truestory you can focus on more than two things at a time.

#truestory you can focus on more than three things at a time.

**Heidi Parkes** I still love the 'M-Star' design by DeChazier Pykel. It's unique, reminds me of the Native American history of Milwaukee, our title as the Cream City, and is a hopeful image. It was a really close vote with this and the sunrise flag, and I think they should both have a chance to be voted on in an upcoming public election.

I think changing the Milwaukee flag is an important issue, and that we need a new flag, as a rallying symbol for other positive changes in the city.

<https://instagram.com/p/BFzaOk7yUYe/>

**Eddie Sturkey** I was a big fan of this flag as well.

**Gregory James** This one was my favorite as well.

**Paul Szwalkiewicz** Sorry but I don't like it. Milwaukee is so much more than a city by a lake. While the current flag may be outdated at least it represents where we came from. I wish we had been able to see more of the over 1,000 entries for the new flag. 😊

**Audrey Lewis** lol @ comments like "this shouldn't be the flag because not everyone likes it/feels represented by it". you try to please every citizen with a flag design and you get the mural episode of parks and rec. design by committee doesn't work.

**Cheryl Butterfield** No, looks like it should be the logo for a sleepy sports team or a package delivery service. It would be easy to paint on the broadside of a truck.

**Ian Powell** U wrong

**Samantha Carne** The new flag is elegant while still conveying MKE's identity. The current flag is much too busy.

**Kevin Seymour** Really? MKE's identity? So we are a generic diet soda?

**David Kiefer** Poor baby!!

**Michael T Black** Design is not just about patchworking as many symbols onto the canvass. It's about how it's used (i.e. can you identify the flag from 50 yards away), whether it is instantly recognizable, how well it symbolizes the identity of what it represents in a in a meaningful way. Additionally, the flag is a symbol and should be used alongside text, not including text in the symbol. I have serious doubts about how much thought these folks defending the old flag have put into their arguments. Can your 6 year old draw the American flag? Yes, because it's designed well. Can they identify it from across a football field? Of course, because the design is striking and simple. The reason so few citizens and even fewer children recognize their own flag is exclusively because of poor design. In Chicago, for instance, the flag is like a city brand. They put the design on clothes, backpacks, storefronts, decals, bumper stickers, everything. It's a source of pride that they can take with them anywhere they go. People in Japan might even recognize the white and blue stars because tourists will bring their city with them. We don't have anything like that for our city and frankly, we deserve it.

**Carole Montgomery** Michael T Black nailed it with his comments. I love the simplicity and the symbolism of 3 rivers and 3 founding town areas and the sunrise over the lake. Very few in Milwaukee could describe the current flag or name the various items depicted on it.

**Kelly Platner** Elegant? Lmao

**Daniel N Schultz Jr** It looks like the Corona label. Try again.

**Jim Spice** This was my losing entry: <https://scontent-ort2-1.xx.fbcdn.net/.../36129575...>

**Jim Spice** A navigable harbor exporting amber waves of beer from 4 families flowing through 3 rivers.

**Jim Spice** In retro, I should have gone 100 on C and Y. <https://scontent-ort2-1.xx.fbcdn.net/.../36137079...>

**Robin Lee Reed** Good attempt. The star is too much like the North Star but I like the reference to Scandinavia and the Swedish colors. I don't think it's the Milwaukee of today though.

**Carol L. Jensen** So much better

**Christophor Rick** thank you. It's a nice art project but says very little about the city itself.

**Erik Weber** Milwaukee needs to have a brand, a visual identity, and marketing. A flag is one small peice of that. Can I help?

**A. Ryan Thompson** Yes, I have a golf invitational for you to attend. Also... I'm in favor of the flag.

**John Guy** I love the Flag. I've seen it all over the city from people's porches to our local breweries and other small businesses, and even the Milwaukee Brewers.

**Bonnie Norwood** It has grown on me over time. But when it first came out I thought it was a bit too generic. I could take it or leave it.

**Steve Kodis** Let's take it!

**Maureen Hurley** I think this is too plain to be official city flag, but the real one is waaaaay too busy- needs to have some of the stuff erased & give it a cleaner look

**Daul Pettmann** The best flags are simple. That's literally the reason a contest was held in the first place.

**Steve Kodis** Mayor Tom Barrett, the icing on the cake for me is that this symbol has already been used to describe and identify our city.

Take a look at the Milwaukee city seal found here (and within City Hall):

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/.../Seal\\_of\\_Milwaukee%2C...](https://upload.wikimedia.org/.../Seal_of_Milwaukee%2C...)

Smack dab in the middle is the sun rising over Lake Michigan.

What an effective way to connect civic pride with city government.

**Cathey Rash** How can I get one of the old flags before they are destroyed??

**Tony Snell** Yes! A new day, a new Milwaukee built on a memorable past.

**Jim Wuerl** Copying South Milwaukee's lead are we? Proud Past Promising Future?

No..... Construction barrels on each side of a street car is way more appropriate.

**Sara Larson** Absolutely! Just bought one today for our porch. □

**Jeff Goose Vanderbilt** Please, please, please no. I love the current flag and am lucky that my wife was able to work on digitizing it while she worked at the City.

**Daul Pettmann** Are you blind?

**Jeff Goose Vanderbilt** Daul Pettmann Not that I'm aware of. Why do you ask?

**Laura Busch Vanderbilt** Daul Pettmann No need to be rude Paul Dettman. Everyone is just expressing their opinions here.

**Michael Clausing** I like it. I think it should be the official flag of Milwaukee.

**Gregory James** Yes! This change is long overdue. Get rid of that basket case old flag.

**Kevin Seymour** Make me think of a Pacific island nation. Or a "country" in a video game.

**Wayne Rokicki** No. To be brutally honest, it looks like it was made from the scraps that were left over from the Corona and Minolta logos. I'd prefer the "414" flag or a flag containing the stylized M that was used in the "Milwaukee, a great place on a great lake" campaign.

**Jim Wuerl** I totally agree with you Wayne. I like the original Milwaukee flag. So Mr Mayor, are we to change the flag every few years now?

There are way more important issues in Milwaukee that have priority: crime, potholes, and the wasteful boondoggle of the street car screwing up traffic royally downtown!

**Rocky Chronister** The proposed flag does coordinate with the Choo Choo Soul costume pretty well. <https://goo.gl/images/2wQpyx>

**Chris Scott** I honestly didnt know Milwaukee had a flag.

**Chris Scott** Get your flags at Outpost Natural Foods Co-op!!

**Jim Wuerl** Now political gamesmanship, or war, is being waged by Tommy Choo Choo and company already with the alleged shakedown of businesses. The election is in 2020 and Tommy boy feels threatened.

Everyone knows the local media is in Tommy's back pocket. So the mayor and company appear to be firing a preemptive strike on Ald Zielinski because he's running on the platform to send the full size Lionel street car packing!!

**Jim Wuerl** Chris Scott next to those multicolored skittle flags?

**Jim Wuerl** Chris Scott next to the skittle flags huh?

**Jim Wuerl** You know, pride flags?

**Steven J Miller** I agree on the stylized "M" from great place on a great lake. It plain works with simplicity.

**Heidi Brewer - Remondino** It is Okay...Doesn't really depict Milwaukee Very Well...

**Scott E. Roman** I Love it... I fly it in my Garden...

Make it officoal... these naysayers are just Afraid of Change...

**Kathie Stempski** Mervyn I LOVE A great place on a great lake. I use it a lot with friends from different places!

**James Silverstone** Thought it was ATT

**Terra Dill-Volk** Absolutely! We love what it symbolizes and it's a small but great change for our city!

**Frank Sturzl** Yes, graphically it's a beautiful flag.

**Ilya Shvartsman** There is nothing about this flag that says Milwaukee: could be Sheboygan or Racine or Bahamas.

**Daul Pettmann** So could the flag of Japan. What's your point?

**A. Ryan Thompson** Ilya Shvartsman What's the best thing about Switzerland?

**A. Ryan Thompson** I don't know, but their flag is a huge plus.

**Ilya Shvartsman** No worries, I'll explain: i don't know symbolism of Japanese flag, but I'm guessing it's something to do with it being "the land rising sun". I could be wrong of course but the point is that there should more to a flag than just aesthetics. This is a very pretty flag no doubt, but it doesn't say "Milwaukee" at all. Does that make my point clearer?

**A. Ryan Thompson** Ilya Shvartsman It does tho: <https://robertlenz.com/mkeflag/>

Ilya ShvartsmanIlya Yeah. I saw that. That's a great narrative, friend!

**Simon Mrachkovskiy** Ilya Shvartsman looks like sundown in ukranian

**Tammy Porchia** Forget the Flag, we have more pressing issues.

**Genaro An** YES YES YES absolutely yes. Young people in particular are very drawn to the

**Tanya Havlicek** I like how unifying this is. I didn't know we had a flag. While the current has many symbols of MKE, they are explicitly divided on the flag. This people's flag is forward looking, symbolic, attractive.

**Evan Jacob Braun** I'd say start another contest with chances for this flag and other community designs to win.

**Rebecca Silber** Maybe not another contest, but a new approach. If the City really does want a new flag.

**Valerie Jaan Pogue** There was a TED talk about what comprises a "good" flag! I think this would qualify!

**Zach Zembrowski** There is another option that harkens to our current flag but no one really talks about.

**Robert Lenz** YES. There have been multiple efforts to change the flag since its adoption. Finally, the public has taken ownership of a new flag on their own, even without the City's approval. This should be an easy choice at this point.

**Tim Kern** I love our old flag, and I'm proud to have played a part in the industrial past it represents, but it's time to look towards the future, the sunrise, and the promise of a new day.

**David Day** Right! We can have both.

**Christopher Rucinski** YES

This is a relatively simple law to enact.

Are there better things to do? Yes, there are \*always\* better things to do. But that doesn't mean you can't do the simple stuff, too.

**Sierra Perry** Yessss! Plus, the design is already there! It's not like we are hiring a bunch of people to figure out and complete a new design

**Jerod Freitag** I love our current flag. As long as this Corona rip-off is never the Milwaukee flag, I am fine with it being a "people's flag". It would be sad and bland as Milwaukee's official flag.

**Rocky Chronister** Any good composition will look good in a single color, gray scale, and full color. This is why art school starts with just pencil. The composition is poor.

Also, that color scheme is going to appear very odd to the 1 in 10,000 people with tritan color blindness. The thinking into this wasn't very professional or inclusive.

**Sarah Gorczany** Absolutely! This is actually not the design I originally voted for, but I've come to love it. Its vibrant sunrise represents the city's continued renewal efforts. It has the wonderful colors that resemble multiple facets of Milwaukee, including the Brewers and Marquette. And it signifies one of the things we are proudest of: the lakefront. It is much simpler and more elegant than our previous flag as well.

**Gary Witt** This is a perfect use for social media. What's next the city bird?

#zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz

**Keith Stachowiak** I vote for the Inland Seagull.

**Jerod Freitag** The informal contest was not handled well, as there wasn't broad enough of an announcement. plus, the creator of the flag has been downright rude to any critics, AND, did not allow for people's own words to be used in his petition. It's a steamroller, and it's not representative of any kind of just, unified vision.

**Daul Pettmann** Just because you weren't paying any attention is no reason to go through it again. If you didn't submit your own idea or vote on those that were, that's on you.

**Jerod Freitag** yes, because that dinky little contest should determine the city flag. give me a break.

**Josh Lutzow** Yes the current flag is awful. A flag should be simple and elegant while meaningful. This design is all three of those things. Look at the simple elegance of chicago's flag. It is beautiful, meaningful, and simple. The current milwaukee flag is cluttered, oversaturated, and outdated. A flag should be able to stand the test of time. Something as literal as the current milwaukee flag will never do that

**Danielle Himpelmann Klein** Yes! Make it the official flag, please.

**Ski Sphinx** If we have to spend losta loot... then no. I'd rather see that money used for road repair, education, anything. Buying all those flags for a city that needs so many other important things makes about as much sense as putting a dress on a pig

**Crystal Hampton Hines** It's a good flag to represent a company logo. But I just can't see it as a state flag. Too simplistic. Without the explanation that goes with the flag, you can't even tell what the flag really represents, other than Lake Michigan... which is shared with lots of other counties. We need a flag that isn't as abstract and ambiguous. I'd say just update the original one to make it less busy. With today's computer technology, figuring that out wouldn't be hard to do.

**Hannah Daniels** In my opinion, flags are supposed to be simplistic. If you weren't from the US, you wouldn't know what the stars and stripes represent on the American flag.

**Crystal Hampton Hines** Truth, Hannah, people wouldn't. Eh, I guess I've never been a fan of country flags either. Some are crazy similar and I can't tell the difference between those. And we aren't the only ones with a star and stripes. Why not be unique? Why do the same old...See More

**Steve Kodis** That's true, which is why one has to be taught of the symbolism.

As we were in elementary school; 13 stripes for the 13 original colonies, red for valor and bravery, white for purity, etc....

Learning about the symbolism is what creates a meaningful connection between a flag and a viewer.

Once you know the symbolism, it's unlikely you'll forget. As with the new Milwaukee flag, it too has meaningful symbolism:

The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The light blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers (Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic) and



three founding towns (Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, Walker's Point). Gold represents our brewing history and white symbolizes unity.

✈️★ The more you know right!?

**Ryan J. Day** Design and local government are always going to be separate areas of expertise. And yet, here, we have a significant group of people, young and old, rallying around both.

So while it'd be great for every Milwaukeean to love the new flag for their t-shirts and toaster cozies, it just isn't possible, and maybe not even the point of this effort. In a time when people can't seem to agree on an idea without their version of zero-sum perfection, maybe the point should be to applaud those who'll put in the work for our city — especially when it's to adopt a unifying mark that helps others follow suit.

I like the new flag, but even if I didn't, I'd rather support those who try to gain momentum for good, not hold out for a blend of subjective perfection that doesn't exist.

Besides, you're never going to identify with a design until it's around for more than a minute. I'm sure the flag of '54 had just as many critics.

**Rebecca Silber** Would the city even get licensing for this design if they did adopt it? To me it looks like a few dudes have gotten together and formed a brand around this design—selling everything from leggings to beer labels. And surely they are profiting big time f...See More

**Rebecca Silber** Would the city even get licensing for this design if they did adopt it? To me it looks like a few dudes have gotten together and formed a brand around this design—selling everything from leggings to beer labels. And surely they are profiting big time f...See More

**Steve Kodis** Rebecca Silber <https://milwaukeeflag.com/download/>

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**Ryan J. Day** Rebecca Silber, oh sure, I'm just saying they each have their own set of principles that make them effective, at least in theory.

**Aaron Davis** Yes!! A simple and vibrant city flag is such an important piece of a city's culture. There's a reason why it's being seen everywhere, because people identify with it and with a powerful symbol that is being organically adopted, Milwaukee can join other cities that have seen their flag become a beautiful piece of calling their city home!

**Jason Haas** I respectfully submit that I do not support changing our official flag at this time. If a new flag is indeed, I think it should encompass more of the city's history, its people, and its future.

**Christopher Marx** The process for selecting it was a bit closed off and astroturfed. The flag has weak symbolism and lacks in originality, given it's resemblance to designs like the Adidas logo and the Obama campaign symbol. I would rather have a different design replace the current flag than the "people's flag."

**Rebecca Silber** While this may seem petty to some, this is an extremely important read in the context of this flag design. The Wisconsin Chapter of the AIGA openly rallied behind the Milwaukee flag design contest, ignoring the National AIGA's firm stance against crowd sourcing. Crowd sourcing cheapens the work that we graphic designers do and opens it to criticism such as that displayed on this post. Whether or not this flag concept is strong (and I do feel that it is), this flippant handling of an important symbol of our city is harmful to the industry and it doesn't represent input of the greater community.

<https://eyeondesign.aiga.org/against-crowdsourcing.../amp/> AIGA | the professional association for design Tom Barrett Nik Kovac

**Rebecca Silber** Another important read (and an explanation about why as a graphic designer I want to speak out): <https://www.aiga.org/whats-the-harm-in-crowdsourcing>

**Jim Ward** Power to the people!

**Steve Kodis** AIGA Wisconsin was part of this initiative Rebecca Silber...

**Rebecca Silber** Steve Kodis I'm well aware of that, and they should NOT have been. The AIGA does not promote spec work, and AIGA Wisconsin did. As I mentioned elsewhere, AIGA New York, AIGA Chicago, AIGA Minneapolis, etc. would have NEVER been part of such an initiative.

**Rebecca Silber** Can you imagine NAPFA or the CFA Institute sponsoring a contest to redo the City's budget? Or promoting any sort of finance contest? And what if your financial advisor participated in such a contest? It would be difficult to not think less of their professional standards at that point.

**Rebecca Silber** And that is why this was not a fair process. Because there are local graphic designers who do not feel comfortable entering design contests because of industry standards and personal/professional convictions against spec work. Those talented designers did not participate.

**Rebecca Silber** <https://portland.aiga.org/design-contests-are-unethical/>

**Rebecca Silber** <http://apexcreative.net/why-design-contests-are-bad-for.../>

**Rebecca Silber** AIGA also states (on the AIGA WI website) that "AIGA encourages thoughtful, responsible discourse. Please add comments judiciously, and refrain from maligning any individual, institution or body of work." 80% of the negative comments about this flag on this City sponsored post are maligning its design. This hurts the industry and such a setup should also not be advocated by the Wisconsin Chapter of the AIGA, or by Mayor Barrett.

Manage

**AIGA Wisconsin** Rebecca, we appreciate and respect your views on this matter, but please understand that per the above referenced link from AIGA Portland: "Students and professionals may draw different lines on what constitute unacceptable practices."

We fully support the People's Flag initiative, which was not a "contest" and did not result in prize money or monetary compensation. It did not seek nor take advantage of the designers that were engaged in this process. Rather, this was an educational initiative aimed at furthering the AIGA mission of "bringing design to the world".

Our goal was to engage the community and educate them about the power of design, and to further empower local designers to take control over the branding (or lack thereof) of the great city of Milwaukee.

If you have any further concerns or would like to discuss any of the above topics in greater detail, please inbox us so that we may connect you with our chapter president, Drew Lettner directly.

**Rebecca Silber** AIGA Wisconsin thank you for your thoughtful reply! I won't hesitate to contact the chapter president should I feel the need to discuss anything in greater detail.

**Rebecca Silber** And, for the record, it was called a contest and also a competition:

<http://archive.jsonline.com/.../five-finalists-unveiled...>

**Mike K Tatrai** Rebecca Silber get a life...

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Thank you Rebecca Silber

**Jenni LH** No. While I appreciate it (& the 414 flag) and enjoy seeing it around town (& know many of the well-intentioned folks involved in the process around creating and selecting it); I would like there to be a more inclusive process for selecting a new city flag.

**Jack Dallimore** Overall, I have seen overwhelming support for this flag. It is a symbol to rally behind as Milwaukee moves into a new era. Our city is attracting more and more young people and young energy, and this in turn drives growth. Whatever your opinion on the design of the flag, it has proven to be a symbol that the city has embraced (the Milwaukee Brewers hats with the logo, Milwaukee Brewing Company's MKE IPA, etc).

I carry this flag with me when I travel and people ask about it. I love that I can proudly talk about the city it represents and how much it means to me. We are a city with a lot of potential and I think this flag helps symbolize that. Not because of the abstract shapes in its design (although I am a big fan), but because people are wholeheartedly embracing it as a new image to represent Milwaukee. Not to mention that a sunrise is the ultimate symbol of potential, because with each new day dawns the potential to do something great.

**Adam Knachel** They only talk to you because they want to know who would be dumb enough to use a Corona box for a flag

**Joe Baker** 100% yes! It's an updated, streamlined design that symbolizes the history and the future of Milwaukee.

**Scott Mittelsteadt** The history?? How??

**Joe Baker** Scott Mittelsteadt The gold/yellow is a a stated symbol of Milwaukee's brewing history.

**Scott Mittelsteadt** Joe Baker ohhhhhh, I should have known

**Lacey Muszynski** No. That flag can be the symbol of anyplace that happens to be on a body of water. There is nothing distinctive or distinguishing about it.

**Katherine Forsyth Katter** Did you read what the colors and shapes symbolize? That's Milwaukee!

**Lacey Muszynski** Yes, I've been following this whole saga from the beginning. They can barely be considered symbols. I mean, "3" is such a stupid symbol that it represents two different things on this one flag. Could it be any more generic? The sun rising means a new day! White means unity! This is all generic junk we put on flags we designed in a grade school project. It can all appear on any flag anywhere, regardless of whatever meaning the designer attempted to attach to it.

I appreciate that MKEans are proud and rallying around a new flag, but I think that would have happened no matter what flag had won the contest, or been put forth as a new alternative.

**Renee Marek** This is so simplistic compared to the beautiful, meaningful flags we have had. It's so open to interpretation that it says nothing.

**Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain Butz** Absolutely yes! The movement behind the "unofficial" flag has a great sense of community and pride. The meaning behind the flag as mentioned on the website captures Milwaukee's essence very well.

**Katie Furbush** Yes! A flag should be something easily identifiable and something a city can rally under. I love that Milwaukee has already started to embrace it.

**Matthew Gnas** I'm torn. My personal opinion is that this design a, isn't unique enough (could be a flag for any city near water and the sun, or an ad for Corona, or a beach towel graphic, or...) b, doesn't really represent anything unique about MKE's character (we're a whole more than our geography and founders) and c, has weak symbolism ("the sunrise represents a new day!" ...so profound).

On the other hand, while there are other like me who dislike the design, there are even more people who've already embraced it.

So maybe, for a city who thinks the "Bronze Fonz" is the pinnacle of public art, this isn't the flag we need, but the flag we deserve.

**Timm Heck** It is a very good flag. I am a Tosan, but I would say it is a good flag for Milwaukee that is symbolic of a path forward and the bounty of the lake and land here.

**Bill Zalenski** While an interesting exercise, I didn't agree with the process for an official flag. Their process had a distinct objective that may not be the needed objective for the city as a whole. The project had actually moved into a back-channeled branding project for the city. I have no problem with people flying an unofficial flag to represent the spirit of our city, but the process used is not appropriate.

**Rebecca Silber** This is well stated.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** What race, age, and income of Milwaukee resident gets to see the sun rise on the Lake? Our Lake is dominated by a certain type of development, and from

Bayside/Fox Point, to Oak Creek - who in Milwaukee County, and what status are these citizens that identify with mornings spent watching this scene depicted here? Are we maximizing the messaging that our ENTIRE city: filled with universities, breweries, parks, and the true economic engine of the state - is modeled in this flag? My vote is NO, please consider a City-wide, very slow process to investigate alternatives. Professionals from around the globe could spend years making a much better symbol of unity, and a more holistic rallying flag.

**Rebecca Silber** Thank you for this very thoughtful comment. I have felt in reading through these comments the last few days that no one can relate to how I feel, but I feel like you do. If the city wants a new flag (which should have been the FIRST question asked before this all went down), then professionals should be brought in. And it should be a slow process.

**Gregory James** I suspect you weren't paying attention. The People's Flag was years in the making. It wasn't imposed on anyone from above. And I do have to ask those of you who oppose the change... Do you fly the old city flag? If not, why not?

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Daul Pettmann thank you for the swearing and mocking of the homeless - perhaps the symbol of our City should be taken more seriously than Facebook cussing and the demeaning of those less economically privileged... the submission, comment, and vote was not done as a public effort to replace the flag, it was a tiny non-profit / charity that wished to educate the public on the power of design

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Gregory James I was paying attention to the small non-profit that made this effort, which wasn't in earnest to replace the flag

not loving the old flag does not mean I then have to embrace this fetching but not to my taste "what if" flag.....See More

**Rebecca Silber** Brennan Dineen Balestrieri I could not agree more with you.

A related story—I spent a month putting together a proposal for a City of Milwaukee issued RFP for marketing and branding work in April that was supposed to be selected in May. They still haven't announced that they chose anyone. It took me at least 40 hours to navigate and fill out the paperwork for that. And it is now July.

