

City of Topeka Flag Redesign Initiative

Brought forth by Forge

INTRODUCTION

There's never been a more exciting time to be in Topeka. From the revitalization of Downtown and NOTO, to the opening of Washburn Tech East and the Momentum 2022 Initiative, our city is quickly transforming itself into an even better community in which to live, work and play.

As Topeka continues to foster a sense of pride, the Topeka Flag Redesign Initiative of Forge is launching a community-wide effort to redesign the city flag. The flag is a powerful symbol representing the spirit and character of the community.

The submission guidelines have been developed to encourage civic engagement and inspire a unified community vision for this important symbol. We invite you to participate in the creation of the next Topeka flag and, in doing so, design a symbol of pride for generations of Topekans to come.

ENTRY RULES

Dimensions/Format

- Flags should be designed in the standard U.S. Flag 1:1.67 proportion.
- Submitted designs should be 1.5" x 2.5" in size.
- Acceptable file formats for image uploads are: JPG, PNG or PDF. Submission must be less than 20MB.

Entry Components

- All residents of Shawnee County, Kansas are welcome to apply.
- Application form, including the narrative explanation, must be submitted along with designs to be considered.
- Each entry may only contain one design. Individuals may submit up to three separate entries.
- Applications must be received by 5 p.m. CST August 31, 2018.
- Submissions will be accepted three ways:
 - Via email to topekafalg@gmail.com
 - By mail to 618 S. Kansas Ave. Topeka, Kansas 66604 Attn: Michaela Saunders or
 - In-person to 618 S. Kansas Ave.

Application Requirements

The application should include:

- Full name
- Street address (not P.O. Box) with zip code
- Preferred email address
- Preferred phone number.

- A narrative section to explain your design. This section can be no more than 250 words.

Flag Design Requirements*

- All submitted flag designs should:
 - a. Include representation of the four design themes (see below).
 - b. Utilize the color palette of gold, green, and blue, with the option of white, as necessary.
 - c. Adhere to the North American Vexillological Association Five Basic Principles of Flag Design (see references).

**Designs choosing to stray from the above three guidelines will be considered only if they include justification in the narrative explanation.*

DESIGN THEMES*

1) Pathways

Pathways traversed the Topeka area even before the Santa Fe Trail commerce route opened in 1821. The trails were the precursors to many of Kansas' major railroads. Today, Topeka sits at the intersection of major highways that connect the United States. The community continues to develop new pathways, like the expansion of the Shunga Trail and recently improved bike routes. Pathways also refers to the historical significance Topeka has played as part of major national historical movements.

2) Growth

The people of Topeka are proud to see the community continue to grow and evolve. In June 2018, Topeka City Council passed a resolution to grow Topeka by 1,000 citizens by 2020.

3) Advocacy

Topeka has a strong history of civic engagement and social change. As the capital city of Kansas, Topekans are consistently willing to challenge the status quo. From our roots as the Free State Capital to *Brown v. Board of Education*, advocacy continues to shape our lives today.

4) Authenticity

Topeka embraces all of its neighbors – visitors and residents alike. We celebrate who we are while inviting all to the table. We continue to have the tough conversations necessary to make progress toward a united community, because first and foremost, we strive to be ourselves – authentic.

**While all four elements must be represented in some fashion, this does not necessarily mean there must be four symbols or graphics on every design proposal. A specific graphic design element may potentially represent two themes, a background color may represent a theme while a border may represent something different, etc. The narrative portion of your application is critical to explain these items.*

REVIEW PROCESS

A review committee composed of residents, design experts, city leaders, and flag redesign committee members will narrow the flag submissions to 2-5 final designs. Residents will have a chance to provide feedback on this narrowed set of designs throughout fall 2018.

Public input, quality of design, meaningful explanation of design elements, and design adaptability are among the criteria that will be considered.

The final flag will be a combination of multiple designs and will not be attributed to any one designer. Selection of the final flag, however, does not guarantee the flag will be officially adopted. This will require a passing vote by the Topeka City Council.

Timeline

Design submission deadline	Friday, Aug. 31, 2018
Designs announced for public input	Fall 2018
Flag proposal submitted to Topeka City Council	Spring 2019

REFERENCES

- 1) Why city flags may be the worst-designed thing you've never noticed (TED)
https://www.ted.com/talks/roman_mars_why_city_flags_may_be_the_worst_designed_thingyou_ve_never_noticed
- 2) Five Basic Principles of Flag Design (NAVA)
<http://www.ausflag.com.au/assets/images/Good-Flag-Bad-Flag.pdf>