I agree with you that if the City would like graphic design services, then they need to use the proper avenues. It's a disservice to the design industry if a designer does design work for the City that they didn't ask for, and then just presents it to them. If the City has a design need they either need to use their graphic designer (they have one, last I heard), or use the RFP process—and actually follow through with the RFP. Unfortunately I am a bit put off by the fact that I spent so much time on effort on something to meet their deadline, yet I haven't heard anything from them. However, I am still very interested in doing design work for them, and would like to help them figure out their needs and help them follow through.

If the City is having difficulties figuring out how to navigate the hiring a freelance designer, then maybe AIGA Wisconsin should meet with City officials about putting

together a directory of interested graphic designers whose portfolios they can review and who they can call on should the need arise. I know for a fact that the City wants to pull from minority and women owned businesses in the City of Milwaukee. This could be a good opportunity for them to do that. But the City needs to drive that train.

Gregory James Gregory Brennan Dineen Balestrieri You suggested that this flag was some sort of unrepresentative effort to jam the flag down the throats of the people of Milwaukee. That's just ignoring how it actually came to be. True... City government didn't post an RFP but this was a VERY public effort and designs were invited from anyone who wanted to offer one. And it has been adopted by countless CITIZENS who fly it as a way to reflect pride in their community. It is a design that was by intent placed in the PUBLIC domain, not to be "owned" by anyone.

Your objection seems to be that it will appear on a beer can or a beach towel. Yep. It will. That's a good thing. And there is no way to prevent such a thing from happening. That's the nature of PUBLIC art. Anyone can use it. Even a beer company.

It wasn't my first choice, but I've grown to like it and I fly it at my home, like countless others. Anyone who wishes to can design their version and champion it to the PUBLIC.

I think you are letting your IMAGINED version of a perfect process be the enemy of an ACTUAL open and public process by which this flag has come to be what it is.... the defacto city flag. It has already been chosen by citizens who cared enough to push for a replacement and those, like me, who appreciate their effort. If the City adopts it we'll just be seeing the ratification by our public officials of a fact that has already taken place. It already is the people's flag. There isn't any serious alternative that is going to happen. It is just a question of whether government buildings fly the same flag so many citizens have chosen or continues to fly one of the most embarrassing city flags in existence.

**Gregory James** I wanted to also point out that while your concern for the fact that there are people who have problems with lack of leisure time is well intentioned but bogus. There are far too many such people. But having the City put out an RFP is not going to help the homeless. You need actual programs targeted at the problem for that. And I think you expose a bit of disingenuousness by simultaneously advocating for this to be turned over to "professionals from around the globe". Few of them are homeless.

You said: "the submission, comment, and vote was not done as a public effort to replace the flag". This is flatly wrong. The process involved a dozen workshops around the city. It involved far more members of the public than would have happened if the City put out an RFP. Hundreds of designs were submitted by members of the public. The selection process was highly democratic, and thousands of Milwaukee citizens ranked the finalists in order to select the winner.

I am mystified why you would be attacking such an open and public process.

You can look at the entries yourself, online, any time you want to and learn about the actual selection process.

<https://milwaukeeflag.com/history/#overview>

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** ? At least this comment had less CAPS. For that, I am thankful. Perhaps, as two white dudes with money and power who live next to the lake, our Facebook back and forth is the exact problem with the process.

That flag could fly in Sheboygan, Sturgeon Bay, or any water-side community. If the fact MKE has industry and Hmong, Latinx, black families etc doesn't mean anything to your vote for a flag - great. My old white male privileged, next to the lake ass disagrees strongly. The flag should underline our diverse strength, and not be quick fix pitched as a public education push by a tiny, great but unknown non-profit established to help increase diversity in the creative industries.

**Gregory James Gregory** Brennan Dineen Balestrieri You seem more concerned with virtue signaling than with the city flag, to be honest. You and I agree, for the most part, about social issues facing the community. But trying to make the flag selection a matter of social justice and race politics is a little silly.

There is irony when folk on the left, concerned about community, complain about open processes designed to build community.

**Daul Pettmann** It's a flag, not a PSA for every social justice issue of the day.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** My beef is the flag content as well, not just the non-process. There is genuinely nothing connecting it with MKE versus any water-side community in this world.

The small non-profit never stated this was an official attempt to replace the flag in their unfunded, fun and remarkable but narrow unpaid contest. The votes weren't for an official flag replacement.

That vote is what I deem important, the official vote for the official process.

And I would think virtue signaling would be a key component in vexillology, signification and symbolism etc...

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Daul Pettmann to the majority of Milwaukee citizens that live in the constraints of injustice - they aren't "social justice issues of the day"

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** I am not attacking the public process Gregory James because there hasn't been one yet. If your perception of a non-govt entity doing a very, very small and limited non-profit educational project is "public" then we're at an impasse of defining terms.

**Daul Pettmann** The flag has nothing to do with any of it. This is a big stupid red herring. You're trying to blame a flag for not doing enough to fix the ills of society or not explicitly acknowledging every single group that exists. Since when has that ever been the point of having a flag?

**Gregory James Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Perhaps we are. Because "public" to me means "of or concerning the people as a whole", not "government RFP".

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** I suggest we have a public process, nothing more and nothing less. A large PR buy, like the street car marketing expenditure. A long, deliberate process targeting all Milwaukee to inform, educate, and engage every part of the city. Pay experts in the field to come to our City. Use it as a national and international pitch for the City. Why are we arguing against getting the best and brightest to get input from all neighborhoods in the city.

How much was spent on advertising for this "what if" design educational project? What modes of media? What metrics?

I don't think the 414 or this flag is great enough to rep my great city.

I apologize if that offends, it isn't meant to, but it is silly to argue the fun, smart, low-key campaign to imagine "what if" was an actual process to replace the flag.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri****Brennan Daul Pettmann** This "what if" flag could rep any town next to any water - with zero reference to the universities, industry, and diversity that make MKE strong and noteworthy.

**Gregory James Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** We had a public process. We still do. You can, legitimately, say that you don't like the design. Fine, that's a subjective judgement I won't argue with. But you can't claim that the process wasn't public. And you shouldn't, IMO, exploit the flag for virtue signaling. It cheapens attempts solve real social problems.

**Daul Pettmann****Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** so what? You may as we be complaining about, I don't know, a majority of the flags in existence.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** "we had" - who? The unknown charity without a marketing budget that pitched this as a project for youth and amateurs to experience the design process, and not to officially replace the flag?

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Public means public funding with official govt intentionality. Was choosing Miller Park as the name a public process? Any Corp could bid...

It was a tiny project that got great press. Congrats to them, I've been to 100 of their meetings and trumpet their efforts.

This is a giant, proud city - and deserves a govt, deep, focused effort by professionals.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** Stop attacking me for stating facts. Caps and repeating yourself doesn't make it true, yes the public was engaged in an amateur, fun process to educate non-professionals on what the design industry does - as a stated goal.

**Brennan Dineen Balestrieri** And saying I'm exploitive ignores all the people of color who I am trying to witness and amplify on this thread. And it is wildly insulting, in a



group of insults you're throwing my way for addressing the Mayor. Sorry I also use Facebook, and also have opinions.

**Gregory James** Disagreements are not insults. At least not here, Brennan.

**Lee Becker** No. It's FAR too generic and says nothing unique about the city. How many other cities and towns are also on the shores of Lake Michigan. Show me a stylized version of the skyline, or anything that says Milwaukee. Weak, weak, weak.

**Charles Davis** YES..YES...YES It's about time for Milwaukee to update its image. I'm originally from Chicago and if we are going to revitalize Milwaukee a face lift is essential. As founder of Serio Design FX a local-global brand let me tell a client I am in Milwaukee. Their response-Where is that?

**Jerod Freitag** There are children in Milwaukee who are unaware that Milwaukee sits beside a giant lake. This flag is a whitewashing of how awful Milwaukee is to its poor. The sun rises on water for those the city hasn't wronged completely.

**Audrey Lewis** this is the only good argument I have seen against the new design. but the idea that it just looks too generic or like clip art is silly because the most well-recognized flags are made of simple shapes (i.e. the American flag)

**Anita Burgermeister** In case people don't know what the design symbolism stands for - here it is: The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The light blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers (Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic) and three founding towns (Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, Walker's Point). Gold represents our brewing history and white symbolizes unity.

**Megan Walker Croal** I see this all the time and I had to look up what the old one even looks like, I honestly don't think I've ever seen it before.

**Anita Burgermeister** I submitted my own design. But I really like the symbolism this flag represents, the colors and the simple bold graphic. BTW - the old flag needs to go!

**Robin Lee Reed** It needs a little refinement on the water. It looks too much like the Obama logo. Columbus OH just adopted a new flag and they held a competition. A Design Professor from OSU was the winner. It's stunning and very graphic. (I'm a graphic designer ☐) Building identities that are simple requires a lot of work! I think we need a sailboat in there perhaps with a fish?

<https://www.columbusunderground.com/columbus-flag-ms1>

Here's the out dated Milwaukee Flag. <http://wuwm.com/.../local-graphic-designer-milwaukee...>

**Rebecca Silber** Thank you for posting this article. I'm also a graphic designer, and while I do like the flag design, we graphic designers need to speak out against the crowd sourcing process. If the city wants a new flag, they should be looking at portfolios of designers willing to work WITH them (pro bono, even). It sounds like Nini, the OSU Professor, is handling this no differently than Konis which is unfortunate for the industry and the public's perception of the industry.

**Steven MacArthur** I have to agree with those that find this too generic; it really could be anywhere with a large body of water to their east. I like the suggestion of the old stylized "M"/wave from the Great Place on a Great Lake days, or I would suggest an artistic print of a Harp Lamp! After all, every city has a sunrise, but how many cities in the world have their own unique design of streetlight?

**Linda Gonzales** Without a concomitant explanation, no one even knows what these so-called "symbols" mean...it could be any lake anywhere in the world...the sun comes up over each and every one of them...

This "flag" says nothing that one would immediately grasp as "Milwaukee"...you need a written or spoken description of its "meaning" to know what it is.

This would be a sad representation of the City of Milwaukee.

**Anastasia Kraft** The new flag is beautiful and not comparable to the old one which was rated as one of the worst flags on earth. I fully support the new flag of Milwaukee!

**Arie James** Let's focus our attention on fixing actual problems. But I shouldn't be surprised this is what we are focused on... Building a street car that caters to those with the resources, as opposed to those who actually need it.

**Hope Baleywah** Hope I agree with another person, the contest should involve public schools and other organizations, so everyone has a chance to participate.

**Rebecca Silber** No. It's a good looking design and the concept is strong, but the way the "contest" was handled was flawed. Crowd sourcing is absolutely the wrong way to achieve a design of any sort. The city should not be advocating this. If the city wants a new flag designed, hire (or easily find an accredited designer who will work pro bono under fair terms and conditions) a designer and work together with that person to achieve a common goal. The National AIGA standards should have been followed (AIGA takes a stance against crowd sourcing), and they were not followed. AIGA | the professional association for design Tom Barrett

**Joe Bree** Yes. Its simplicity is part of its beauty and the colors are recognizable as Milwaukee. It has already been unofficially adopted with wide acceptance via a contest and selection process.

**Jill Lazzaro Gueller** Yes, yes, yes! As a lifelong Milwaukeean, I think this flag "gets" us! It reminds me of the old/good Brewers logo: it's simple, unpretentious, has meaning behind it - and makes me think of Milwaukee summers, which are the best summers!

I don't ever remember seeing Milwaukee flags while out and about, but these guys are everywhere! This design is standout, recognizable, and has been such a great source of civic pride and unity!

"The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The light blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers (Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic) and three founding towns (Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, Walker's Point). Gold represents our brewing history and white symbolizes unity."

**Brett Timmerman** Yes, change is a part of life, we should all be collectively moving forward. If you if you're not growing and changing, you're dying. MKE is growing! The USA flag has changed as the USA has changed. Onward!

**Michael Zummo** Make the old flag a mural somewhere like the summer fest grounds and adopt this as a real city flag design!

**Becky Tesch** Yes. the old flag is terrible. it's hard to incorporate a bunch of things into a flag. Flag's need to be simple large bold shapes. I know it's hard for people to connect with sometimes, but look all around the world at flags and you will see they're all pretty basic. This one does have symbolism worked in if you look at the submission.

**Mike McCauley** For comparison purposes, here is the current, official flag of Milwaukee. I like the newer, proposed flag better.

**Garrett Wiens-Kind** Yes, the process was sound, the flag is good.

"Professional designers and facilitators engaged hundreds of students in workshops across the city. Months of social media communications invited amateurs and professionals alike to enter their flag designs. The result was over 1,000 stunning entries!

Five expert judges gathered on April 23, 2016 and narrowed down the entries to 45 semifinalists and five finalists. Following the announcement of the five finalists at City Hall on May 14, 2016, Milwaukeeans rated each on a 0–10 scale to determine the highest rated entry."

**Rebecca Silber** The process was not sound, or fair. There are local graphic designers who do not feel comfortable entering design contests because of industry standards and personal/professional convictions against spec work. Those talented designers did not participate...See More

**Garrett Wiens-Kind** I am a graphic designer too. I went to MIAD. I respect people who don't work for free. I respect people who work for free. Professional designers worked on this, the process produced a great set of potential flags. The design ultimately chosen by that process is a flag I like a lot. I'm sorry the process upset you and the flag that was picked is one that you cannot live with.

**Rebecca Silber** Why did you feel the need to tell me where you went to school? I did not go to MIAD, which maybe gives me a fresh perspective? I don't really know. I do know that the National AIGA is against spec work, I will follow my words with an excerpt from an interview with a past AIGA president (they hold the same stance today). I hope that I am not preaching, but I do feel that the design community in Milwaukee does not share the values upheld by the National AIGA, so I am trying, and trying again to educate fellow designers and the public and the City of Milwaukee. I never said anything bad about the flag design, I would never criticize anyone's design in a public forum--public criticism of a design is another reason why this contest is not good for the industry. It's the contest and the AIGA Wisconsin involvement that does not sit well with me, not the design of the flag: <We are against spec work. The reason for the line, "while recognizing that the decision is up to individual designers", was included was to

try and acknowledge how cultural and technological dynamics have changed. We are finding that we are more effective communicating with younger designers when we do not preach. Instead, we are seeking to educate the next generation of designers by clearly outlining the inappropriateness of a spec work. Sadly, the largest group of designers participating in spec work is their peers! Telling them to “just say no”, isn’t going to work. We need to outline WHY and HOW it is detrimental to their practice.>  
Manage

**Rebecca Silber** And spec work is very different from pro bono work.

**Kimberly Dinan** YES! Though it might not be the flag that everyone wants, but it is certainly better than the flag we have now, and it is already made and adopted by many as the unofficial flag. Making it official would create a better symbol for Milwaukee to rally behind, without having to go through the difficulty of creating a new flag. It already exists and has mindshare, all it needs is to be official!

**Elaine F Lovett** Too busy! Milwaukee is too busy?? Boring new flag  
Looking at that new flag , does is yell....Milwaukee?!  
No,no it doesn't!

**Tracy Gage** I have seen these flags around and thought they were boat flags. There is nothing identifying it as Milwaukee. At the very least it should have an M on it.

**Tara Leight** Yes!!! It is truly the people's flag and the symbol that two of my favorite sports teams incorporated into their brand!

**James Muchow** No, it's boring. Milwaukee should be proud of its heritage and its campy flag. We don't need to imitate Chicago and Reno to “create an new image” for Milwaukee. We should stay quirky and true to our roots, I can't identify with anything about the proposed new flag.

**Kelly lolana** I hate to say it but when I look at this design, I see a strong separation; not to mention a similarity to the division symbol. And, of the utmost unfortunate thing about MKE, being highly segregated, this design kinda represents that. I get we have a lake, but a high percentage of Milwaukeeans don't see sunrises/sunsets over the lake. Like most, agreed, the current flag is WAY outdated. Sending harmonious vibes to all for the creation of MKE's 21st century flag.

**Karen Magestro** No. This could represent any city on a lake. How does it show our diverse culture, our arts, our one-of-a kind art museum or the harbor bridge.

**Jeff Moreau** No, it doesn't represent much besides a city where the sun shines by water. It could represent anywhere. Too generic in my mine. I think we need to incorporate things more unique to Milwaukee.

**Alexandra Ramsey** Good flags should be able to be drawn by children from memory, and this one passes the test. Although it wasn't my favorite from the competition, I'm all in for the popular choice. What a huge improvement.

**Alex Voss** The current Milwaukee flag is often cited by vexillologists as the most horrible flag ever.

This new flag is much better but I still like the idea of a contest to make it official.

**Dayelynn Harmon** Ahhhhh art and it's many lovers or haters! I think the flag is simplistic & beautiful although, to identify it as Milwaukee, how about adding a subtle outline of our very distinctive and beautiful Calatrava art museum?

**Wesley Beusse** I think it's an excellent design since it's quickly recognizable. Official adoption should be just a formality - ideally folks willingly adopt it and display it as some already have.

**Kristi Nora** It's a step in the right direction. I think it proves our flag is out of date. I say have an official competition & have this as one of the entries.

**Paul Szwalkiewicz** They already had a contest. The top 5 picked by I'm not sure who, were voted for on an online poll of 6000 responders.

**Kristi Nora** Paul: Correct, it was just for fun... the city was not involved. If they were, it probably would've had more submissions & votes.

**Rebecca Silber** The city needs to be involved from the beginning. This backhanded design approach is in effect steamrolling what should be a client/designer process all along. Respect the graphic design industry and profession. Would a constituent decide to create a city budget on his own and then back into getting the city to approve it? Why are art professions treated any differently? A successful design is always the result of strong client/designer communication. Government work should not be an exception. If anything, it should lead by example.

Tom Barrett AIGA | the professional association for design Nik Kovac

**Kristi Nora** Rebecca Silber, Well stated. I read there's a meeting a city hall coming up to vote on THIS design or the standing one.

**Kristi Nora** Did you know Milwaukee is voting to change the city's flag? Let your alderman know if you would like to keep the traditional flag of Milwaukee! (or adopt the new one)

Meeting will be happening: June 28 @ 1:30pm

Milwaukee City Hall, Room 301-B

200 E. Wells St., Milwaukee, WI

**Kristi Nora** No source cited but this came from a friend at a design firm....

**Rebecca Silber** Kristi, I see a Steering and Rules Committee meeting that day/time. The agenda isn't posted yet? I'll try to figure out who to reach out to to verify.

**Rebecca Silber** The meeting was canceled yesterday. Ald. Zielinski (Bayview) was kicked off the committee for taking bribes in his campaign for mayor. I don't think that's why the meeting was canceled, but it adds a new twist to all of this.

**Kristi Nora** Rebecca, thanks for that update! #KindaABigDeal

**Bill Zalenski** I agree with the city needing to be involved in the process. The flag project has evolved into a city rebranding project and more work should be involved

**Brenda Kay** It looks like somebody sketched the symbol on their Nautica T-shirt and entered into the contest on the fly and you jokers actually picked this because you thought it was artsy



**Jax Berndt** Absolutely yes! This flag has opened up such an amazing dialogue in our city. It's personally been what has introduced me to many people in restaurants, at festivals, and even just walking through our city streets – just by the sheer bond we immediatel...See More

**Bill Timken** It's an interesting design but the symbolism of the elements as described is pretty obscure. For instance I'm not going to look at the gold background and say ahhh yes, our brewing history.

**Mary Struck** This flag does not seem to represent Milwaukee. It appears to promote a tropical area. We have so many iconic shapes that are truly representative of Milwaukee. This tropical sun/water shape does not exhibit our industrial strength, our diverse ethic population, our art community, or our professional sports facilities.

**Maureen Wenzel** I love the new flag. Its modern, It tells a story about our city with the three rivers that empty in Lake Michigan. The sun rising in the east, the founding towns, and the color that made Milwaukee Famous

**Benjamin M. Hirschman** This is a much better flag than the current one and represents important parts of Milwaukee as a city... the lake, brewing history, three rivers, and it's simple and attractive. Reno NV already copied it they liked it so much..

**Carolyn Ball** When I see the flag I feel pride in our city! I can't wait to fly it and show my love of Milwaukee with everyone who walks by. Make it official!

**Andrew Martins** I have seen this flag flying everywhere. I have only seen the current version maybe once or twice. I think the people have spoken, and we need to let this beauty fly!

**John D. Roach** No! It is too minimalist, almost cartoonish, logo like, without character and strength....where is meaning, symbolism and pride? A city flag should be meaningful.

**Audrey Lewis** yes! clever design how it uses very basic shapes like most national flags but makes a scene out of it, and still feels very milwaukee. the current flag is just a hot mess.

**Chris Krumrai** An updated Milwaukee county flag is in order to bring together the greater Milwaukee area. Also this flag looks like a morning show logo

**Patrick Slam dunk** Nope. Original flag is a beautiful disaster, and should be saved. We get it, we all saw the Ted Talk where he bashed our flag. It may be a disaster, but it's our disaster! If it is changed to anything I want a combination of the "K" statue from downtown and the big yellow slide from state fair. We should add to our current flag! Lean in to it a little, own it!

**James Ibach** You live in Texas.

**Tina Staszewski** My girls and I were just talking about this today! We love this flag and yes it needs to officially be our city's flag!

**Scott Mittelsteadt** I like the one Milwaukee has now, displays its heritage even though that's not PC anymore. This one looks like a failed summer fest logo. How does it say "Milwaukee"?

**Iran Mejia** Yes! It's iconic, symbolic, and you said it yourself, we've been seeing it more and more so there's some pride building up behind it. The old one is too busy and just that, old.

**Grace Moone Marlow** Absolutely! Our current flag is held up as the primary example of bad flag design, and this flag is iconic, effective, and balances excellent design with symbolism and elegance.

**Liam Butler-Green** Your honor, I do believe a 1996 Green Bay Packers Starter Jacket would make a fine flag for our humble city.

**Joe Rosa** I agreed with that comment it's ugly and boring like ever thing Milwaukee is butting up. Like there no taste in Milwaukee art. I do think we can do better.

**Elise Marie Campagna** I see so many posts here about the shore of Lake Michigan... and how vague (some) think the design is. Has anyone noticed the three rivers on the flag, or...?

**Bonnie Halvorsen** I thought it already was the official flag. When I see this I think "my hometown." I never felt that way about the other flag

**Kathleen Ann** Why don't you ask the public about a real issue instead of something superficial? Wait. YOU'D have to have substance.

**Kathleen Ann** Ross Bukouricz How's the crime in your neighborhood? Roads? Schools? Taxes? Going to hold or gain value long term? Yeah. Makes ME go ☐, but it's you're choice.

**Kathleen Ann** How's your car insurance? Planning to take trolley rides much? Better never need a firefighter... there's fewer firehouses and emergency responders.

**Logan McDermott** I admire the historical content within the Milwaukee Flag. The people's flag is as plain as white rice.

**F Marvin Hannah** Hello Mayor Barrett...I hope all is well? It's a great START. An advocate of "less is best"...this design looks incomplete.

**Ray Jivoff** I agree! It needs City Hall, Rockwell Clocktower, the Art Museum and the Hoan Bridge!

**F Marvin Hannah** Ray Jivoff SOMETHING!!

**Darl Paladin** This sunrise thing is kind of bland. How about a rendering of the Calatrava - the way the Sydney Opera House says "Sydney", the Calatrava says "Milwaukee".

**Marsha Vila** I like it very much. I do think I would add a well placed signature- like word( Milwaukee) around the right hand edge of the sun...or a well placed black line sailboat or other symbol of Milwaukee on the design.

**Marion MC Carey** U are right the more I drive in the city the more I see that flag.when I see it I think of Milwaukee .I even seen one in Tosa must be some who likes Milwaukee.Someone who lives on n 55st.

**Danielle Kowalski** 55th is Milwaukee.

**Reuben Glaser** No, she said 55st

**Adam Knachel** Reuben Glaser

55th st could be Milwaukee

Without a cross st no way to tell... So maybe you should learn something before commenting again

**Michael William Knop** I love the people's flag. Make it happen! The current flag is the laughing stock of the vexilological community.

**Michael Kuharske** Lifelong resident...I've never flown the Milwaukee flag, this "new" flag flies in front both my house and business!

**Joe Hausch** Yes.

I think "the process" having the community involved, having professionals creating the criteria and judging the early entries is what makes it great. And the people's vote made it the Peeps choice.

Do I love it? No, I'm a designer, and I didn't create it. ;^)

Should everybody love it? It should be in place and we should be more proud of US (MKE) and it's time to embrace the city it represents.

Milwaukee is humble to a fault. At least this represents some forward thought and thinking.

Hoist the flag, and keep it up MKE!

**Harrison Vey** Absolutely. It's a flag I'd be proud to display in Milwaukee or abroad. The current one is an eyesore, and far too busy. I recall a TED talk in which Milwaukee's flag was pointed out to be one of the worst designs in the country, and that's something we can change with this flag

**Candy Hoyt** Like it but it needs something saying Milwaukee! But the current flag needs updating & it should b the people's choice!

**Joseph O'Halloran** Is it an improvement on the current flag? Absolutely. Is it good enough to consider replacing the current flag? Eh.

**Michael Kuharske** Not accepting the new flag seems akin to if people had objected to the calatrava for ruining our historic skyline.

**Michael Kuharske** Instead the Calatrava started this rebirth of civic pride that has spilled into this desire for stronger symbol of our pride.

**Mary Angela Dineen** Meh- my neighbor flies one, I don't think they're from here, not really a thing, plus we live in Shorewood□

**Tanya Sheriff** No, are you kidding, we need to work on real issues

**Ryan Breaker** Yes, because changing an official flag is something that substantially diverts attention from other things and definitely isn't something can be passed easily by the council in less than a day.

**John Grochowski** Yeah we certainly can't do more than one thing at a time...

**Jessica Eaton** Oh my god... multitasking. I just can't.

**Bo Sheriff** I agree my cousin.

**Ren Stoecklin** I have no idea what the mke actual flag looks like. But I know this flag. If you want to see what should go in to making a flag... watch the ted talk why city flags may be the



worst designed things you've never noticed and you'll see why this flag is a beautiful representation of the city of Milwaukee

**Allen Schoessow** No, it looks stupid and really doesn't do the great City of Milwaukee justice like the old flag does.

**Maureen Wenzel** Sorry about the miss spelling, on the previous message. It should read The color that made Milwaukee famous, Beer.

**Lisa Martensen** Yes! Please make it Milwaukee's official flag. It's past time to replace that hodgepodge of an old flag.

**Paul Pfiggy** I don't know it's growing on me. Put an outline of the Kona bridge across it and I think it would work.

**Sue Leister** I thought this was a contest years ago. I really like this flag!!! We're a great city on a Great Lake.

**Tim Richter** It is worthwhile considering a new flag. However, this design does little to represent our City. I do not support making it our official flag.

**Abe Rickson** Yes. It's a far better design than the cluttered existing city flag and it has already been adopted by many residents.

**Jerry Schaffer** No. Not a good flag. It could be any city absolutely nothing in it says Milwaukee.

**Andrew Thomas Nelson Sumwalt** A THOUSAND TIMES YES!!! Such a good flag that people are actually using!!! When was the last time you saw the old flag up in a restaurant or bar or anywhere. NEVER. THE NEW FLAG IS GREAT AND IS THE SYMBOL FOR OUR GREAT CITY!

**Joette Rockow** Do it! It's a beautiful symbol of Milwaukee.

**Brian Paasch** Please, make this happen already

**Erik Eisenmann** Absolutely, yes! Milwaukee is experiencing a renaissance right now, and deserves a symbol we can all rally around and be proud of. Please support this effort, @mayorbarrett!

**Ginger Mamba Jamba** YES! 100% support this.

**Chris Scott** me too, me too!

**Stian Fikseanet** This is a really beautiful flag and would have become one of the most beautiful City flags in the entire world if made official. Greetings from a Norwegian.

**Austin Jacob Kieler** Yes!

**Logan McDermott** People's flag isn't that bad but i think the current one has much more intricacy

**Daul Pettmann** Logan McDermott a thing flags aren't supposed to have! If the average child couldn't draw it from memory, it's too busy.

**Logan McDermott** I get what your saying but I don't see why kids have to be able to draw it? I think if you want to pull the youth into it, having a flag with a rich history to pick apart and study is more valuable to have

**Logan McDermott** Daul Pettmann I don't haven't anything against the people's flag I just really like how much historical content is in the milwaukee flag.

**Daul Pettmann** Flags should be simple, seals can get the intricacy

**Jacob Perse-Anderson** Yes

**David Ciepluch** Do not like it. Boring.

**Connie Schmidt** No! I think it looks stupid. I like our original flag.

**Daul Pettmann** No one likes the original flag. It's hideous.

**Scott Carlson** Most people outside of Bay View love the current flag.

**Shaun Schroeder** The new one looks better

**Brian Paasch** Should see the TED talk about flags, it is actually quite embarrassing

**Ricky James Gronwall** Scott More like most people outside of Milwaukee love the current flag.

**Connie Schmidt** Daul Pettmann that's only your opinion.

**Connie Schmidt** Scott Carlsson I do live in Bay View. 😊

**Daul Pettmann** Yes

**Shelly Long** Corona sold here.

**KJ Lawler** No.

**Hannah Daniels** Definitely yes!

**Reinhard Rittmeyer** Blech.

**Mark Sedarski** NO!!!! It's UGLY!

**David Mountainbrook** Love it

**Shauna Winkelman** Yes!!

**Marcos Figueroa** Absolutely!

**Shaina Desotelle** yes!

**Kristaleen Hernandez** Watch the TedTalk on flag design by Roman Mars on YouTube. They literally call out Milwaukee's flag as one of the worst designed flags in the US around the 11 min mark. Maybe we should consider an update?

**Scott Polebitski** Yes Tom it is, make it happen. Love this flag as a symbol for Milwaukee.

**Richard Sanders** YEP

**Jjaannsseenn Lisa** No!

**Erin McCarthy** Yes!

**David Day** Snap! Official recognition!

**Erik Kulke** Yes!

**Adam Borkhus** No

**Cully Barnaby** I don't think so, but if a change is needed, I prefer the 414 flag.

**Michael Aronow** I like the 414 flag, too, but that area code covers more than the city. So maybe not the best city flag.

**Cully Barnaby** Good point.

**Wayne Rokicki** The same argument could be made against the proposed flag. The sun and the lake cover an even wider geographic area than the 414 area code does.

**Cully Barnaby** Good counter point. I personally like the font used on the 414 flag because I believe it is Milwaukee specific. I may be wrong but I think I read that somewhere.

**Eloise Wilson** NO, this city flag doesn't reflect who the people of Milwaukee are, how about adding a landmark that is well known to all the people of Milwaukee.

**Skinner Vance** Yes, people will instantly know its MKE just like other large city flags.

**K Michael Eastburn** you've done enough damage to the city.

Leave the rest of it alone please .

Thank you

**Dan Steiner** I like it better than the old one, and just got one this morning.

**Catherine Strietmann** Roman Mars of 99% Invisible has an incredible TED talk on flag design, in which he mentions the ineffective design of the Milwaukee flag. Like the Chicago flag and many more, the People's Flag of Milwaukee is distinguishable and well designed. It has caught on throughout the city and is a great symbol for Milwaukee pride. Watch this to gain a better perspective on what flag design means for a city, and how much a flag like this can impact a city's culture and unity

[https://www.ted.com/.../roman\\_mars\\_why\\_city\\_flags\\_may\\_be...](https://www.ted.com/.../roman_mars_why_city_flags_may_be...)

**Jacqueline Anne** Excellent point, Catherine! Milwaukee needs a flag that it's people will be proud to fly. As with Chicago, a flag can also become an integral, and iconic, part of gaining unity throughout a city. Milwaukee's (along with many other cities) evident wealth disparity causes clear economic segregation between neighborhoods.

Something as "simple" as a flag is a perfect example of finding commonality despite differences in circumstance and background. I believe this, the People's Flag of Milwaukee, is a design worthy enough to help bridge that gap. It is a step in the direction of progress.

**Jacob Edward** Much better. More iconic, less busy/jumbled.

**Byron Raphael** Yes! It's so much better than the old flag.

**Mike Fischer** I hate to turn my back on history, but that old flag is a disaster! So many fiddly details. It's got 8 other flags on it! Plus a "red indian". Rather racist. I like the new one. It's simple and pleasing. Lends itself to use beyond the flagpole. Perhaps the old flag could be made the "city flag emeritus"?

**Sara Van Winkle** No. It looks too much like the logo for Comfort Inn

**Melissa Merline Gleason** Didn't think about that, still really like the design.

**Ryan Breaker** No real reason not to in my opinion, to be honest.

**Katie Parlow** Yes! Such a better design and truly is a symbol connecting all of Milwaukee!

**Amanda Rose** Here's the original post where the designer shares his meaning:

"The light blue bars in the sun's reflection represent the city's three rivers and founding towns, the gold symbolizes our brewing history and the white represents the city united."  
The white represents the city united? This, in one of the most segregated cities in the county.



That isn't my city. Not my flag.

<https://www.tmj4.com/.../peoples-flag-of-milwaukee...>

**Chris Scott** The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day. The light blue bars in its reflection represent the city's three rivers (Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic) and three founding towns (Juneau Town, Kilbourn Town, Walker's Point). Gold represents our brewing history and white symbolizes unity.

**Kyle Manderscheid** Why is the Reno flag being flown in Milwaukee? Do we have that many NV transplants?

**Paul Bestul** Is Donetsk, Ukraine a sister city of Milwaukee? I've been seeing its flag everywhere lately.

**Paul Bestul** [https://onmilwaukee.com/.../640px-Flag\\_of\\_Donetsk\\_Oblast.jpg](https://onmilwaukee.com/.../640px-Flag_of_Donetsk_Oblast.jpg)

**Paul Bestul** Or is it that Summerfest has a deal with Corona in Mexico?

<https://arubatrading.com/.../uploads/2016/04/FB-info-Ad.jpg>

**Paul Bestul** I'm just saying, it may be tough defending this simple logo from copyright claims.

**Erin Lenz** Please make the new flag official. This grassroots movement continues to change the narrative of Milwaukee for the better. Local businesses, makers, sports teams and ordinary citizens alike have adopted this symbol of pride and unity. It's gained national attention and positive press for our city. Let's move forward together to make a simple, symbolic change for our city. 🍷💚

**Dan Schley** I like it and I consider it our flag. I am proud to fly it.

**Rick Rodriguez** No. This flag has nothing to do with Milwaukee. We have a flag.

**Kyle J Kopenski** A really, really bad flag.

**Rick Rodriguez** Kyle J Kopenski but it's ours. Most people pushing for a new flag don't even know what the current flag is. Let's change our President first. Then we can worry about something as trivial as a city flag.

**Martin Matson** No, we can do better than this.

**Jim Matson** It's horrible

**Joshua Zelasko** Yes! It's such a strong design that creates a new symbol for the city.

**Wayne King** Looks like it was designed by a 2nd grader, but they don't have 2nd graders at MIAD. No!

**Wayne King** Banner for the Lakefront Festival of the Arts. Yes!!!

**Wayne King** Official Emblem of the Trolley?

**Christine Sinicki** I'm not a fan of the design but if I recall this is the flag the people chose so , yes

**Scott Carlsson** Actually, it was a small group that voted on it, not the entire city.

**Adam Dudenhoefer** I wanted a new one and then somehow this one won. Now I'm indifferent.

**Kevin Seymour** Well I see Tommy has successfully flashed a shiny object to distract the weak minded. Now he can get back to trying to neuter the Fire and Police Commission and burying the lead pipe fiasco.

**Ryan Yatso** I love the new flag. It needs to be official. It will bring the city together

**Julie Bock** No - unless we want to be know as the Corona City.

**Gregory Hilgendorf** Is the water wet, yes this should be the official flag

**Jeff Kelli Emanuelson** I vote for a trolley with graffiti on it struck in the snow

**Andrew James Shelp** NO. Are we "Corona City"? "Coronaville"? Is Jimmy Buffet our mayor? NO. Contract an artist to come up with a new/different flag just DO NOT use this corporate logo ripoff of a flag design. So tasteless...

**Rebecca Silber** Contracting with an artist is key, thank you!!! But, first the city should probably decide if it even wants a new flag in the first place. This has pretty much been pushed on us all.

**Christopher Robin** Can we design a new Mayor? Asking for a friend.

**Terri Kroll** It is minimal. My kindergartners students could do better.

**F Marvin Hannah** You agree with my comment too!? It's missing something...☹

**Terri Kroll** F Marvin Hannah yep

**Erika Gudmundsson** Absolutely not! It looks like a dollar store beach towel!

**Steve Wycklendt** I like it but not a big deal. People are gonna fly it with or without an official change

**Ricki Hammernik** Absolutely not. There is no reason to change our flag.

**Ricki Hammernik** I don't like the new flag, it looks like something for a corona beer advertisement

**Conal McNamara** YES! I've had it hanging in my bedroom for over a year!

**Bryan Atinsky** It is a bit weird for being a flag of Milwaukee. Instead of showing Milwaukee, it shows what you see when you are looking away from Milwaukee. How does this, in any way, reflect who we are as a city?

**Holly Hetzel Steffes** I thought it was official, and I do like it also.

**Joanne Williams** No. This flag says nothing. Keep the current one and use this as an alternate if necessary.

**Charlie Kowalski** No thanks. Personally I think it looks too similar to the AT&T logo.

**Tim Dodge** I love the new flag and fly it at my house whenever I can

**Kathleen Ann Kennedy Klassen** I prefer the old flag, it's dysfunctional and confusing just like our city.

**Matthew Wegner** Please do because the flag right now is hot garbage.

**Susan Jost** Yes, I support this. Milwaukee's image needs improvement and this would help.

**Damien Sommer** Yes. People like this flag and it helps to show pride in our city. No one flies the old flag.

**Scott Carlsson** Actually I see a lot of businesses and residences fly the current flag. I only see the Reno flag in Bay View.

**Travis Mayer** Absolutely. The current flag is out of touch.

**Ricky James Gronwall** Yes. Don't think it's a good question to ask on here since most of your followers are trolls who have nothing positive to say.

**Carly Mae Derezinski** Dissent  $\neq$  trolling. Not everyone has to be supportive and positive for their views to have worth.

**David Schmitz** Carly Mae Derezinski, yes but when the ONLY comments one ever makes are negative, that is trolling. I see it all over the place from left and right. It's fine to voice disagreement, but when that is all one does and never has anything positive to say, that is trolling or just being an ass.

**John Grochowski** Dissent is one thing. Off topic, ad hominem attacks are another, and are definitely trolling.

**Theodore Salgado** Ricky, I am a constituent, not a troll. Libs like to call anyone who disagrees a troll. SAD

**Nickolas Doxtater** I'd just like our elected officials to focus on fixing the city and not on stupid stuff like a new flag. "Our streets are in need of repair and we don't have enough buses? Let's build an 8 block trolley." No, when there is actually something genuine to be positive about, people will be.

**Ricky James Gronwall** Nickolas Doxtater streetcar built using federal funds that only could be used for it. Keep up.

**Ricky James Gronwall** Theodore anyone who calls you trolls out is a Lib? Is that like any actual facts are fake news?

**Jim Wick** Ricky James Gronwall

Federal funds=Taxpayer money

That money could be used for more productive things....See More

**Ricky James Gronwall** Jim Wick well that's what the federal government decided to give funds to a city to build and they would've done so for another city in another state if it didn't happen here. But Nickolas "won't use a real pic on his profile because he's a troll" Doxtater is referring to things that are fixed with state/city taxes. You so obviously missed it. Keeping up with you would involve slowing way, way, way down because you're so far behind.

**Gail Germanson** It's a very unappealing flag! Looks like the CORONA logo!

**Dan Lee** Would Milwaukee come instantly to people's minds around the country and world if they see this flag?

**Katharina Himsel** No

**Susan Harle** It would if a Harley-Davidson was added.

**Ryan Noble** Yes, don't let the negative self defeatists that abound in this city win.

**Sallie Wild** No. This flag looks like a shirt you buy at old navy.

**Nita Burcham** The I-beam sculpture all over again.

**Stephie Jay** Seriously? Focus on crime and pressing issues.

**Karter Wilkening** It is such a clean, simple design. I love it!

**Katherine Forsyth Katter** I'm all for the new flag design! (It reminds me a bit of the flag of Greenland ☺!)

**Nichali Xhelili Ciaccio** No. Please no. Just, no. I agree with another commentator that it's a nice project. But we have a flag and it's great as it is. Let's please move on.

**James Reeves** The two lines on the sun represent parallel trolley tracks leading the city forth into the new century.

**James Reeves** Course, I didn't say which century.

**Gary Tuma** Do it but take note that In 2078, they'll be like "oh, that flag is so like 2018".

**Steve Radtke** Yes. Make this happen. You have the opportunity to unite the city behind something good.

**Duane Crouse** Mr mayor after growing up in Mike thur h s then entering the marines getting.married and moving to.the suburbs for work and what we thought a better environment for the kids..long story short we visited Mike. This.week end the old.southside neighborhood Mitchell park the domes the down town.area the lake front and of course the 3rd ward.wr ate in.the third ward .walked around the lakefront ares and.never felt unsafe and honestly impressed at how clean the city was I just want to that you for your leadership in these campaigns keep up.the good work for your citizens.

**Steve Luckas** No. And I'm tired of feeling like its being forced down our collective throat.

**Gordon Nieskes** I think you alot more things in this city to worry about besides a flag.

**Marty Horning** No, it's boring and static.

**Shad Budda** Hmm...a light half and a dark half, and the dark half has bars...not too subliminal.

**Todd Elsbernd** Um, you just turned a Comfort Inn sign upside down...

**Heather Kirch** I love it. Please, get rid of the old flag.

**Casey Dunn** 100% YES! Time to recognize that people have rallied behind this symbol of civic pride!

**Jennifer Bottesi** I agree with John Gonzales. Pretty please... nope 🐾

**Doug Cheverie** It looks great and I admire it's symbolism.

**Kerry Rink** How about a flag that's construction cone orange that reads:

"Milee-wau-kay, land of unfilled potholes and f'd up alignments" Milwaukee doesn't need a flag, it needs HELP.

**Scott Schwartz** Well since th sun is going down on wisconsin under walker it might be appropriate

**Dmitry Krivochenitser** This flag is gorgeous - finally making us proud to fly Milwaukee colors and advertise our city!

**Selvyn Brown Jr.** Until they have a permanent CITY slogan, I think it's moot! It's time to get out of Chi-town's shadow!!

A GREAT PLACE on a GREAT LAKE!

After some time... A Greater place on a Greater Lake!

More time has passed.....

THE GREATEST PLACE on THE GREATEST LAKE!!

A slogan for a hundred years!

Put black profile of new city skyline including the Calatrava on the banner! It'll work! Stop doing stuff half-ass!

**Julie Lotus** Where's the chalk outline? 🐣

**Raymond Bigelow** It appears this New Flag issue is a hot topic - I for one would settle for a new Mayor!!!

**Dean Vesperman** I like the flag, but no.

**Andrew Nevoraski** Why not? The old flag is horrible... and rated as I think Wikipedia said 1 of the 4 worst in the country... or something like that. I think this flag is a vast improvement over what the previous flag had to offer. I'd still like to see something brewers stadium related symbolized in the flag though. Not really sure what design I would choose to do that... but lake Michigan is a lake we border... but that's more of a Michigan state thing (as it's named after them not us)... I'd like to see something more focused on the brewers stadium arena and unity and the 3 rivers... or something of that sort instead.

**Barbara Cooley** It's a nice flag for Lake Michigan. Says almost nothing about Milwaukee.

**Elaine F Lovett** Salli, it should have something that represents snow, ice and potholes too! in my opinion!

**Judy A Knudsen** I never believe in changing anything that's doing just fine as it was.

**Bill Lison** How does it convey Milwaukee's identity? It's a circle and some blocks of color. What am I missing?

**Michael Kuharske** It already does convey Milwaukee because people are flying in, wearing it, even tattooing it on themselves! How does two blue bars and 4 red stars represent Chicago?...just because it does!

**Michael Kuharske** Plus there is a bunch of symbolism that is literal: three rivers, three founding fathers/towns, Lake Michigan, water, beer, etc

**Bill Lison** Michael Kuharske your second reply is perfect! That is all I was asking. Thank you.

**Don Krause** It's a sunrise, if you're ever up at 5am you would know.

**Kate Kohlbeck** But I think it needs the name Milwaukee on it.

**Carl Witkowski** No.



**Cully Barnaby** Now I have to go put ours out!

**Rachel Elise** Cully Barnaby No, you don't.

**Carl Witkowski** Yes! Fly it high! The true flag!

**Dennis Moore** The Mayor got more than 1 person to agree with him so now you have a new flag. Luckily the road train will save us all.

**Darragh McNamara** Yes. For the people by the people. Let's make it official.

**Claude Scher** Brown bag anyone a new flag yes this one no

**Felicia Glendenning-Perkins** We love this beautiful contemporary flag!!!!

**Linda Zellmer** No. It doesn't say anything about the city.

**Janet Sandner** No. It is a half step away from being a Pepsi logo. NO Milwaukee personality.

**Nancy Finnegan D'Amato** What a blah flag to advertise our great city!

**Michelle Owczarski** No. The city has far more to worry about than this.

**Morgan Bourne** How about a circle with an uneven interior too represent lead in the pipes?

**Noah Benjamin Sumner** It's boring and if I have to look up what it represents, it's not doing its job.

**Ellen Osburn Johnson** I know there is nothing new under the sun, but Sara Van Winkle, you are right.

**Jeanne Dawson** I like it as the "unofficial flag". I'm a history dork.

**Patricia Sadowski** A rose by any other flag is still a rose.

**Daniel Eugene LeTendre** No i hate it says nothing about Milwaukee.

**Kaleb Haugen** YES

This was a publicly selected flag. The people have spoken.

**Curtis Peck** I prefer and fly our old flag because of the rich history it displays, not a fan of the "new one"

**Todd Krinklecock** No, the original speaks volumes.

**Jenny Mendenhall** Yes, I think it is a great symbol for the city.

**Stephen Gebbia II** Gillian I think they should squeeze in Ray Nitti

**Nicole Jones** I'm a little bias, 414 flag for me, but I do appreciate this one as well. Love all things MKE.

**Michael Hartley** Make a few changes to the old flag to update it and it's better than the new one.

**Tom Plutshack** I don't really like it. It doesn't say "Milwaukee" to me.

**Jeff Ambelang** It's much too simplistic. Do not care for colors, or lack thereof, either.  
Manage

**Lynn Guerrero** I think you have more to worry about than the City flag, Mr Mayor.

**Juliana Neeb Kelly** I thought Milwaukee already had a flag...There's one hanging in our school's auditorium.

**Terri Kroll** That is the state flag.

**Laurie Starr** Not sure how it symbolizes Milwaukee. It could be any town on a lake. Too generic.

**Tony Thompson** Like you took Japan's flag and changed the colors.

**Patty Berg** Yes! I like the flag recognizing our great assets, the rivers and the lake.

**Todd Sum** Where's the street cars?

**Anna Kate Kasper-Shapiro Barr** Feels like a rough draft and the design could be better.

**Chris Kenth** No. The old flag is ugly, but it has character. The new flag looks like a corporate logo.

**Martje Wetherall** Yes! It is a great symbol of our amazing city!

**Thomas Bohl** I believe it says nothing about Milwaukee and is awful!

**Hector Florentino** I think is time to make Milwaukee an official sanctuary city instead 🖤

**Prentiss Johnson** Whatever is good for the city 🏠

**Seth Spaude** Looks a lot like Roman electrics symbol. Jess Spaude Chad Spaude

**Kent TheColonel Knapp** Not a fan...

**Martin Moore** We've got a hater. 😏😏

**Kent TheColonel Knapp** I just don't like the design. I think we can do better....

**Martin Moore** Kent TheColonel Knapp I honestly didn't even know we had a flag until this was made. So I have no affinity towards it one way or another. Lol

**Kent TheColonel Knapp** I'll partial to the 414 flag. Many might suggests it omits anyone with a 262, but isn't that the point?!

**Chad Poepppey** That flag is a joke and does not represent this city.

**Shannon Knapp** No thank you. I do not like corona beer.

**Angela Sottile Pryor** Then you should have voted for a different one at city hall. I know I did. 😊

**Shannon Knapp** Also did!

**Amy Hopple** Nowhere does it say Milwaukee

**Susanna Platt** Yes!! I love this flag!

**Kyle A Mericle** Yes it should be the flag

**Stephen Trigg** Definitely, much better than the old flag.

**Mike Loberg** No, if this connects to Milwaukee in some way, it eludes me completely

**Drew Schmitz** I hope Roman Mars goes to hell for this.

**Dominic Gehring** Yes, However, I want to improve the quality of the materials these flags are being made with!

**Angela Sottile Pryor** Make it official!

**Peter Burgelis** Yes

**Joe Holla** Milwaukee, as well as WI, sucks. Leave for a better life. Sure glad I did!!

**John Collura** Yes!!! For the first time I agree with you Mr. Mayor, only add the word Milwaukee & the date we became a city 🤔

**Sam Collura** I totally agree that this flag should be made official. However, when it comes to flag design, words are considered a poor choice as they're hard to distinguish from a distance. This TED talk actually talks about city flag design and even uses Milwaukee as an example (not a good one, unfortunately.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnv5iKB2hl4>

**John Collura** Sam Collura good point about the lettering Samuel J

**Aye Murray** Absolutely not. It's garbage.

**Ti-mara Minefee-Tribble** I like it.

**Adam Pryor** Yes! Love everything about this initiative! Let's do it.

**Laura Busch Vanderbilt** I like it.

**Cathy Tice Freed** YES!!

**Laken Farrington** I like it too.

**Max Riesing** Yes!!!!

**Wayne Palubecki** Looks sort of like the AT&T globe

**Richard Schwalb** Yes

**Artrell Jones** Yes

**Melissa Merline Gleason** Yes! It's beautiful!

**David Hansen** To the point here (the reason for the posting) - I do not like this "flag at all. The colors are all wrong/stupid. I would prefer something along the lines of the Canadian flag, same basic colors, and in the middle stylized hands clasping the other in support and good will.

**Scott Carlsson** How about no. This is a copy of Reno's city flag. Instead of relying on a TED talk, we put actual research into a flag that represents the city. I prefer the current one, but perhaps we we update the iconography. I'd rather be known for an ugly flag than a generic copy of a flag. Plus the current flag is free. The other option would be the 414 Flag, which represents the city better than a Corona beach towel.

**Davey Jones Yoga** On the contrary! Reno copied Milwaukee.

**Scott Carlsson** Reno is official, Milwaukee is not.

**Kay Frederick** Yes

**Jeanne Gieldon Rasch** Yes!!!!

**Dustin Klein** This flag is boring af. No character and lame. Clean up current flag and keep it.

**Gregory James** Who's flying the old flag? Nobody. You only see it in a few official situations. If people liked it you would see it al over.

You see the People's Flag all over for a reason. Time to get rid of the old one, folks.

Manage

**Katie VanBommel** Yes! It makes me happy every time I see it.

**DesignMil** 100%! The time has come and honestly, most folks already believe it to be the official city flag. We can crack open an ice cold MKE IPA from Milwaukee Brewing Company to celebrate!

**Dave Blank** I did not like the design when it was chosen - I still don't like it.

**Peter Donalds** Absolutely yes, yes. Great flag

**Bex Taylor** Great idea.

**Jerry Yanasak** Not our flag. So generic.

"What is it?"

**Joseph Koeppen** Yes 🤔

**Cadie Sommer** Love the new flag

**Gilberto Gonzalez Jr.** No!!

**Dave Salkin** Yes

**Michael Horne** No.

**Paul Fidlin** Yes! Simple and iconic.

**Mario Pipia** Current flag is ugly as sin but has been around for a long time and good bad or indifferent there is nothing else like it.

The peoples flag looks an awful lot like Reno's flag and as much as I hear people say that it embodies Milwaukee I just don't see it. In my opinion the 414 flag more greatly embodies the city. I've also heard it described as hipster clip art which I find pretty funny. But, the Brewers sell a shirt with it incorporated with the ball and glove logo and it's a really cool shirt... so there's that.

That being said, I live in West Allis so you do you Milwaukee. But please please Light the Hoan

**Mike Edwards** Work on violent crime .....use money making city safe....

**Kevin Bania** Not the flag it deserves, but the flag it needs:

**Steve Schrab** I love this flag!

**Susan Scot Fry** No. Not a fan of the design.

**Kayla Rae Wilde** Yes!!!

**Ryan Carter** Yes!

**Luci Reyes** Ugly.

**Astrid Peelle Browning** No. Uninspiring.

**Jordan Kuczynski** Yes! Let's make it happen!

**Andrew Larsen** Yes. The old flag is so ugly and badly designed, it's literally used as an example of how not to design a flag. The new one is much better.

**Stephen Vincent Anderson** Let's do an official contest. Let this stand against others in a city sanctioned contest.

**Rebecca Silber** Agree on city sanctioning from the beginning. Let it stand amongst other professional designers' portfolios that the city reviews. Let there be an election where the public narrows down a designer from the ones the city chooses. Then the chosen designer works closely with the city, and constituents on a new design. I mean, come on. Let's crowd source a new budget for the city--no one with half a brain would say that's okay. 44% of the population of Milwaukee is white, yet 97% of the

commenters on this post are white. I certainly hope that mayor doesn't base any decision on a FB post.

**Tom Ryan** YES

**Tom Dixon** Like it!

**Tracey Sperko** Yes

**Mike Mildew** NO.

**Tracey Sperko** Yed

**Tim Decker** Yes

**Curtis Fortune** Yes

**Dick Fleissner** No

**Shaia Fahrid** Yes!

**Matt Koster** No way. Our current flag is great.

**Brian Stefanik** Yes!

**Wes Blankenheim** Yes. Far less busy than the current one.

**Colin Daly** Yes

**Scott Johnson** Yes

**Daniel N Schultz Jr** Please, no.

**Michael Nischke** DO IT!

**Michael Glabere** I like the old flag. Tho technically I think no flag is just fine

**Caitlin O'Gara** Love it! 😊 Flyin' it in Bay View!

**Nick Pritzl** Ab-so-freaking-lutely

**Leo Kleiner** Absolutely yes!

**Christopher Hanke** Let it fly!

**Keith Krupar** Exactly how does this represent Milwaukee?

Manage

**Jay Bullock** oh god no

**Malcolm Gregory** Make it official.

**Carl Niemiec** Not a fan

**Brian Martinez** Yes yes yes yes yes!

**Leonel Brodhead** Yea

**Eddie Platz** Yes.

**Jon Peltonen** Yes

**Jake Newborn** No

**Tim Hunter** wrong

**Jessica Erin** No.

**Kelly Platner** Absolutely not #notmyflag

**Martha Carrigan** Yes!

**KT Kat** Yes!

**Kitt Pellegrini** just do it already. city needs a face lift

**Said Hamideh** too minimalist

**Grace Blevins** Yes!

**Kelly Briskie** Looks like a cruise line flag. So, no

**Jerry Grillo** It's annoying!

**Kevin Kuschel** Yes

**Alan Johnson** ugly

**Peter Zanghi** yes.

**Tim McCormick** No.

**Shelly Rosenquist** Yes! Love it.

**Jared Judge** Yes 🐼

**Ann Knoedler** Not a big fan of this design

**Tina Holst** I'm not sure if I like it enough to be the official flag. Unless you google it there's no way to identify each color/symbol. I think we need more input from our citizens to come up with a better design. It is pleasing to the eye.

**Scott Gondek** Absolutely not.

**Julie Ragland** I love it.

**Laurel Noack** MAKE IT OFFICIAL PLEASE TOM!

**Jim Kearney** I like it.

**John Gonzales** PLZ NO !!!!!!!!

**Jennifer Bottesi** Please explain and I know you can help with this b/c you are a photographer. Why when I see this image I can only think Minolta camera???

**Jennifer Bottesi** <https://goo.gl/images/H7177h>.

**Jennifer Bottesi** Now I understand.

**Jim Gannon** What the hell is it?

**Emina Arcan** I second that.

**Ron Hockersmith** Time for a change

**Chelsea Hunt** Yes yes yes!

**Sarah Martis** I love it!

**Dan Atkinson** Make it official.

**Denise Townsend** Yes. 😊😊

**Jim Wick** It must have 🍷 on it.

Then future generations will always remember exactly what you did for this city.

**Ricky James Gronwall** You must be referring to your flag...

**Jim Wick** Ricky when you graduate from the elementary school remarks read this and know that 14 years ago Tommy boy promised to stop the dumping of raw sewage into Lake Michigan.

He has done approximately nothing to stop it.

<https://www.tmj4.com/.../mmsd-dumps-untreated-sewage..>

**Ricky James Gronwall** I didn't realize Tommy boy masterminded the rain that overwhelmed the sewage system! Or that he's supposed to be out there personally inspecting the pipes! You'd think there were other city workers responsible for that.....

**Ricky James Gronwall** Also, Tmj4? Isn't that considered a liberal mainstream media fake news source to you?!?!

**Jim Wick** Ricky James Gronwall you're not the smartest kid in your 4th grade class huh?

Are you seriously saying "other city workers" are more responsible than the mayor for what happens in Milwaukee?

Good grief child stay out of government issues if you have no clue how things work.

**Joel Lindenberg** Marquette Interchange was torn up several years ago. Tommy could have divided storm and sewage pipes. Thereby reducing volume going through sewage treatment. Instead you got a trolley.

**Kristopher Thyme** No thank you

**Emily Fenech** 100% yes!

**Ross Hellenbrand** Do it, Barrett!

**Patrick Bader** Yes! Time for a change

**Paul Ward** Absolutely!

**Dave Reid** Yes

**Sami Jarjour** <https://www.atlasobscura.com/.../we-asked-a-vexillologist...>

**Christopher Rozek** Why don't you help the people in the inner city?

**Matt Murphy** No. It's ugly

**Stephanie Jackson** No.

**Lisa Boudnik** No

**Allison VL** No

**Sherrie Szombathelyi** yes

**J Peter Haumersen** Yes

**Kathryn Heim** Simple. Elegant.

**Sonja Nelson-Gurda**



**Zakkarry Michael** Yes!

**JR Witt** No

**Jen Yatso** YESSSSSS

**Jasen Groves** As tasteless and horrendous as the current flag is, too many elderly citizens still like it. Maybe the next generation will adopt a new flag after the baby boomers and gen x'ers are gone.

In the meantime, the people's flag should be adopted as a symbol of a unified city, county and metropolitan area.

**Richard Paul** Agreed about the flag but the second half of Gen X (younger ones) are who started rooting back and investing in the city away from the suburbs where many were raised! I feel the same about the boomers but they are also coming back to the city finally.

It's the angst ridden people who can't accept change as positive and should move out and west with their close minded opinions.

**Allie Tierney** Yes!

**Sonia Hass** ITS UGLY!!!

**Miles Willems** Yes!

**Jenny Hazard** Nope.

**Shanyell McCloud** That's ugly

**Nick Berg** Nope.

**Nicholas Pagenkopf** I like it for our flag. It's much better than our current flag. Buts that's my two cents.

**Nick Berg** Nope.

**Nicholas Pagenkopf** Nick Berg fair enough.

**Nick Berg** Ha! Look how well/quickly we worked that out - perhaps we ought to go into politics.

**Nicholas Pagenkopf** Nick Berg I completely agree. The political stage needs us.

**Jimmy Lemke** Sure, why not?

**Michael La Monte** No.

**Carl Nylund** No trolley on it?

**Patricia Wendt** Yes, I like it!

**Tanika Reyes-Norwood** Absolutely 🙌🙌🙌

**Jodie Hills** YES love this flag

**David Kiefer** .Milwaukee is not a Communist City, we will never give in to the Communist Dem party here in Milwaukee. If you vote for them you are one as well, this means you rather take your freedom away and live in fear. Milwaukee stand up against the communist party the Dem.

**Reuben Glaser** Bring it down a notch, you lunatic

**Ricky James Gronwall** It was a socialist city for a while and did well then

**David Kiefer** No it's been this size for years. Our mayor is only in it for his Legacy trolley car which is actually a small train. We need to raise more taxes no we don't we're tax Enough.

**David Kiefer** We need to get away from the Dem mayors and hire a Rep one.

**Joann Reynolds** No doesn't feel like Milwaukee to me

**Mary Kristbaum** Especially this one

**Kevin Krause** No. It looks a bit too southwestern.

**Marty Horning** No, its boring!

**Kristin Barth Hoeffler** Ha! I thought it was?



**Stephanie Chin** No. Looks like 10 other cities. No personality  
**Angie Elizabeth Ammerman Thompson** Yes, it's very beautiful  
**Rebecca Schaffer** Yes!!  
**Mike Woj** Looks Asian  
**Ryan Swendrowski** Yes. It's time to update.  
**Meghan Crunch** Yes!!! A million times over.  
**Adam Gabornitz** Absolutely yes!  
**Anne J Koller** Yes!!!  
**Bonnie Stelzel** YES!!  
**Patrick Raymond** the flag should accurately summarize the city as a whole, and I dont see a dumpster on fire anywhere in this image so I'd say it's back to the drawing board.  
**Katherine Wilson** Yes yes yes please!!  
**Sarah Kopacz** yes!!  
**Jeffrey Paul Owens** Yes please!  
**Anthony Lauer** Yes, I do.  
**Mary Kristbaum** No never not  
**Abi Gilman** Yes!!!  
**Jennifer Stoner Nickolas** No  
**Brandon Tushkowski** Absolutely yes.  
**Michael Newborn** No no no no no  
**Mark Ustby** Yes.  
**Bridget Horne** Yes  
**Terri Kroll** No  
     **F Marvin Hannah** Help them Terri...you'd be the perfect person!  
     **Terri Kroll** F Marvin Hannah contest is over. Never heard of it.  
**Alex Runner** Yes.  
**Mary Beyer** no  
**Pat Kragh-Durfee** NO!  
**Gordon Steimle** Love it!  
**Mari Santiago-Velez** No  
**Jayne Holland** Yes  
**El Sere** she's beautifull !! sun over the lake  
**Maria Zoske** NO!  
**Nikki Lickteig** Yes!!!!  
**Eddie Sturkey** My vote is Yes!  
**Denise Doehr Hodkiewicz** Yes!  
**Charlene Seymour** Yes  
**Tom Radoszewski** yes  
**Adam Knachel** No way

This shouldn't be our city flag

We don't need to have a Corona box colors flying as our flag. This is a horrible design and flag

**Shan Nelson-Rowe** yes

**Dan LeTendre** Yes

**Barbara Schmidt Reimer** yes

**Joyce Miller** Yes

**Pat Michaels** No!

**Chris Sonnleitner** NO!

**Noah Kelber** CHANGING THE FLAG IS THE ONLY THING THAT CAN KEEP ME FROM  
HOPPING IN FRONT OF THE STREETCAR SAVE ME PLEASE

**Kipp Elsbernd** Ugh

**Ross Lowinske** No

**Jeff Barton** That flag design is totally pointless. Milwaukee is a Historic and Proud city.

Don't replace Excellence.

**Mark Bierman** No

**Heather J. Morris** Yes!

**Marc Tozzi** Sure

**Jim Ward** Yes

**Rosario Natoli** No

**Jonathan Wallner** Nope

**Mariiana Tzotcheva** Yes!

**Randall Tyrond Coleman** Yes.

**Jon Osowski** Lol

**Joshua Talsky** Sure

**Jo Rodgers** Yes!

**Mitchell Colker** No

**Mark D. Linser** No.

**John Rippy** Yes!

**Felix Martinez** no

**Reuben Glaser** No, absolutely not. This thing is so pretentious and generic and says nothing about Milwaukee as a city. It could just as well be the flag for Seattle or any other number of cities. This thing is so stale. Our current flag is certainly tacky and excessive but it's also got character and is clearly identifiable. The only reason this discussion ever started was because some schmuck who has no association with Milwaukee gave a TED Talk bashing our flag for cheap laughs and we all got embarrassed and self-conscious. Our response should not be to rip away part of our identify and replace it with some cheap clip art nonsense but instead to double down on the flag we already have, warts and all, because it's OURS.

**Adam Pryor** This would be ours as well. Another chapter in Milwaukee's story.

**Jay Buchholz** I hate it

**David M Ours** #KeepMilwaukeeWeird the flag is messy but unique just like us.

**Adam Pryor** Um, sir, that's Portland's slogan. At least we should be original don't you think?

**David M Ours** Exactly! so why we trying to push a flag that's unoriginal

**Adam Pryor** It is original. How's it not?

**David M Ours** <http://milwaukeearecord.com/.../milwaukee-vs-reno-flag.../>

**Josiah Lent** Yes

**Jim Baran** Don't like it, get rid of it.

**Matthew VanOosten** Yes, please make it official!!!

**Robb Hoffmann** Is the dark blue stuff sludge or mood?

**Cf Marcoux** Yes!!!

**Sachin K Chheda** Make it the Alt Flag. Don't get rid of the current flag.

**Nick Toman** The current flag is a hot mess.

**Sachin K Chheda** Nick Toman then clean it up. It has character. This other one is fine but this is all symbolic anyway. We can have two.

**John Dentice** I think its racist not enough white!

**Laura Norene Sant'Ana** Yes

**Rebecca Dreyer** Yes

**Holly Lee** Yes!

**Jessica Korpela** Yes

**Jake Cohen** Yes

**Anne McManis** Yes!

**Ann Kraus Sturdevant** no, I think orange and yellow with a cone of trash in the center would accurately depict the direction the "Shitty of Milwaukee" has taken...work on cleaning it up and getting decent roads in a timely manner

**Gary Cunningham** As banal as the city itself.

**Scott Mittelsteadt** It could be Cleveland's flag! 😊

**Derrick Skinkis** Should the area representing the lake be brown?

**Susan Sweeney** Yessssssssss

**Michael Przytarski** Does anyone besides me realize it's "borrowed " from Racine in the 70's and 80's?

**Nick Morgan** The City of Milwaukee needs a flag that its citizens can take pride in. The current flag does not accomplish this. Adopting The People's Flag of Milwaukee as the official municipal flag would generate civic pride on par with great cities like Chicago, Washington DC, and New York City. These cities' flags are an integral part of their citizens' civic and cultural identities. Great cities have great flags, and great flag represent great cities. It is long past time that Milwaukee join these ranks and adopt The People's Flag of Milwaukee as the official city flag.

**Daniel Slapczynski** No. It's a joke. It's as Milwaukee as Wrigley Field

**Bill Christofferson** Maybe someone should post the monstrosity of the current flag, so people can see what ugly looks like

**Marco Briceno** Vince Tripi and I think so

**Ray Fischer** Looks like the flag of some third world socialist republic....oh, guess it does represent Milwaukee.

**Theodore Salgado** Let's save our time and use the money for potholes. Yes, there are potholes galore in this city's streets (and a trolley).

**Adam Pryor** What money? How much do you think this costs? It was all funded without city dollars.

**Milwaukee Dave** I agree Alan Johnson. UGLY!!

**Louie Lobashuski** It doesn't matter what we think( no trolley) because you do want you want anyways. Tom B. Worst Mayor this city ever had.

**Jonathan Wallner** I think it's time you focus on the real issues.

**Jesse Marshall** Ryan Briskie

**Timothy Leverage** Since when did politicians ever really start helping those folks?

**Jeff Ambelang** John Edbauer

**Jacqueline Anne** Catherine Strietmann

**Catherine Strietmann** Oh do I have OPINIONS

**Catherine Strietmann** Considering starting my first Facebook comment fight

**Catherine Strietmann** Haters step aside

**Catherine Strietmann** Justine Shanner

**Kathy Mueller Grudzinski** Farmer Ted

**Shannon Knapp** [https://www.instagram.com/p/BkIsZ6Hg\\_52/...](https://www.instagram.com/p/BkIsZ6Hg_52/)

**Adam Pryor** I'm so prideful of our area code! Literally where that on a shirt!

**Shannon Knapp** Same!

**Erik Roadrash Smith** No. While some people may want a new flag, some of us love the tradition of the old one, just like the traditions of this city. This thing does not clearly represent Milwaukee. It looks like a Corona beer bottle. You shouldn't have to google a flag to understand what it stands for.

**Korinthia Klein** I don't understand almost anything on the current flag and would have to google that as well. Just because it's been around a while doesn't make it good.

**Erik Roadrash Smith** Korinthia Klein so you don't understand what city hall is, or a ship, or an Indian, or water, or barley? It's much easier to understand.

**Andrew Leonard** No. I think the money it would cost the city to do so certainly could be better spent?

**Dylan Baxter** <https://youtu.be/pnv5iKB2hl4>

**Peggy England** Chelsea England

**Kevin Schwartz** It's not Milwaukee unless you put a stupid trolley going down the middle of the flag design.

**Duane Michalski** Only if you add human waste to it. It's your forte to contaminate our lake and river.

**Anthony B. Ferguson** Maybe instead of worrying about a flag you should be fixing the problems city leaders are trying to avoid and cover up. You don't like hard work quit your job better yet I'm waiting for the young people to vote out this old out of touch leaders. Can't wait until midterm because I'm not with no party I'm a floater who goes vote for new younger blood

**Barbara Ray-Velazquez** I like the flag

**Alexander Allgood** This flag is garbage and a transparent attempt at a cash grab selling t-shirts by an out of work graphic designer. Give it up dude!

**Juan Andres Rios** Needs a trolley and hints of raw sewage to make it a symbol of Barrett's failures

**Hazael Huizar** Milwaukee needs an official flag but something that represents milwaukee not some made up shapes ☹ exp. guns drugs cops dead people

**Shawn Prebil** It seems every city has to have a Roman Mars approved flag...it's really stupid.

**Nickolas Doxtater** How about you fix the city first?

**Chris Capper Liebenthal** Only if you want the city to get sued by Corona for trademark infringement.

**Irene Parthum** OMG you're right.

**Adam Pryor** Uh? <https://goo.gl/images/TPaFdh>

**Chris Capper Liebenthal**

<https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/.../Logo%2BCorona%2Byt.jpg>

**Adam Pryor** Notice where the register mark is. This isn't their logo. The word mark is.

**Sharon Moths-Guerten** Boring and ugly. Aren't there more important issues that you should be concentrating on?

**Fred Bluhm** Are you gonna fly one on the trolley, trolley tom?

**Thomas M Ryan III** Awful flag no originality doesn't scream Milwaukee plus it resembles a recycled Presidential logo

**Greg Schroy** A white Pac man handicapped symbol?

**Louis Mankiewicz** Too many flags around already. Who would even fly it? Most don't even fly the American flag anymore.

**Susanna Platt** I've seen this flag all over MKE.

**Ricky James Gronwall** Yeah homes and businesses alike across Milwaukee are already flying it

**Daul Pettmann** Louis lives in Menominee Falls. Shocker.

**Louis Mankiewicz** Daul Pettmann you're a genius!!! Omg! Except I haven't updated my profile.

. The fact remains, it's a city flag. I don't support it and never will. I support more substantive measures that help people in the city, like The Joseph Project. The Joseph Project has helped over a hundred people get jobs and it's growing!!!

**Daul Pettmann** Louis Mankiewicz how do you think adopting a new flag hinders that in any way? Do you think the mayor is going to be putting all of the new flags up himself?

**Louis Mankiewicz** Daul Pettmann the flag does nothing! It doesn't help or hinder.

Hello!!!☺. We shouldn't have a city flag. We have a state and country flag, that's enough. I'm a simple person that likes to focus time and money on things that help people on a substantive level. A flag is only for morale, I guess. That doesn't trip my trigger. Seeing people get jobs, plant trees, fix potholes, mow the grass on the boulevard in front of my house more than twice a summer would be nice

**Andrew David** MILWAUKEE IS WAY OVERDUE FOR THIS FLAG.

Here's why: the process used to design this flag engaged the community and gave everyone a voice to and chance to participate and shape the trajectory of the results.

But when that was happening, the community was NOT ENGAGED. Just like the last several efforts to redesign the flag. Hell, most of the people didn't even know Milwaukee HAD A FLAG.

So now, in the final hour before "making it official"—after seeing a mind-boggling uptick in residents flying the flag; after seeing countless people sporting this design on t-shirts, apparel, partnerships w/ local business, and a general feeling of reigniting our city's engagement in civic pride—all of the critics come out of the woodwork.

This is why the narrative of Milwaukee needs THIS CHANGE. I've heard people complaining about it costing money (it didn't cost the city not ONE RED CENT), crowd-sourcing ethics (the terms of engagement were made very clear), not engaging the community—all things that were carefully considered and implemented during the redesign engagement process.

Nobody cared until something they DIDN'T LIKE subjectively started to happen; pointing out that this new flag didn't reflect Milwaukee's rich history—WHICH IT DOES! You are literally critiquing this flag out of pure ignorance (the symbolism and approach are well-documented HERE: [milwaukeeflag.com](http://milwaukeeflag.com) if anyone cares to like, actually READ it).

And most of the other naysayers are here commenting purely out of SELF-SERVING reasons (looking at all of YOU "414 Flag" people—is YOUR flag part of the Creative Commons, or are you just trying to make another DOLLAR out of the opportunistic coattails of this campaign? I'd guess the former.

All of this is downright embarrassing, and I hope we can turn the page on this and give MILWAUKEE THE FLAG THAT IT DESERVES.

**John Ehn IV** Asking the general public for design critique will make your head spin. Burn the old flag.

**Sam Draver** Big market mentality

**Kelley Brand** Out of the blood of all of the daily shooting victims in Milwaukee?

**Paul Lelinski** I'd like to see Mayor Barrett hanging from a flag pole.

**Chuck Wagner** Another cyclist died from getting his tire caught in their trolley tracks and then was hit by the trolley. Are you really this dense?

**Kory Mocbeichel** No. It is very ugly.

**Lori Moore** Milwaukee sucks

**Jimmy Lemke** So why are you on the mayor's facebook page?

**Patrick Dailey** It bears a striking resemblance to the Obama loser flag!

LRB 172198-2

# Waving the white flag on the “People’s Flag of Milwaukee”

 [milwaukeearecord.com/city-life/waving-the-white-flag-on-the-peoples-flag-of-milwaukee/](http://milwaukeearecord.com/city-life/waving-the-white-flag-on-the-peoples-flag-of-milwaukee/)

Matt Wild

March 14, 2018



A few weeks ago, a reporter from the *Wall Street Journal* interviewed me about the ongoing drama surrounding the Milwaukee city flag. What, the reporter wanted to know, was the deal with the **“People’s Flag of Milwaukee”**? From whence did the gold and blue, App Store-aping visage come? What did its existence mean for the 64-year-old and awful—just awful!—**official flag**? What was to become of that old flag’s obscene mix of outdated landmarks and baffling symbols, all an affront to both good flag design and the unquestioned taste of **some knob with a TED Talk**? Why was the city now rallying around this new “People’s Flag”?

And why, the reporter finally wanted to know, did I hate the thing?

The ensuing article, **“Surprise! Your City Has a Flag and It’s Terrible,”** was published earlier this month. I was cut out of it. (Quotes from my **Disclaimer** co-host Evan Rytlewski were included, as was the **tattoo** of my *Milwaukee Record* cohort Tyler Maas.) It’s just as well. After nearly five years of **getting worked up** about the dubious effort/contest to design a new Milwaukee city flag, and after nearly two years of **living with** the winning design—“Sunrise Over the Lake,” by Robert Lenz—I’m officially giving up. I don’t care anymore. The old flag is dead. The “People’s Flag” has won. May its Corona beer label colors fly atop Milwaukee businesses and luxury apartment balconies for years to come. Also, be sure to pick up your very own pair of “People’s Flag” leggings, **available now for \$39.99**.



I haven't come to this place of vexillological surrender lightly. Don't get me wrong: I still kind of hate the thing. Not the "People's Flag" per se, but the original impetus behind it. Hey! A guy with a podcast said our flag is terrible! Let's design a new one, only let's do it as a publicity-garnering contest that adheres to **needlessly restrictive rules**! And when we arbitrarily pick the winning design—after amassing a mountain of press that will look great on our CVs, of course—let's slap it on every piece of merchandise we can imagine! And if anyone dares question the "pride and unity" the new flag so un-cynically represents, let's brand them as evil old Milwaukeeans who are "stuck in the past" and "scared of change" and probably racist too because we just noticed there's an outdated Native American symbol on the old flag. Boooooo! Oh, and don't forget the old "If you hate it so much why don't you design your *own* flag" chestnut. Also, be sure to pick up your very own 6×10 premium sewn nylon "People's Flag," **available now for \$50**.

No, the reason for my surrender is simple: the damn thing is everywhere. It's all over the East Side, all over Bay View, all over downtown. It's on **beer bottles** and bicycles. Businesses and residences. Men and women. Young and slightly less-young. In two years' time, the "People's Flag" has gone from a pet project of Milwaukee's designer class to an ever-expanding default icon. More and more Milwaukeeans are embracing it. Its cookie-cutter "here's a sun over some water" design may not exactly scream "Milwaukee!" but its growing ubiquity does. And hell, if *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* columnist Jim Stengl is **starting to see the thing everywhere**, you know the war is over.

And it's that war that has always bugged me the most about the "People's Flag." From its very beginnings as a grassroots campaign, the charge to design a new city flag—led by graphic designer Steve Kodis—created two "sides" of Milwaukee: the old and new. You were either for the gleaming Milwaukee future promised by the "People's Flag," or a crusty relic who clearly didn't subscribe to Roman Mars' 99% *Invisible* podcast.

But as time has gone on, I've realized that war has mostly been in my head, and whatever battles were left were mostly being waged by one person: me. How many people, I've wondered as I've passed dozens of "People's Flags" near the UWM campus, know its backstory? How many people, I've wondered as I've driven past the umpteenth Bay View restaurant flying the flag, *care* about its backstory? The folks behind the "People's Flag" were right about one thing: you almost never saw/see the official Milwaukee flag (though one flies at UWM, coincidentally). Isn't it enough that a new generation of Milwaukeeans finally have a symbol of their city pride? And that they're not afraid to show it? Get the fuck over yourself, old man.

And there's that, too. I turned 40 last year, and the fear of finding myself old and obsolete, griping about those darn kids and their hula hoops or whatever, is very real. Sure, I can lay out a convincing and impassioned case against the "People's Flag" that has nothing to do with "It's new so I hate it!" but maybe that impulse is still buried in there somewhere. Maybe it's better to look around, admit defeat, realize the **children are *not* wrong**, and simply say "yes" to the new. Or at least "okay, fine, you win." **Act your old age, relax, this won't hurt** Get busy accepting a "People's Flag" that may have come from a cynical and marketing-driven place but

has since come to symbolize the hope and future of an evolving 21st century city, or get busy dying.

A few months ago, someone posted a photo of downtown, as seen from the harbor, to the Milwaukee subreddit. **“She’s gorgeous in the winter, too,”** read the caption. Those words struck me. Could you possibly *imagine* someone saying that about Milwaukee 30, 20, or even 10 years ago? Calling this city “gorgeous”? Calling it “she”? When I washed up on these shores in 1996, Milwaukee was primarily known as the blue-collar, down-and-out, beat-up home of a serial killer. How unlikely that now, amidst **unprecedented change and development**, new and new-ish residents were waxing poetic about its beauty? Clearly, something has changed.

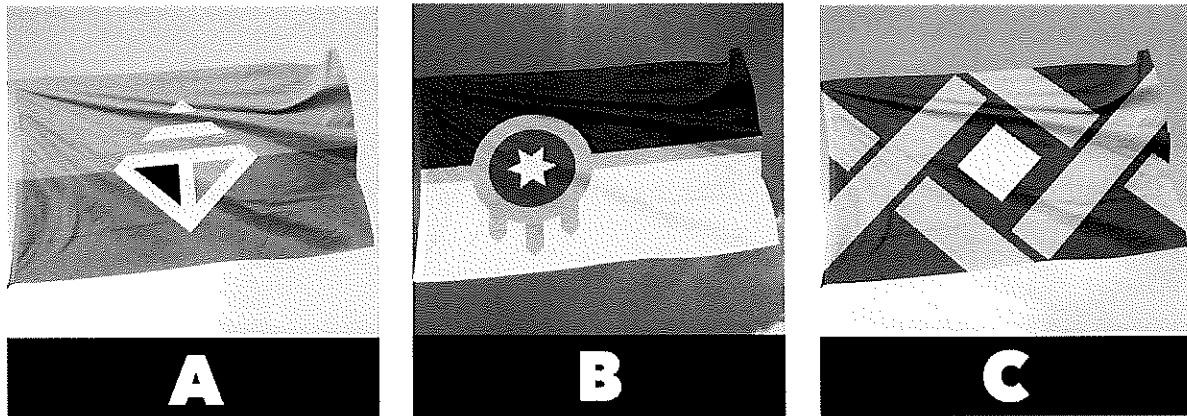
And if the “People’s Flag” has come to represent that change, if it has transcended its questionable origins as a resume- and money-making marketing exercise, who am I to piss and moan about it? Am I throwing in the critical towel because I don’t want to be seen as foolish and out of touch? I don’t think so. My pissings and moanings about the flag still stand—I’m just admitting that they’ve become increasingly irrelevant. Am I burying my head in the sand, like that guy who has **completely ignored the news since Trump was elected**? I don’t think so. (LOL at all the shit that guy and the guy who wrote the article have received, by the way.) I’m simply moving on.

Now, am I going to *buy* a “People’s Flag,” and maybe pick up a “People’s Flag” beach towel (**available now for \$38.99**)? Not a chance. But I’ll no longer begrudge anyone who does. Instead, I’ll take the message of the “People’s Flag” to heart. “The sun rising over Lake Michigan symbolizes a new day,” says the flag’s creators. It’s a simple, three-color reminder to do my part to make that new day a good one.

[https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/organizers-for-new-tulsa-flag-project-unfurl-finalists-open-public/article\\_59a47aa7-267f-5d4f-a80f-497fafbbd090.html](https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/organizers-for-new-tulsa-flag-project-unfurl-finalists-open-public/article_59a47aa7-267f-5d4f-a80f-497fafbbd090.html)

## Organizers for new Tulsa flag project unfurl finalists, open public voting

By Jarrel Wade Tulsa World Apr 26, 2017



**TO VOTE TEXT A, B, OR C TO  
(918) 376-5690**

The three finalists of Tulsa's flag redesign. Photo provided

Campaign organizers revealed three finalists in their effort to update Tulsa's city flag Wednesday.

The effort, which began in November and weeded submissions down to three flags, now goes into a public-voting phase.

Tulsa residents are encouraged to text A, B, or C for their respective pick from an image provided by the campaign to 918-376-5690.

“The committee wants to provide Tulsa with a flag that is by the people and for the people, as well as a banner Tulsans can be proud to fly,” a press release from the group says.

Flag A is a reimagining of the current city seal and homage to the current flag that features the seal. It’s gold on top of blue.

Jacob Johnson and Joey Wignarajah have spearheaded the effort with Tulsa City Council support. The council anticipates eventually calling a council vote to adopt a new flag.

The argument for a new flag is that the current flag is simply the city’s seal on a white background. A city ordinance makes it illegal to attach the city seal to anything without express permission from the city — making something as simple as printing a shirt with the city flag on it a municipal crime.

Organizers also argue that the current flag is just not good — falling well behind on modern flag design and theory.

The information-gathering phase brought in 600 pieces of unique input that leaders said fell largely into a few categories.

About a third involved Tulsa’s oil and gas industry; another 30 percent regarded the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot; and other input included Tulsa’s geography in relation to the Arkansas River and Turkey Mountain, and Tulsa’s music scene.

The input led into a design-gathering phase in January that was extended to accommodate more residents who wanted to submit their flag-design proposals. In total, about 250 designs were reviewed.

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## Votes Pour In Despite Negative Reaction To Tulsa Flag Designs

Wednesday, May 3rd 2017, 10:13 pm CDT



**TULSA, Oklahoma** - Many people are not happy about the final three designs being considered for Tulsa's new city flag, but the group in charge is still asking for your input.

The comments online continue to pour in - most are not so kind, but, whether you like them or not, you might want to vote because one of the three could be the next City of Tulsa flag.

It's not the response **Tulsa Flag** (<http://tulsafalg.com/>) co-founder Joey Wignarajah was hoping for the night before the final three designs were released to the public.

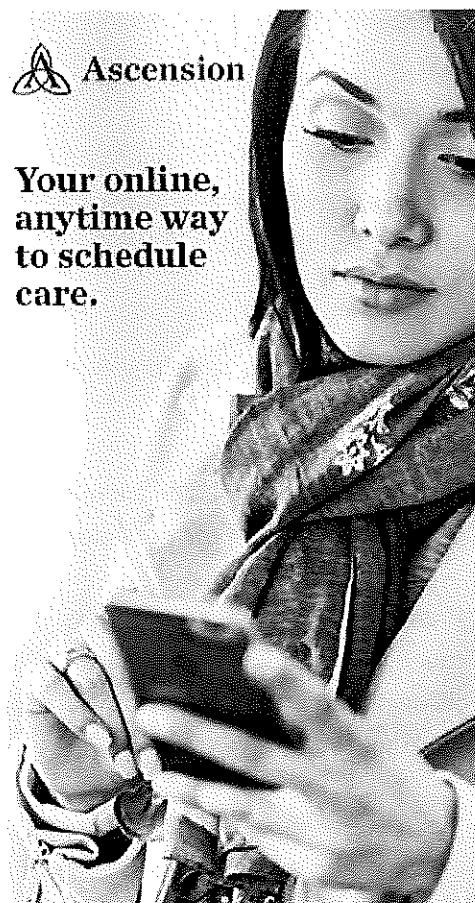
"A little nervous. You're always worried about how they are going to be received," he said.

While some people quickly got on board, others didn't like what they saw.



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The group posted a video to Facebook to help people understand the meaning behind each design.

The colors and bars all symbolize important parts of Tulsa's history while being good principals of flag design.

Wignarajah said, "Keeping it simple - no words, a 5-year-old should be able to draw it from memory, no more than two to three colors."

But not everyone thinks it's an improvement from the current flag.

"There are people that think our flag now is fine, but when was the last time you saw it flying anywhere," Wignarajah asked.

There aren't many places that fly the current flag, including Tulsa's City Hall.

The group of seven behind the push for a new flag started with 400 designs and got it down to 25.

Brand experts, fashion experts, and art historians spent four hours in a room to select the top three - and while those picked aren't sitting well with everyone, Wignarajah said thousands have voted.

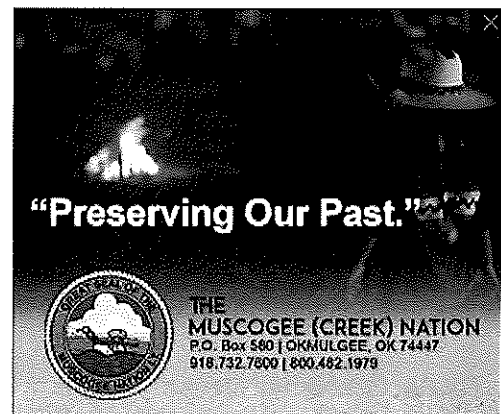
"Yeah, you're seeing negative comments on Facebook, but what they're not seeing is, now, the over 7,000 people who have voted to say that they do like one of the three designs," he said.

The group is not releasing any of the rejected designs, saying they don't want people to get confused on what you can vote for.

You have until May 10th to vote for one of the three flags, after that the city council will have to approve it, and the mayor signs off on it.



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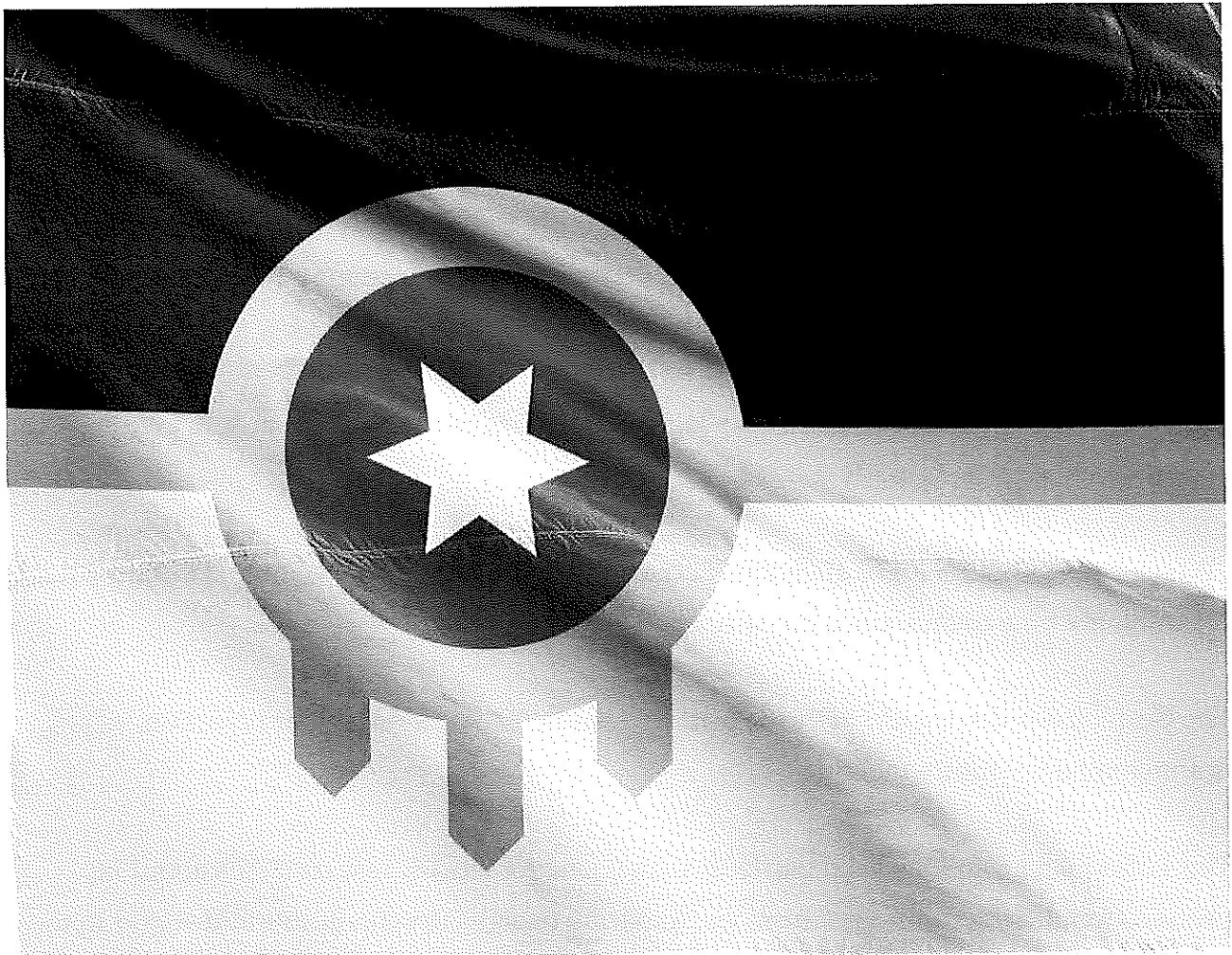
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## Update: Tulsa Flag group announces winner of contest while City Council still undecided on change

City Council plans a discussion but no action yet on the idea

By Jarrel Wade Tulsa World Jul 11, 2017



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### Related Content

**VIDEO: Finding Tulsa's Flag**

**Update:** The winning flag was announced shortly before 9:30 a.m. Wednesday.

The design is said to represent the settlement of Tulsa by the Creek tribe under the Council Oak Tree alongside a Native American shield most-famously represented on the Oklahoma state flag. The color red is said to represent lives lost during the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot, and the blue field represents the Arkansas River.

The Tulsa Flag group that held a citywide, privately funded contest to identify a new city flag plans to unfurl the winning design Wednesday morning.

The group has known the winner for about a month, but plans to reveal it were delayed after City Councilors unexpectedly soured on the concept of changing the flag after residents called for keeping the current one.

Joey Wignarajah, one of the Tulsa Flag leaders, said whether or not councilors are ready to support a change, he is ready to reveal chosen flag.

"We've been getting a lot of questions about where this winner is," Wignarajah said. "And we think it's time to announce the winner."

The Council has discussion of the flag on its agenda for Wednesday but no action, which is anticipated for future meetings.

The Tulsa Flag group has been working with councilors to address concerns about its process from taking public submissions, to paring designs down via committee and to the vote.

Among of the biggest concerns from residents and councilors were the lack of a none-of-the-above choice, and the requirement that residents text their vote from a cellphone.



"We've been working with the council quite a bit," Wignarajah said. "We've made some tremendous strides. We're not there yet, but we think it's time to give the people the flag they voted for."

The winning flag, to be announced Wednesday, got more than 50 percent of the votes out of 8,200 total.

Wignarajah said a number of misconceptions have plagued the group's grassroots effort to update Tulsa's flag.

For one, there has been confusion over what his group wants to actually change.

Wignarajah said because the current flag is the official Tulsa city seal on a white background, some people think the group wants to change the seal.

"Nobody is changing the city seal," Wignarajah said. "The city seal will remain the city seal. Manhole covers, water utility bills, the doors on public-works vehicles — none of that changes. We're just looking to change the flag."

Wignarajah said the seal has never been part of the conversation.

"It's a phenomenal seal, but it's a very bad flag," he said. "No one wants to fly it outside their house. No one wants to put it on their shirt."

In fact, it is a misdemeanor in the city of Tulsa to use the city seal without permission, making most private uses or reproductions of the current flag on T-shirts or hats technically illegal.

"Will the city prosecute anyone that uses it? Absolutely not," Wignarajah said. "They are reasonable in that regard. But it's still illegal."

Whether it is legal or not, Wignarajah said the main reason people don't fly it is because it's just not attractive.

"You can't find the flag anywhere," he said.

Tulsa City Hall has two flags flying on top of the building: the American flag and the Oklahoma state flag.

The Tulsa flag is in Tulsa City Council chambers and a council committee-meeting room.

The only known places it is flying downtown is at the southwest corner of the BOK Center and at Tulsa Transit's Denver Avenue bus station. It also flies at a smattering of other public properties outside downtown.

"It's a bad flag because it's got too much detail that you can't discern when it's on a flag pole," Wignarajah said. "Change is hard. I think we really want them (councilors) to see the vision that this is the flag that can be out all over the place."

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# Unofficially official: The Tulsa Flag is seemingly everywhere but City Hall. What gives?

By DYLAN GOFORTH | MAY 1, 2018



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*The Tulsa Flag flies on top the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro. Courtesy*

In the roughly year-and-a-half since two Tulsans announced a plan to replace Tulsa's flag with a new design, their efforts have been successful beyond even their most far-fetched expectations.

Dozens of businesses have created merchandise, ranging from shirts to shot glasses, to tiny little gnomes.

Even some of Tulsa's most prominent professional sports teams have gotten in on the act. The city's USL soccer team, the Tulsa Roughnecks, wear a Tulsa Flag patch on their jerseys and sell Roughnecks-themed flag merchandise in the team store.

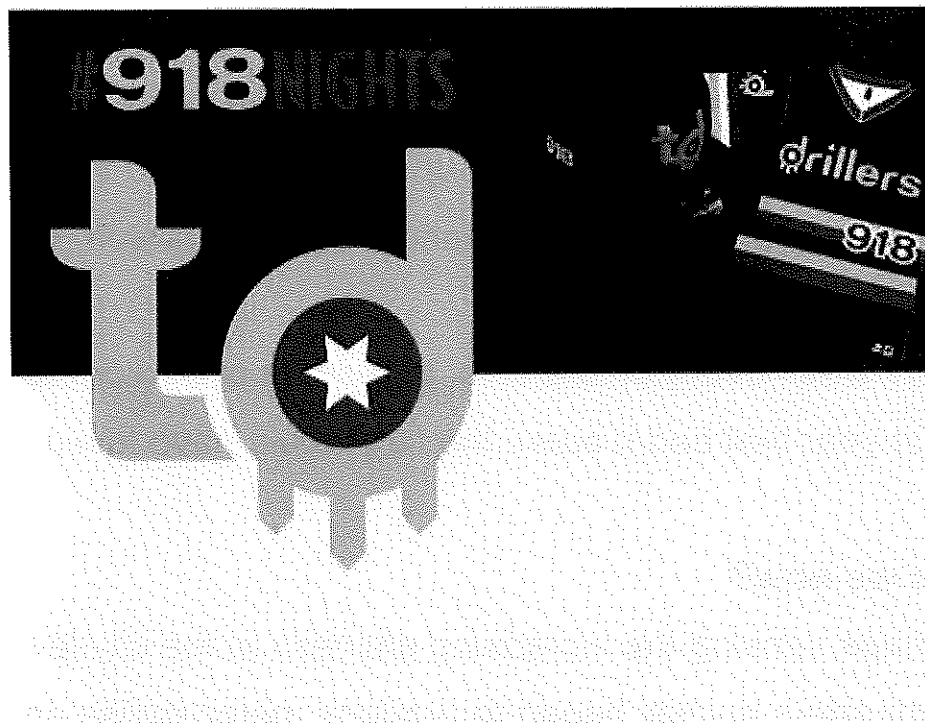
### **Tulsa Flag slideshow**

The Tulsa Drillers, a Los Angeles Dodgers-affiliated minor league baseball team, took it a step further, announcing "918 Nights" this summer. The team designed new flag-themed jerseys and hats they will wear on the field July 5-9.

The flags are flying across the city — and world: Joey Wignarajah, part of the group who hatched the idea of replacing Tulsa's old flag proudly shows off images taken of the flag in Japan, the Gobi Desert, Barcelona, even the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Even some local political campaigns have adopted the flag — John Waldron, a Tulsa teacher, has used the flag in some designs while running for House District 77. Daniel Regan, a local City Council candidate, also uses the flag in his campaign.

“I’d say at this point we have exceeded even our wildest expectations,” Wignarajah said. “It’s one of those things where we thought it was a good idea and we thought people would enjoy it, but it has really taken hold at a level beyond what we thought was possible. It’s really everywhere.”



*Tulsa Drillers 918 Nights will be held July 5-9. Courtesy.*

And yet the one place it’s not flying is maybe the most peculiar — City Hall.

The original plan, dreamed up in 2016, was to privately fund a redesign contest of Tulsa's flag (currently just a copyrighted image of the city's seal,) where three top selections would compete against each other until a public vote.

The winner would be brought to a vote by the City Council at some point last summer, and the council would officially adopt the flag.

But the plan hit a snag.

There was public backlash when the three finalists were announced — it turned out some people just didn't like any of the options. That reticence trickled down to the City Council, and many of the members — some of whom the Tulsa Flag group assumed would vote in favor of the flag — suddenly began to distance themselves from the effort.

In the end, it was never put to a vote, and some councilors told The Frontier last year that had it been, the flag would have failed.

### **Where are we now?**

**P**erhaps sensing the increasing shyness at the city level, flag supporters quickly began to produce merchandise and the Tulsa Flag group began to promote the winning design.

Almost instantly, the flag took hold.

“When we hit that friction, we decided to focus on the fun part,” Wignarajah said. “Adoption by Tulsans is what makes it a city flag. I think our original timelines was that we would get the winner and get it passed and let it go do its thing. We had to adjust significantly when the it became clear the City Council wasn’t going to pass it.”

“We hope the city will act on it. But our attention has been focused on just getting it out there.”

To illustrate just how far “out there” it has gotten, Wignarajah showed off a slideshow of the flag in different locations or on different types of merchandise. There’s pictures of a baby wearing the flag, of the flag above a number of garages, or on beer cans or on clothes and hats promoting a local elementary school.



*Joey Wignarajah, left, and Jacob Johnson, right, created the project seeking to redo Tulsa's flag. DYLAN GOFORTH/The Frontier*

Does any of that make it closer to becoming Tulsa's official flag? Not necessarily. The Frontier reached out to all nine City Councilors for comments about the flag and its possible future. Only two — Blake Ewing and Ben Kimbro, both ardent flag supporters — responded.

"I think we should have adopted it back then," said Ewing, who is not seeking re-election to his council seat later this year. "I think it's never too late, and this council gets to be the ones who did it, or they can watch the next council do it.

"Just make it official. There was all this talk, like 'Have another contest and include the (current flag) as an option.' It's just stupid. It's done, this is the flag."



Kimbrow said he was “still stridently in favor” of adopting the new flag design.

“It seems evident from the positive reaction that Tulsan’s have had to it, they do too,” Kimbro said in an email. “You may see another push for adoption from the Council later this summer. Fingers crossed, some of the Councilors that supported and then later reversed their decision will have seen the popularity of this.”

“For us, it’s always been about getting the people to adopt (the flag) more so than getting the City Council to adopt it,” Wignarajah said.

“The council could adopt it like our current flag, and if people don’t use it, it doesn’t matter. It’s pretty clear that Tulsa has adopted it.”

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Dylan Goforth

**EDITOR IN CHIEF/STAFF WRITER**

Dylan is a news junkie and QuikTrip addict. He spends too much time on Twitter, but has launched what will be a failed attempt to cut back in 2018.

Contact: [dylan@readfrontier.com](mailto:dylan@readfrontier.com) or 918-931-9405.



LOCAL

# Rochester considers designs for new city flag

Medical symbols, stars and bars, crosses ... and lots of geese.

By Matt McKinney (<http://www.startribune.com/matt-mckinney/10645411/>) Star Tribune

MARCH 3, 2018 — 6:56PM

The people behind the [Rochester Flag Project](https://www.rochesterflag.com/) (<https://www.rochesterflag.com/>) would like you to know that they are not opposed to geese. As winged ambassadors for the southeastern Minnesota city, a flock of geese or a single goose might work, but Rochester is also home to tech companies, rivers, farms and a [hospital](https://www.mayoclinic.org/) (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/>) that you may have heard of.

So an image of one of those things — or perhaps of geese, as the birds tend to [flock in Rochester](http://www.city-data.com/picfilesv/picv18975.php) (<http://www.city-data.com/picfilesv/picv18975.php>) in unusually high numbers — could make up the winning design for the city's new flag, said Anastasia Folpe, one of the Flag Project volunteers.

She and others are considering which symbol might best represent the city while overseeing a grass-roots campaign to design a new banner. Their efforts so far include the Rochester Flag Project website and assorted [social](https://www.facebook.com/rochesterflagproject/) (<https://www.facebook.com/rochesterflagproject/>) [media](https://www.instagram.com/rochesterflagproject/?hl=en) (<https://www.instagram.com/rochesterflagproject/?hl=en>) [accounts](https://twitter.com/rochmnflag) (<https://twitter.com/rochmnflag>), as well as a citywide contest that has drawn [dozens of entries](https://www.rochesterflag.com/submissions/) (<https://www.rochesterflag.com/submissions/>).

And while geese have figured prominently in many of the designs, dozens of other ideas show medical crosses, stripes, stars, rivers and the letter 'R.' The campaign hopes to choose a design by summer and present it to the City Council, which hasn't made any promises but has so far encouraged the effort.

That's been enough for Lee Herold, owner of the Rochester flag store known as [Herold Flags and Flagpoles](http://heroldflags.com/) (<http://heroldflags.com/>). Herold is also a longtime vexillologist, the name for a person who studies flags, and he's long had the Rochester city flag in his sights.

"It's dated," he said of the 38-year-old blue flag stamped with a circular seal. The seal includes an image of the city skyline, including well-known Mayo Clinic buildings, and three geese flying overhead. The word "Rochester" and the abbreviation "Minn." run around the seal's edge. But it's mostly the 1980s-style font that sets people off.

At the time the flag was designed by Rochester artist Laurie A. Muir, the font referred to the cutting edge work of IBM, a large local employer. The font no longer looks like the future, though, and even City Hall staffers have quietly tweaked it to look more generic on some versions of the seal in downtown offices.

Muir, contacted by the Rochester Post-Bulletin, said changing a flag because it's dated doesn't make sense. But the timing seemed right, said Herold, to remake the design with the launch of the Mayo Clinic's massive 20-year, \$5.6 billion expansion known as Destination Medical Center.

The project's first call for entries drew 55 designs, and a second and final call drew another 119. A group of local judges educated in flag design will choose 12 finalists. The public [can choose their favorites](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc0_WGG7kHwBDCowjN0YCz8D3Na8x2k0Uku8hDTar4Hy_TLew/viewform) ([https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc0\\_WGG7kHwBDCowjN0YCz8D3Na8x2k0Uku8hDTar4Hy\\_TLew/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc0_WGG7kHwBDCowjN0YCz8D3Na8x2k0Uku8hDTar4Hy_TLew/viewform)) through April 22, at which time judges will make a final selection.

Folpe said she hopes the City Council will approve of the new flag and that it can be flown as early as RochesterFest in June. Herold said the winning look will likely adhere to design principles that call for simplicity, limited colors and the avoidance of words and letters, and be a finished product that pleases the public.

Several entries have included the [Rod of Asclepius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rod_of_Asclepius) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rod\\_of\\_Asclepius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rod_of_Asclepius)), a Greek symbol representing healing and medicine, while others have shown a similar symbol, [the caduceus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caduceus) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caduceus>), that's often associated with communication and commerce.

And, of course, geese.



([http://stmedia.startribune.com/images/ows\\_152011626357346.jpg](http://stmedia.startribune.com/images/ows_152011626357346.jpg))

Rochester flag redesign contest Round 1

winners Public voting First place: Leo Ariemma, Woodbridge, Ontario



Second place: Joe Uessem, Dusseldorf, Germany

"There are pro-goose and anti-geese people," Folpe said. A lot of activities around town already use a goose or geese in their symbols, so it would make sense to have a goose on the city flag, she said.

"I'm not opposed to the goose," she added. "It depends on how the goose is being used."

mckinney@startribune.com    612-673-7329    \_mattmckinney

**THE MED CITY BEAT™**

MAY 8

**Want to help design a new city flag? Here's your chance to get involved.**

NEWS • 2017 (/NEWS-BLOG/?AUTHOR=58AA1770BF629AEA7B18FCB7)

*The following is a news release from the Rochester Flag Project.*

The Rochester Flag Project Committee and Herold Flags & Flagpoles announce the official start of the contest to update the Rochester city flag.

The contest was first announced in February at the Rochester Art Center. Since then, a committee has been formed to set contest rules and votin

The Rochester Flag Project is following in the footsteps of many cities around the country that are updating their flags and reconnecting with urb  
The project goal is to tap into the substantial brainpower and talent in Rochester to create a truly grassroots flag design. In this way, Rochester c

Rochester flag store owner, flag expert, and North American Vexillology Association (NAVA) board member Lee Herold adds, 'A flag must be a pr  
used because they like it, rather than as a duty and a loyalty. It must speak to the character of the citizens in a way they can identify with and say

As of this announcement the committee plans two rounds of entries, with the first from May 15th to August 15th, 2017 and the second from Octol  
Rochester Mayor and City Council in spring, 2018, in time for the city's 160th anniversary.

Both the public and the judges will vote in both rounds, and the top three of each vote will be awarded a prize and advance to the final review rot  
contest, including the Art Center, the History Center, and Rochesterfest. Voting will take place both online and in person at the Herold flag shop

The Judges' Board includes: Melissa Amundsen, Emily Carson, Wasima Kausar, Judith A. McIlmail, Becca Stiles-Nogosek, Jessica Schmitt, Terry

Entry forms will be made available around Rochester at information kiosks and through social media and online. Anyone can enter and submissi  
Flagpoles, or sent by mail. Entry forms and further contest details and deadlines can be found at [www.rochesterflag.com](http://www.rochesterflag.com) (<http://www.rocheste>

Volunteer help for this citizen effort is greatly appreciated. Contact us to join in with this unique, fun and meaningful project for our city of Roch  
market this project, please don't hesitate to ask.

Samples of city flags can be found at Flags of the World, <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/> (<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/>). Anoth  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/roman\\_mars\\_why\\_city\\_flags\\_may\\_be\\_the\\_worst\\_designed\\_thing\\_you\\_ve\\_never\\_noticed](https://www.ted.com/talks/roman_mars_why_city_flags_may_be_the_worst_designed_thing_you_ve_never_noticed).

*Related: [Grassroots effort emerges to redesign Rochester's city flag](http://www.themedcitybeat.com/news-blog/2017/rochester-flag-contes) (<http://www.themedcitybeat.com/news-blog/2017/rochester-flag-contes>*

*Cover graphic: Rochester's current city flag*

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# Orlando launches contest to design new city flag



The City of Orlando is asking the public to submit ideas for a new city flag.



By **Jeff Weiner**  
Orlando Sentinel

FEBRUARY 15, 2017, 12:05 AM

**O**rlando is tired of waving the white flag.

More specifically, it's tired of a blue-and-white flag that the City Council adopted in the 1980s that officials now say is too busy and not distinctive enough.

So, Mayor Buddy Dyer's administration is launching a contest Wednesday, asking members of the public to submit designs for a new flag.

"Not a lot of people know what our city flag looks like," said Dyer spokeswoman Casandra Lafser. "City flags help unite cities and communities and it's a source of civil pride.

"We just feel like our flag may be lacking in that regard," she added.

The city plans to accept submissions until March 22, after which a panel of arts, history and design experts will cull the 10 best banners for a public vote, online and at City Hall.

Contest details are available at [cityoforlando.net/flag](http://cityoforlando.net/flag)

Entries must be submitted on a 3-by-5-inch card with the entrant's name, email address, phone number, mailing address and an explanation of the design's symbolism on the back.

Submissions can be turned in by mail or dropped off, either at City Hall or one of several other locations listed on the city's website. Only hand-drawn designs are allowed.

The city is looking for designs that follow the principles of the North American Vexillological Association, which is dedicated to the field that studies the history and symbolism of flags.

That organization prizes simplicity, favoring flags that feature meaningful symbolism and are distinctive, but use only two or three basic colors and no seals or lettering.

The current city flag, which also resulted from a contest and was adopted June 2, 1980, features five colors and centers on an image of Lake Eola, flanked by nondescript buildings and trees.

The new flag, the city's contest materials state, should be "so simple that a child can draw it from memory."

[jeweiner@orlandosentinel.com](mailto:jeweiner@orlandosentinel.com), 407-420-5171 or @JeffWeinerOS on Twitter

**Orlando's Creative Village could finally get off the ground »**

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## The City of Orlando Flag Process

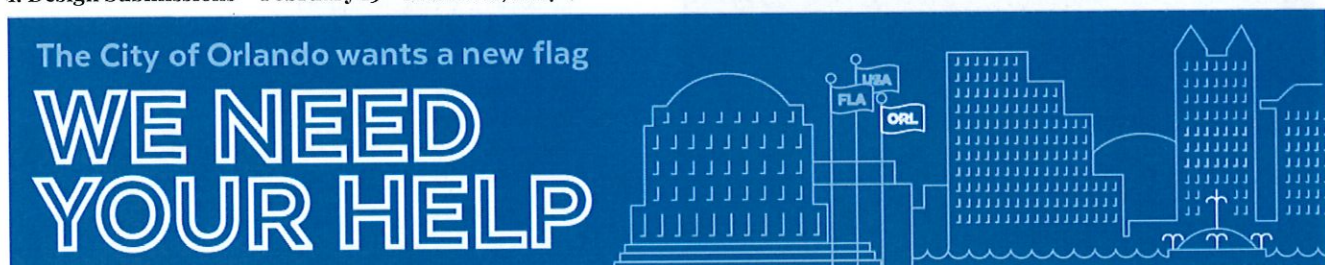
On Monday, July 24, 2017, the Orlando City Council approved the new flag design.



Below is an archive of the new flag design contest and it's various rounds of voting and community input.

1. Design Submissions | 2. Voting | 3. Flag Tour & Feedback | 4. The Final Two | 5. The Final Design

### 1. Design Submissions – February 15 – March 22, 2017



**Let's create Orlando's flag together.**



#### Why a New Flag?

A flag is more than just a symbol, it is a source of civic pride that makes people feel more connected to their city. As the City of Orlando's story continues to evolve, so does the need for a visual identity that is unique to Orlando. The contest is an opportunity for our community to create a new city flag together.

We want a flag that flies proudly around the entire city and outside our homes. A flag that people can rally behind and businesses are proud to display. A new flag that is designed by the people for the people.

## Let's Create It Together

**WHAT MAKES A GOOD FLAG?**

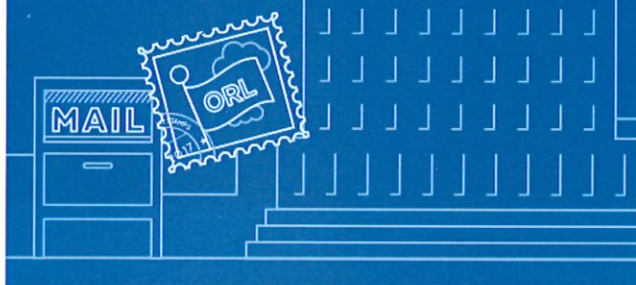
All entries will be judged based on the North American Vexillological Association's

**5 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DESIGN**

- 1** Keep it simple: The flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory.
- 2** Use meaningful symbolism: The flag's images, colors, or patterns should relate to what it symbolizes.
- 3** Use 2-3 basic colors: Limit the number of colors on the flag to three, which contrast well and come from the standard color set.
- 4** No lettering or seals: Never use writing of any kind or an organization's seal.
- 5** Be distinctive or be related: Avoid duplicating other flags, but use similarities to show connections.

**Design Guidelines**

- Design must be created on a 3x5 note card
- Entries must be hand-drawn and use solid colors. No graduated colors or digital art will be accepted
- All entries will be judged based on the North American Vexillological Association's 5 principles of good design
- A paragraph (150 words or less) explaining symbolism in the flag is required

**MAIL OR DROP OFF YOUR ENTRY AT ORLANDO CITY HALL****Submission Guidelines**

- Submission dates: February 15 – March 22, 2017
- Individuals may submit up to three (3) different entries
- Entries must include contact information: name, address, phone number, email and a paragraph (150 words or less) explaining symbolism in the flag is required
- Entries without contact information provided will be listed as anonymous
- Everyone is encouraged to participate
- There is no cost to participate
- All designs must be submitted via traditional mail or delivered to one of seven locations
  - Orlando City Hall
  - Lake Nona YMCA
  - Engelwood Neighborhood Center
  - Rosemont Neighborhood Center
  - Beardall Senior Center
  - Jackson Neighborhood Center
  - Smith Neighborhood Center

**Mail**

Orlando City Hall  
Office of Communications and  
Neighborhood Relations  
P.O. Box 4990  
Orlando, Florida 32802

**Drop-Off**

Orlando City Hall  
400 South Orange Avenue  
Orlando, Florida 32802

**Drop-Off**

Lake Nona YMCA  
9055 Northlake Parkway  
Orlando, Florida 32827

**Drop-Off**

Engelwood Neighborhood Center  
6123 La Costa Drive  
Orlando, Florida 32807

**Drop-Off**

Rosemont Neighborhood Center  
4872 Rose Bay Drive  
Orlando, Florida 32808

**Drop-Off**

Beardall Senior Center  
800 South Delaney Avenue  
Orlando, Florida 32801

**Drop-Off**

Jackson Neighborhood Center  
1002 West Carter Street  
Orlando, Florida 32805

**Drop-Off**

Smith Neighborhood Center  
1723 Bruton Boulevard  
Orlando, Florida 32805

**Voting Guidelines**

- After submissions are received, a flag design review committee will participate in an extensive review and selection session to identify the top designs
- The public will be asked to vote for their favorite design

**Full Rules & Guidelines****Participant Guidelines**

- Submission dates: February 15 – March 22, 2017
- All designs must be submitted via traditional mail or delivered to one of seven drop-off locations.
  - **Mail**  
Orlando City Hall  
Office of Communications and Neighborhood Relations  
PO Box 4990  
Orlando, Florida 32802
  - **Drop-Off Locations**
    - Orlando City Hall
    - Lake Nona YMCA
    - Beardall Senior Center
    - Engelwood Neighborhood Center
    - Rosemont Neighborhood Center
    - Jackson Neighborhood Center
    - Smith Neighborhood Center
- Design must be created on 3x5 note card
- Entries must include contact information: name, address, phone number, email and a paragraph (150 words or less) explaining symbolism in the flag
- Entries must be hand-drawn and use solid colors. No graduated colors or digital art will be accepted
- All entries will be judged based on the North American Vexillological Association's 5 principles of good design
  - Keep it simple: The flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory.
  - Use meaningful symbolism: The flag's images, colors, or patterns should relate to what it symbolizes.
  - Use 2-3 basic colors: Limit the number of colors on the flag to three, which contrast well and come from the standard color set.
  - No lettering or seals: Never use writing of any kind or an organization's seal.
  - Be distinctive or be related: Avoid duplicating other flags, but use similarities to show connections.
- Individuals can submit up to three different entries per person
- Everyone is encouraged to submit

**Legal Disclaimer:** Entries that do not follow the above guidelines will not be considered. All entries become property of the City of Orlando and the author/creator relinquishes all rights to the design and entries are subject to disclosure under Florida's Public Records laws. The Flag Design Committee reserves the right to alter, modify, or combine designs to create an official City of Orlando flag. Submissions by members of the Flag Design Review Committee will not be considered.

**Voting**

- After submissions are received, the Flag Design Review Committee will participate in an extensive review/selection session to identify the top designs; then:
- Public voting will be available online from April 3 – April 17, 2017 on [cityoforlando.net](http://cityoforlando.net)
- Everyone is encouraged to vote
- Individuals can vote only once

**Flag Design Review Committee**

- Ted Bogert, *Diamond Residential Mortgage*
- Grace Chewning, *Orlando City Clerk Emeritus*
- Stephanie Darden, *Prismatic*
- Joy Wallace Dickinson, *"Florida Flashback" columnist, Orlando Sentinel*
- Terrance Hunter, *Public Art Advisory Board*
- Chad Miller, *Code for Orlando*
- Cole NeSmith, *Creative City Project*
- Orlando Robles, *Art Teacher, Orlando Science School*
- Dr. John Schott, *North American Vexillological Association*



- Kyle Shephard, *Historical Society of Central Florida, Inc. and Chief Assistant City Attorney, City of Orlando*

## FAQs

### Will my design become the flag if I win?

The Orlando City Council will vote and formally adopt the design as the City flag.

### Will there be a monetary prize?

The flag campaign will not provide a monetary prize to the winners of the contest.

### Do I have to be a resident of Orlando to submit?

No. The Orlando Flag contest is open to anyone who would like to submit a design.

### Is there an entry limit?

Individuals can submit up to three different entries per person.

### Is there an age requirement?

There is no age limit.

### Is there a cost to submit?

No, there is no entry fee.

### How do I learn how to make a well-designed flag?

Community resources such as art and design teachers are immensely valuable, as well as online Vexillology communities. Also click here to watch a TED Talk : Why City Flags Might be the Worst-Designed Thing You've Never Noticed.

## Resources

The American City Flag Survey of 2004 (PDF)

*Roman Mars: Why city flags may be the worst-designed thing you've ever noticed*  
Watch the TED Talk

*Good Flag, Bad Flag- How to Design a Good Flag* (PDF)

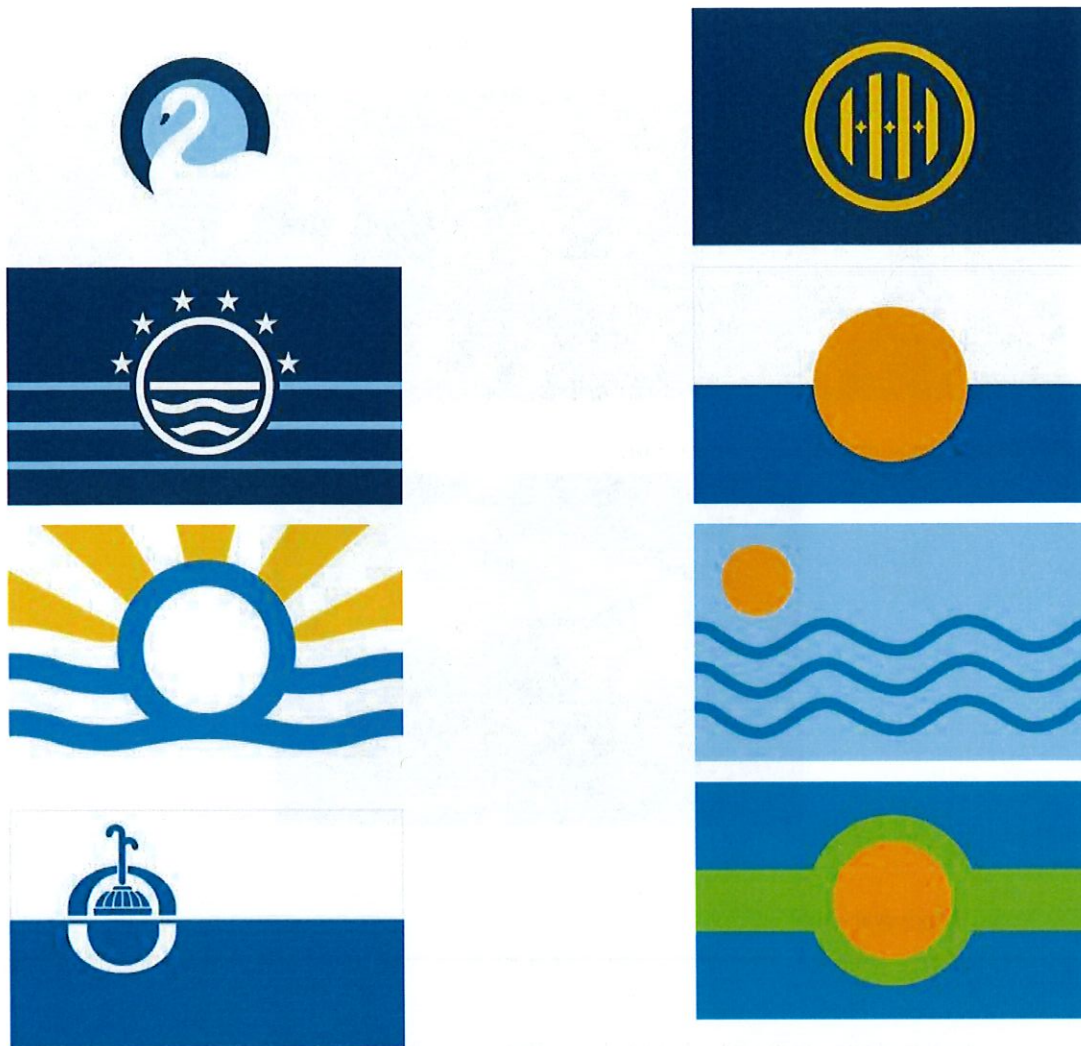
### 2. Voting – April 3 – 17, 2017



## The First Voting Round

The Flag Design Committee's Top Ten Choices were presented for public voting.





### 3. The Flag Tour & Feedback – May 8 – 21, 2017



### The Final Four Flag Tour

#### Final Four Flag Tour Dates and Times:

- Monday, May 8 – 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Beardall Senior Center
- Tuesday, May 9 – 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Engelwood Neighborhood Center
- Wednesday, May 10 – 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Orlando City Hall

- Thursday, May 11 – 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Orlando City Hall
- Friday, May 12 – 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Jackson Neighborhood Center
- Monday, May 15 – 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Smith Neighborhood Center
- Tuesday, May 16 – 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Orlando City Hall

- Wednesday, May 17 – 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Rosemont Neighborhood Center
- Thursday, May 18 – 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Orlando City Hall
- Friday, May 19 – 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Northlake/Lake Nona YMCA
- Sunday, May 21 – 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Lake Eola Park

*Thank you to Flag World for providing these prototype flags*

### 4. The Final Two – May 24, 2017



## The Final Two



### 5. The Final Flag Design Recommendation – June 9, 2017



Artist: Tim Eggert

### 6. Orlando City Council Approval – July 24, 2017

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## City of Orlando To Celebrate 142nd Birthday with Raising of New City Flag

Posted date: July 24, 2017

### City of Orlando To Celebrate 142<sup>nd</sup> Birthday with Raising of New City Flag

#### WHAT:

Today, the Orlando City Council approved a new flag design for the City of Orlando. The flag was developed with the help of the Orlando community through a flag design contest launched earlier this year.

To celebrate the new flag, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, City Commissioners, the Flag Design Review Committee and the flag artist, Tim Eggert, will join together on Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup> on the City's 142<sup>nd</sup> birthday, and officially raise the new flag.

#### WHEN:

Monday, July 31, 2017  
1 p.m.

#### WHERE:

Orlando City Hall Plaza  
400 South Orange Avenue

#### WHO:

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer  
City Commissioners  
Flag Design Review Committee  
Flag Artist Tim Eggert

#### BACKGROUND:

#### FLAG CONTEST

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As part of the flag design contest, the City received more than 1,100 flag designs from 12 states and seven countries, including contributions from five local schools. The contest engaged more than 23,000 residents on social media, and the City received more than 10,000 votes and 2,200 comments from citizens as part of the contest's participatory phases. Another 500 residents participated in the contest during a flag tour hosted by the City, displaying prospective flags in six neighborhood centers as well as Lake Eola Park and City Hall.

#### NEW FLAG SYMBOLISM

The new flag was designed with thoughtful symbolic imagery regarding the City's rich culture and bright future. The winning design features the Linton E. Allen Memorial Fountain at Lake Eola Park, one of the most distinctive and recognizable symbols in the City of Orlando. The water ascending from the fountain represents the continuous flow of energy and innovation that makes Orlando a city on the rise. The six equal segments on the base of the fountain embody the city's six commission districts. The iconic fountain is surrounded by the letter "O", which symbolizes Orlando's unity, connectivity and timelessness. The color yellow represents the sunshine, hope and happiness that thrive in our great city. The reflection of the "O" in the water symbolizes the City's careful consideration of Orlando's past and bold vision for the future. The flag is set on a two-toned background of blue and white representing patriotism, perseverance and peace.

#### NEW FLAG DESIGNER

Tim Eggert is a graphic designer for an Orlando-based engineering firm. He earned a B.S. in Graphic Design from the University of Central Florida before moving to New York to hone his skills designing for luxury brands, non-profits, and everything in-between. He continued creating art upon his return to Central Florida, and one of his sunset paintings is featured on an art box in the Mills 50 Main Street District. Tim Eggert currently lives in Winter Park with his wife, two-year old son and two rescue dogs.

###



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English

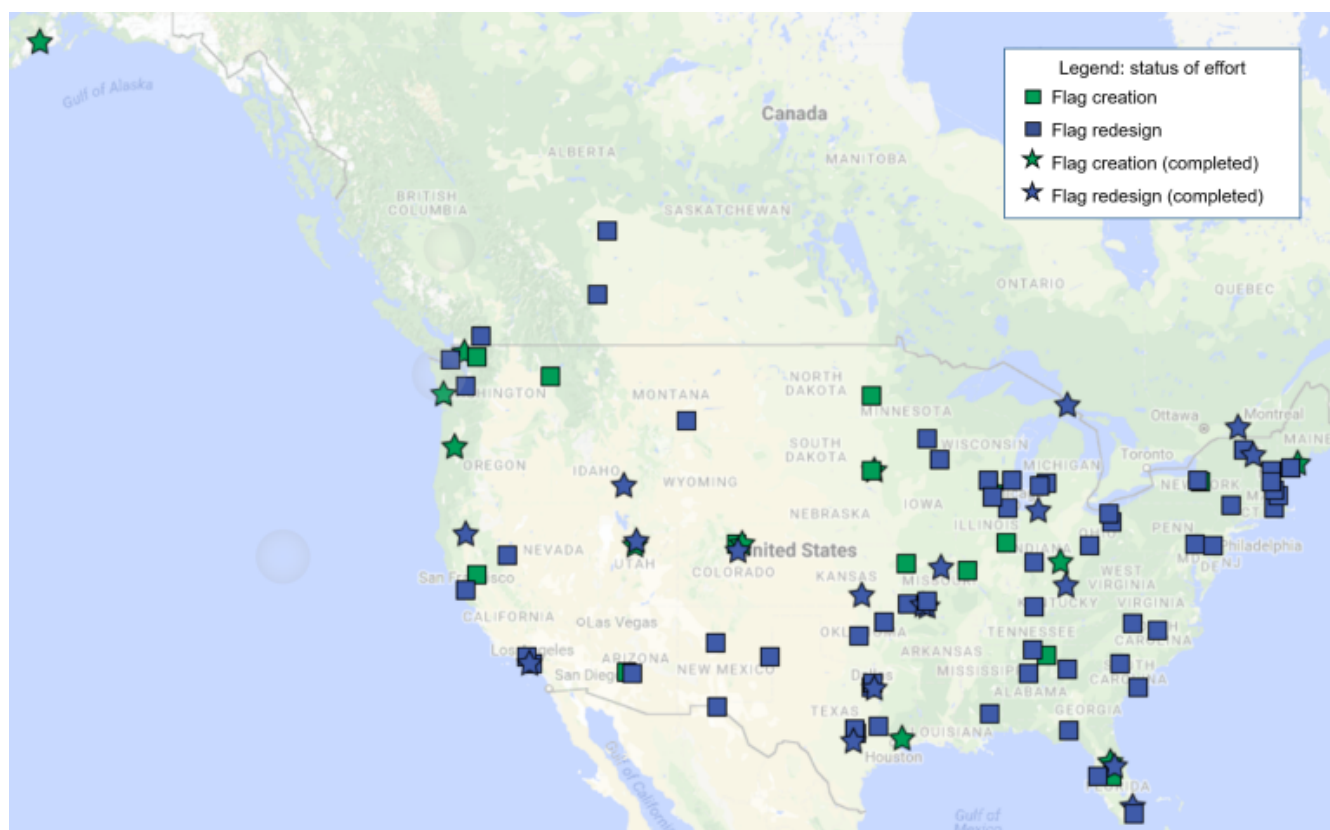




## Portland Flag Association

Vexillologists and Flag Enthusiasts of Portland, Oregon

# Municipal Flag Improvement



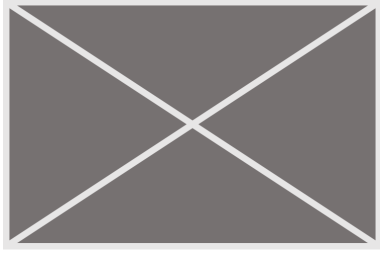
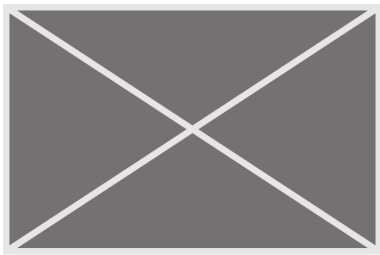
Thanks in large part to [a popular 2015 TED talk by Roman Mars \(and Ted Kaye\)](#) on the shortcomings of many city flag designs, there are efforts in many North American cities, towns, or other municipalities to improve their flag designs — or to adopt flags for the first time.

Here are the 104 efforts we know about (as of 16 February 2018): [Aberdeen, WA](#); [Akron, OH](#); [Albany, OR](#); [Albuquerque, NM](#); [Atlanta, GA](#); [Austin, TX](#); [Barrington, RI](#); [Bath, ME](#); [Bellingham, WA](#); [Billings, MT](#); [Birmingham, AL](#); [Bloomington, IN](#); [Boston, MA](#); [Bowling Green, KY](#); [Boulder, CO](#); [Brandon, SD](#); [Bryan, TX](#); [Burlington, VT](#); [Calgary, AB](#); [Cedar Park, TX](#); [Charleston, SC](#); [Cleveland, OH](#); [Clovis, NM](#); [Columbia, MO](#); [Columbia, SC](#); [Columbus, OH](#); [Concrete, WA](#); [Coral Springs, FL](#); [Dallas, TX](#); [Dardenne Prairie, MO](#); [Davis, CA](#); [Edmonton, AB](#); [Elk Ridge, UT](#); [El Paso, TX](#); [Fargo, ND](#); [Firestone, CO](#); [Fort Payne, AL](#); [Golden, CO](#); [Grand Rapids, MI](#); [Harrison, OH](#); [Hattiesburg, MS](#); [Haysville, KS](#); [Holland, MI](#); [Hope, BC](#); [Huntsville, AL](#); [Janesville, WI](#); [Joplin, MO](#); [Kansas City, MO](#); [Kansas City, KS/MO](#); [Kingston, NY](#); [Laconia, NH](#); [Lancaster, PA](#); [Lake Wales, FL](#); [Lexington-Fayette, KY](#); [Liberty, TX](#); [Liberty Lake, WA](#); [Los Angeles, CA](#); [Lowell, MA](#); [Madison, WI](#); [Manchester, NH](#); [Manlius, NY](#); [Miami, FL](#); [Milwaukee, WI](#); [Minneapolis, MN](#); [Montpelier, VT](#); [Montreal, QC](#); [Mount Dora, FL](#); [Naperville, IL](#); [Nixa, MO](#); [Oklahoma City, OK](#); [Orlando, FL](#); [Peoria, AZ](#); [Philadelphia, PA](#); [Plano, TX](#); [Pocatello, ID](#); [Portland, ME](#); [Provo, UT](#); [Raleigh, NC](#); [Redding, CA](#); [Reno, NV](#); [Republic, MO](#); [Rochester, MN](#); [Rockford, IL](#); [San Francisco, CA](#); [San Marcos, TX](#); [Santa Clarita, CA](#); [Sault Ste. Marie, ON](#); [Scottsdale, AZ](#); [Seward, AK](#); [Sioux Falls, SD](#); [South Bend, IN](#); [Springfield, MO](#); [Sunnyvale, TX](#); [Syracuse, NY](#); [Tacoma, WA](#); [Tallahassee, FL](#); [Tampa, FL](#); [Tulsa, OK](#); [Urbana, IL](#); [Victoria, BC](#); [West Hollywood, CA](#); and [Winston-Salem, NC](#).

72 of these efforts are ongoing. For the 30 cities of Aberdeen, Albany, Bath, Bellingham, Brandon, Columbia (MO), Coral Springs, Elk Ridge, Golden, Harrison, Haysville, Janesville, Lexington-Fayette, Liberty, Montpelier, Montreal, Mount Dora, Nixa, Orlando, Peoria, Pocatello, Provo, Redding, Republic, Sault Ste. Marie, San Marcos, Seward, South Bend, Sunnyvale, and West Hollywood efforts have succeeded in new flags being adopted. The Manchester effort has failed.

Click [click here for a map](#) of all these efforts.

The following are the current flags (if any) for each municipality. If the design effort is centered around a single proposal, it is also shown. Click the city name to learn more about the redesign effort, including multiple proposals that may be under consideration.

Aberdeen, Washington:*no previous flag**new flag, adopted 2016*Akron, Ohio:*current flag*Albany, Oregon:*no previous flag**new flag, adopted 2016*Albuquerque, New Mexico:*current flag, adopted 1969**proposed flag, 2015*Atlanta, Georgia:



*current flag, adoption date  
unknown*

[Austin, Texas:](#)



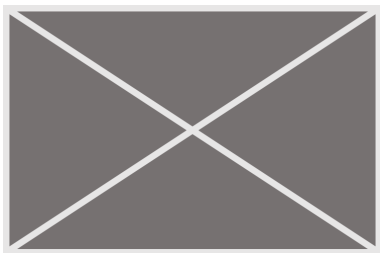
*current flag, adopted 1915*

[Barrington, Rhode Island:](#)



*current flag*

[Bath, Maine:](#)

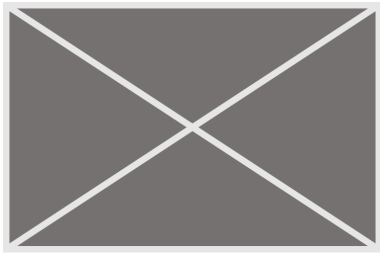


*no previous flag*

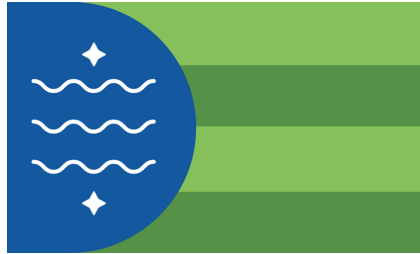


*new flag, adopted 2013*

[Bellingham, Washington:](#)



*no previous flag*

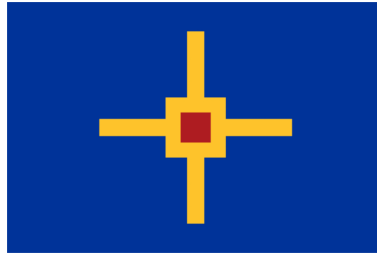


*new flag, adopted 2017*

Billings, Montana:



*current flag, adopted 1986*



*proposed flag*

Birmingham, Alabama:

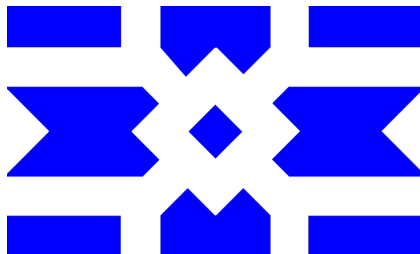


*current flag, adopted 1925*

Bloomington, Indiana:



*current flag*



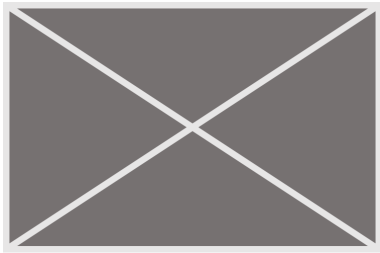
*proposed flag*

Boston, Massachusetts:



*current flag, adopted 1917*

Boulder, Colorado:



*no previous flag*

Bowling Green, Kentucky:

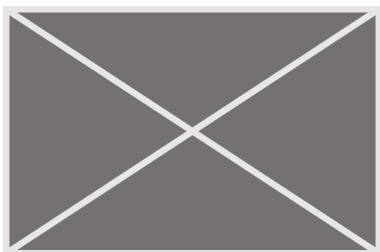


*current flag, adopted 1996*



*proposed flag, 2015*

Brandon, South Dakota:



*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

Bryan, Texas:



*current flag, adopted 2004*



*proposed flag, 2015*

### Burlington, Vermont:

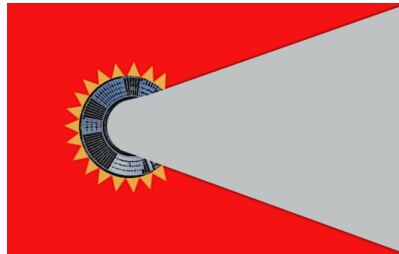


*current flag, adopted ca. 1991*

### Calgary, Alberta:



*current flag*



*proposed flag*

### Cedar Park, Texas:



*current flag (unofficial)*



*new flag adopted 2016, retracted 2017*

### Charleston, South Carolina:



*current flag*

### Cleveland, Ohio:



*current flag, adopted 1896*

### Clovis, New Mexico:



*current flag: seal on yellow field*

### Columbia, Missouri:



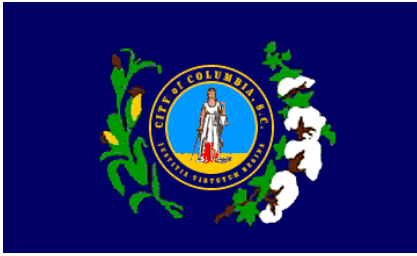
*previous flag, adopted 1988*



*new flag, adopted 2016*

### Columbia, South Carolina:



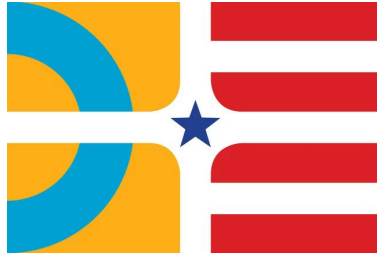


*current flag, adopted 1912*

### Columbus, Ohio:

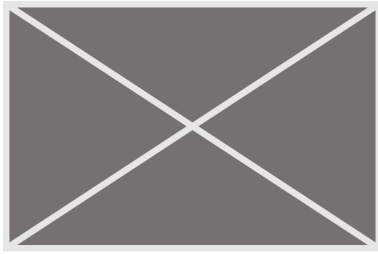


*current flag, adopted 1929*



*proposed flag, 2015*

### Concrete, Washington:



*no previous flag*

### Coral Springs, Florida:

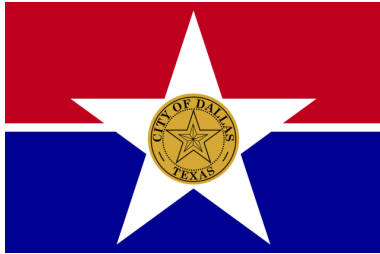


*previous flag, adoption date  
unknown*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

### Dallas, Texas:

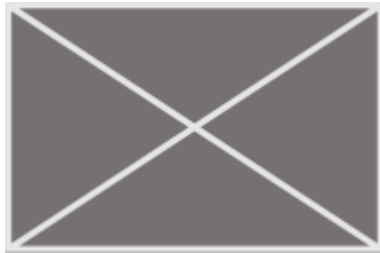


*current flag, adopted 1967*



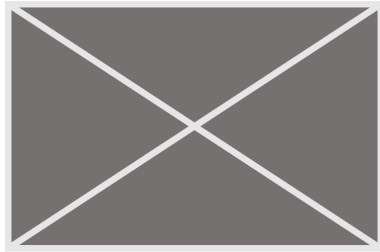
*proposed flag, 2015*

Dardenne Prairie, Missouri:



*no previous flag*

Davis, California:



*no previous flag*



*proposed flag*

Edmonton, Alberta:

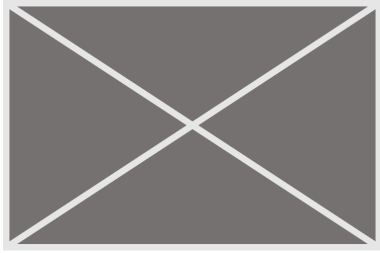


*current flag*



*proposed flag*

Elk Ridge, Utah:



*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

El Paso, Texas:

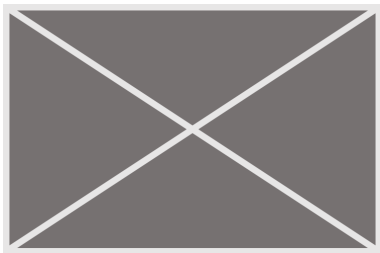


*current flag,  
adopted 29 March 1962*



*proposed flag*

Fargo, North Dakota:

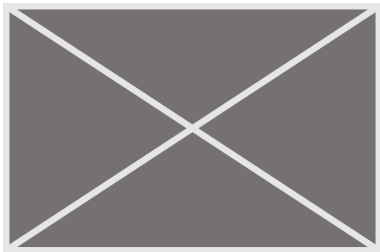


*no previous flag*



*unadopted 2015 contest winner*

Firestone, Colorado:

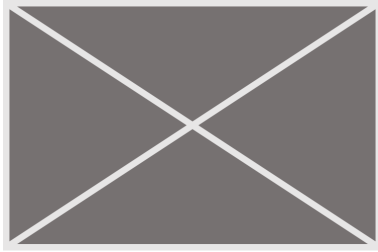


*no previous flag*

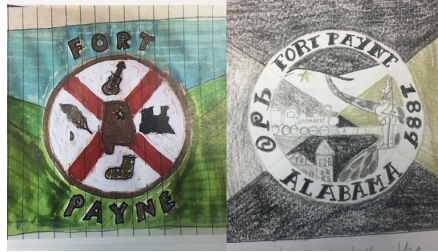


*new flag, adopted 2017*

Fort Payne, Alabama:



*no previous flag*



*winning designs to be merged*

### Golden, Colorado:



*previous flag, 1996-2012*



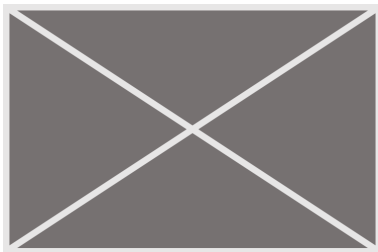
*current flag adopted 2012*

### Grand Rapids, Michigan:



*current flag, adopted 1915*

### Harrison, Ohio:



*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2016*

### Hattiesburg, Mississippi:



*current flag*

### Haysville, Kansas:



*former flag, adopted 1993*



*new flag, October 2017*

### Holland, Michigan:



*current flag, adopted 2002*

### Hope, British Columbia:



*current flag*

### Huntsville, Alabama:

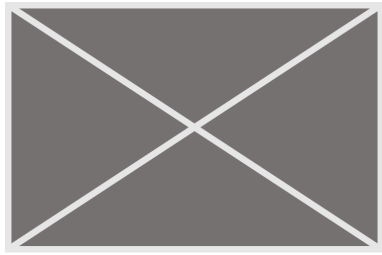


*current flag (status uncertain)*



*proposed flag, 2016*

### Janesville, Wisconsin:



*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2015*

### Joplin, Missouri:



*current flag, adopted 1977*



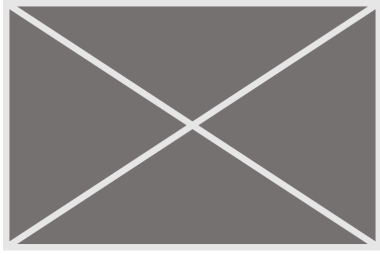
*proposed flag (contest winner, 2016)*

### Kansas City, Missouri:



*current flag*

### Kansas City, KS/MO:



*no previous flag*

Kingston, New York:



*current flag, adopted 1984*



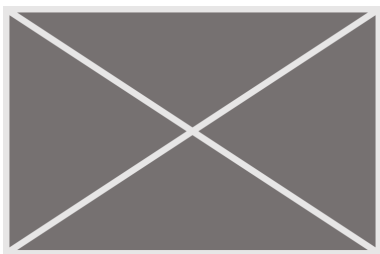
*proposed flag, 2016*

Laconia, New Hampshire:



*current flag, adopted 1965*

Lake Wales, Florida:



*no previous flag*

Lancaster, Pennsylvania:



*current flag, adopted 1907*

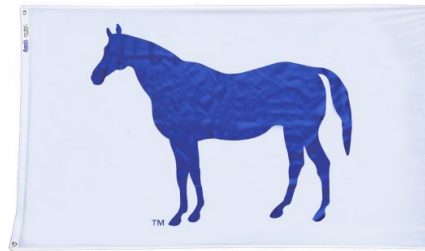


*proposed flag*

Lexington-Fayette, Kentucky:

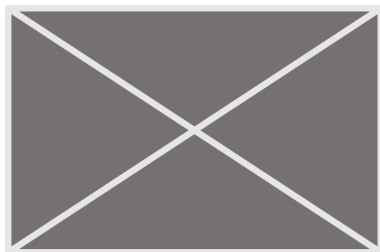


*government flag, adopted 1983*



*“community spirit” flag, adopted 2017*

Liberty, Texas:

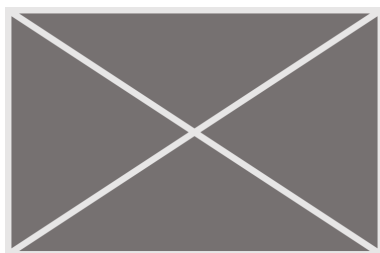


*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2015*

Liberty Lake, Washington:



*no previous flag*

Los Angeles, California:





*current flag, adopted 1931*

### Lowell, Massachusetts:



*current flag, adopted 1960  
(unofficial)*

### Madison, Wisconsin:



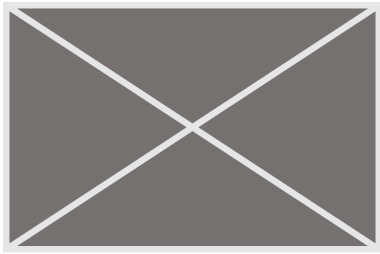
*current flag*

### Manchester, New Hampshire:



*current flag (unofficial)*

### Manlius, New York:

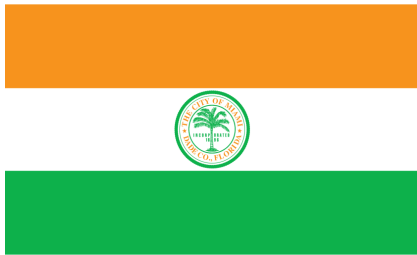


*no previous flag*



*proposed flag (captured from video)*

### Miami, Florida:



*current flag, adopted 1933*



*proposed flag, 2016*

### Milwaukee, Wisconsin:

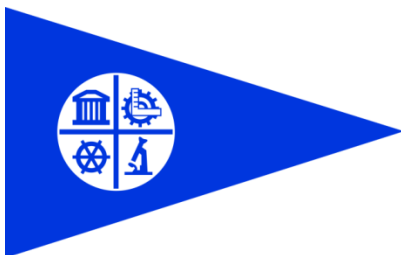


*current flag, adopted 1954*



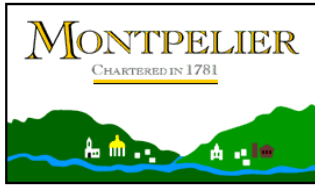
*proposed flag (contest winner, 2016)*

### Minneapolis, Minnesota:



*current flag, adopted 27 May 1955*

### Montpelier, Vermont:

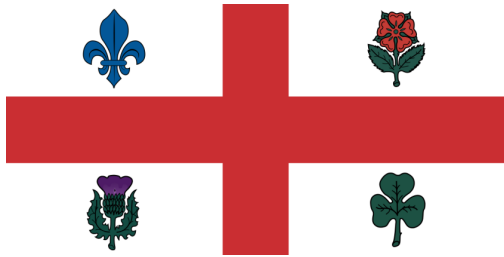


*previous flag, adopted 2001*

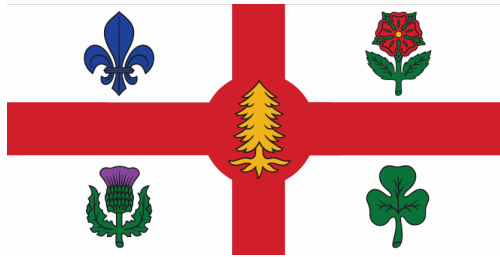


*new flag, adopted 2017*

### Montreal, Quebec:

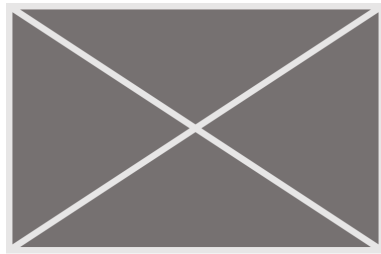


*previous flag, adopted 1939*

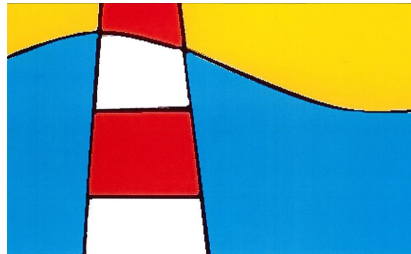


*new flag, adopted 2017*

### Mount Dora, Florida:



*no previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

### Naperville, Illinois:



*current flag, adopted 1974*



*proposed flag*

### Nixa, Missouri:

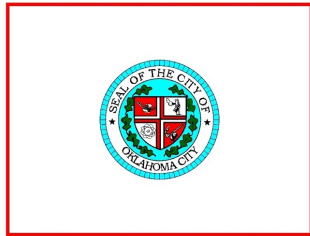


*previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 1 November 2017*

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma:



*current flag, adopted 1994*

Orlando, Florida:



*previous flag, adopted 1980*

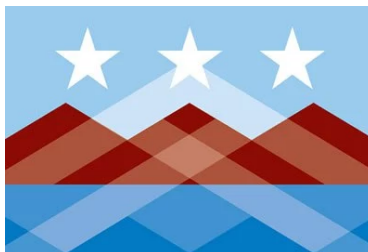


*new flag, adopted 2017*

Peoria, Arizona:

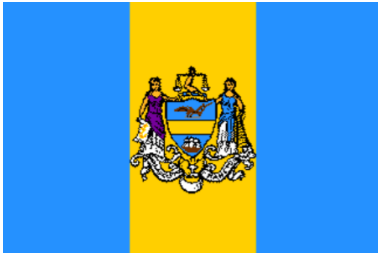


*previous flag,  
unofficial since 1954*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:



*current flag*



*proposed flag*

Plano, Texas:



*current flag*

Pocatello, Idaho:



*previous flag, adopted 2001*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

Portland, Maine:



*current flag, adoption date  
unknown*



*proposed flag (contest winner,  
2016)*

Provo, Utah:



*previous flag, adopted 1985*

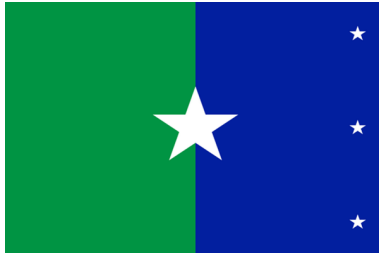


*new flag, adopted 2015*

### Raleigh, North Carolina:



*current flag (front), adopted 1899*



*proposed flag, 2015*

### Redding, California:



*previous flag, adoption date  
unknown*



*new flag, adopted 2017*

### Reno, Nevada:



*current flag, unofficial since 1959*

### Republic, Missouri:



*previous flag, adopted 1991, revised 1999*



### Rochester, Minnesota:



*current flag, adopted 1980*

### Rockford, Illinois:



*current flag*

### San Francisco, California:



*current flag, adopted 14 April 1900*

### San Marcos, Texas:

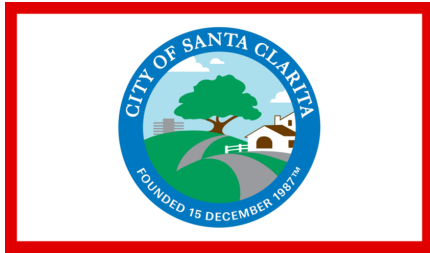


*previous flag, adopted 1989*



*new flag, adopted 2016*

### Santa Clarita, California:



*current flag, adopted 1996*



*proposed flag, 2015*

### Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario:



*previous flag*



*new flag, adopted 2016*

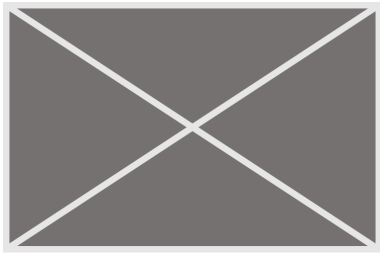
### Scottsdale, Arizona:



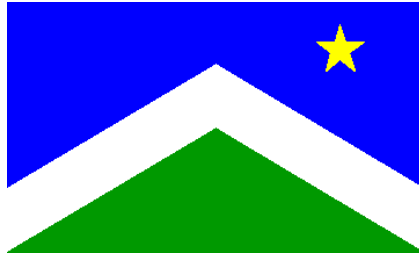
*current flag*

### Seward, Alaska:



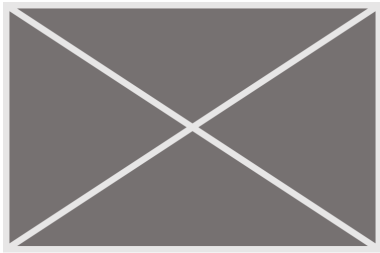


*no previous flag*

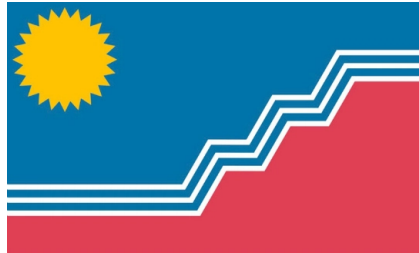


*new flag, adopted 12 December 2016*

Sioux Falls, South Dakota:



*no previous flag*



*proposed flag (contest winner, 2014)*

South Bend, Indiana:



*previous flag, adopted 1965*



*new flag, adopted 2016*

Springfield, Missouri:



*current flag, adopted 1938*



*proposed flag, 2016*

Sunnyvale, Texas:



*previous flag (unofficial)*



*new flag, adopted 27 April 2015*

Syracuse, New York:

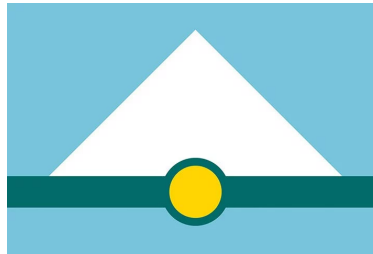


*current flag*

Tacoma, Washington:



*current flag*



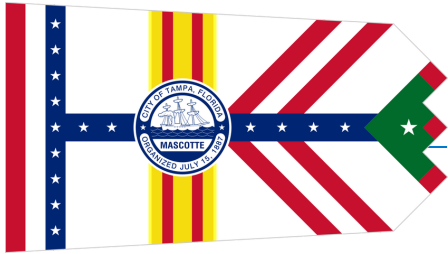
*proposed flag*

Tallahassee, Florida:



*current flag*

Tampa, Florida:



*current flag, adopted 8 July 1930*

### Tulsa, Oklahoma:

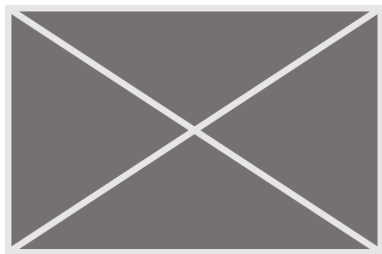


*current flag, adopted 1973*



*proposed flag (contest winner, 2017)*

### Urbana, Illinois:



*no previous flag*

### Victoria, British Columbia:



*current flag*

### West Hollywood, California:



*current flag, adopted 1986*



*variant flag, adopted 2014*

### Winston-Salem, North Carolina:



*current flag, adopted 1936*



*proposed flag, 2017*

Share this:



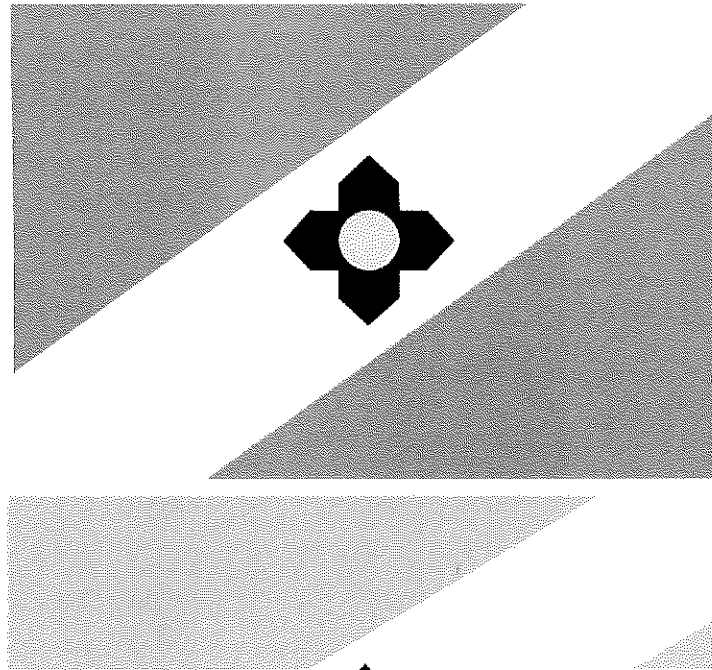
Portland Flag Association /

[https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/madison-city-council-approves-modified-flag-design/article\\_1d486328-1424-5693-9a50-2299097f545b.html](https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/madison-city-council-approves-modified-flag-design/article_1d486328-1424-5693-9a50-2299097f545b.html)

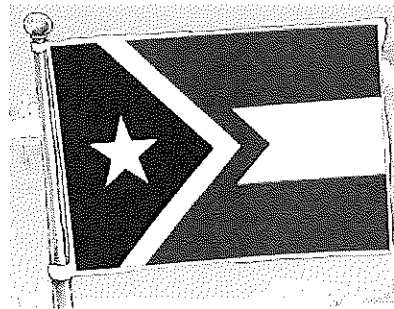
## Madison City Council approves modified flag design

LOGAN WROGE lwroge@madison.com Jul 24, 2018

TRY 1 MONTH FOR 99¢



## MORE INFORMATION



We have a winner in the State Journal's city flag contest

- Madison could impound electric scooters from scofflaw motorized scooter companies
- A dozen applicants vie for vacated District 13 Madison City Council seat


Madison will get a new flag after City Council members approved Tuesday a modified design that removes a symbol some say appropriated a Native American tribe's culture.

The City Council, on a voice vote, unanimously approved the new design, which keeps most of the current elements on the flag.

The new design removes part of the center element that resembles an ancient sun symbol that originated from the Zia Pueblo tribe in New Mexico.

Elements that will remain are a diagonal, white band that separates two light blue segments, representing the Isthmus between Lake Monona and Lake Mendota.

The new flag also retains a central black cross with a gold circle in the middle to represent the state Capitol as seen from above.

 +110 See more than 100 entries in our city of Madison flag contest

The old flag was designed in 1962 by brothers Rick and Dennis Stone to symbolize the city on trips with the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps.

Ald. Arvina Martin, who along with Ald. Maurice Cheeks pushed for the flag's redesign, praised the Stones' "excellent" design while saying the inclusion of the Zia symbol was "inadvertent cultural appropriation."

"I think we have kept the spirit and the same design and just made a minor tweak," said Martin, the council's first Native American member.

After the vote was taken, Martin presented Rick and Dennis Stone the first copy of Madison's new flag.

Logan Wroge | Wisconsin State Journal

Logan Wroge has been a general assignment reporter for the Wisconsin State Journal since 2015.







## Legislation Details (With Text)

**File #:** 51898      **Version:** 1      **Name:** Madison Official City Flag  
**Type:** Ordinance      **Status:** Passed  
**File created:** 5/29/2018      **In control:** COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
**On agenda:** 7/24/2018      **Final action:** 7/24/2018  
**Enactment date:** 8/4/2018      **Enactment #:** ORD-18-00076  
**Title:** Creating Section 1.15 of the Madison General Ordinances to codify the Madison Official City Flag and to repeal Resolution #4408.  
**Sponsors:** Arvina Martin, Maurice S. Cheeks  
**Indexes:**  
**Code sections:**  
**Attachments:** 1. Resolution #4408, 2. Flag image

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/24/2018	1	COMMON COUNCIL	Adopt	Pass
6/19/2018	1	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER	Pass
6/5/2018	1	COMMON COUNCIL	Refer	Pass
5/29/2018	1	Attorney's Office/Approval Group	Referred for Introduction	

No fiscal impact.

Creating Section 1.15 of the Madison General Ordinances to codify the Madison Official City Flag and to repeal Resolution #4408.

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: This proposal modifies the Official Madison City Flag. It removes the sun symbol of the Zia Pueblo people from the Flag and replaces it with a gold circle. It also repeals April 12, 1962 Resolution 4408, which adopted the current design of the Official Madison City Flag. In its place, this proposal codifies the description of the modified City Flag as an ordinance.

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The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1.15 of the Madison General Ordinances is created to read as follows:

### "1.15 OFFICIAL CITY FLAG.

#### (1) Findings.

1. Rick Stone and Dennis Stone, Boy Scouts and members of the Madison Drum and Bugle Corps, with the aid of their color guard instructor, John Price, designed and created a flag to symbolize the spirit of Madison and which the Corps would use on its trips.
2. Rick and Dennis Stone and their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Philip Stone, dedicated the flag to the people of Madison for use as the official flag of the city.
3. On April 12, 1962, the City of Madison adopted the flag as its official city flag by Resolution Number 4408.
4. The design elements of the flag depict features of our local landscape, such as the isthmus, the four lakes and the state capitol.

5. The original design of the flag also featured the sun symbol of the Zia Pueblo people, a federally-recognized Native American tribe in New Mexico.
  6. The sun symbol is a most sacred symbol for the Zia people, with exceptional religious and cultural significance, and which represents the tribe itself.
  7. Appropriating a symbol of such importance diminishes its sacred meaning and demeans the Zia people.
  8. The Zia tribe has for decades sought to reclaim its sacred sun symbol from being used without permission.
  9. While the designers of the flag used the Zia Pueblo sun symbol without any malicious intent, we now understand the destructive impact on indigenous peoples of cultural and religious appropriation, and when we know better, we must do better.
- (2) Resolution #4408 is hereby repealed.
- (3) The Official City Flag. The Official City Flag consists of the following features:
- (a) Relative dimension of 2 to 3, hoist to fly.
  - (b) A background of light blue, bisected diagonally by a white band running diagonally from the lower left corner of the width, or hoist, of the flag to the upper right corner of the length, or fly end, of the flag. The width of the white band is equal to one-third (1/3) of the width, or hoist, of the flag. Superimposed on the white band, in the center of the flag, is a black cross. The four limbs of the black cross are of equal length and are aligned on the flag in the manner of the four cardinal points of a compass, with each limb pointing to the center of a side of the flag. Each limb has a point consisting of a 90-degree angle on the end of the limb. Overlaid on the black cross is a gold circle. The reverse side of the flag is a mirror image of the obverse side of the flag.
  - (c) The two light blue segments (Pantone 298 C) separated by the white diagonal band represent Lakes Mendota and Monona. The white band symbolizes the isthmus between the two lakes. The black cross super-imposed on the white band symbolizes the State Capitol and the Four Lakes. The gold circle (Pantone 123 C) symbolizes the dome of the State Capitol.
- (4) Diagram of the Official Flag of the City of Madison.

