

A FLAG FOR EVERY MILWAUKIE NEIGHBORHOOD? THAT'S RIDICULOUS.

OR IS IT?

Milwaukie's seven **neighborhood district associations (NDAs)** sometimes struggle to rally their residents to come together and improve their neighborhoods. While it might seem frivolous, a well-designed flag can tell people:

“Hey. This neighborhood is a real and unique place, and it’s where you live. It’s worth your attention and care.”

By giving symbolic shape to the history, landscape, ideals, and distinctions of a neighborhood, a flag can inspire a sense of **pride, stewardship, and belonging** that makes us better caretakers of this land, better patrons of local businesses, and better neighbors to each other.

And on a practical note: Flags can be a **fundraising boon** for NDAs. By selling flags and flag-bearing shirts, stickers, etc., they spread neighborhood pride and raise money for events, grants, and other neighborhood initiatives!

(The Ardenwald - Johnson Creek NDA has turned a profit doing exactly this!)

Are you an **aspiring flag designer** wondering where to start? Or an **NDA officer** keen for a banner that will rally your neighbors? Look inside for tips and suggestions from the AJC NDA's journey.

SCRUTINIZING THE BACK OF THE PAMPHLET, EH? VERY WISE.

Because this is where you'll find one of the best things ever. Ready?

Just search YouTube for...

city flags ted talk

... and among your top results will be the TED Talk below. If you've never watched it, now's the time. Why?

This video shows how flags of smaller regions can be invaluable to their residents, plus unveils the secrets of good flag design. It is informative, inspiring, and entertaining.

It also has some (very mild) colorful language, so use your discretion with any nearby little ones.

Intrigued now? Go. It's 18 minutes and 19 seconds you won't regret.



Why city flags may be the worst-designed thing you've never noticed | Roman Mars



WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT A TROUBLING TREND IN MILWAUKIE:



ONLY ONE OF ITS SEVEN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS HAS ITS OWN **FLAG!**



FOR THE ASPIRING VEXILLOGRAPHER (FLAG DESIGNER): WANT TO DESIGN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD'S FLAG? SOME SUGGESTIONS TO TRY OUT:

Step 1: Connect with your NDA

Get on its mailing list, follow its socials, and why not attend a meeting or two? When the NDA declares a flag contest, you'll be among the first to know.

To find the contact info for your NDA, go to **MilwaukieOregon.gov** and find your neighborhood under **NEIGHBORHOODS**.

Step 2: Learn flag design

It's an accessible art form (even if you don't think of yourself as an artist) with simple guidelines. **A great place to start is the TED Talk referenced on the back of this pamphlet.**

A teaser: Picturing a flag with your neighborhood name on it? Watch the talk to see how this works on real flags!

Step 3: Learn your neighborhood

Every Milwaukie neighborhood has both iconic landmarks and hidden gems. Get outside to start sparking ideas that could be immortalized in your flag design. And some Saturday afternoon, visit the Milwaukie Museum and see what they can reveal about your neighborhood's history!

MilwaukieMuseum.com

Step 4: Design your flag!

Once you have some ideas, start sketching. Try out the TED Talk's suggestion: draw your design in a tiny (1" x 1½") rectangle to keep it simple and discernible at a distance.

When it's ready, create your design as a vector graphic, which allows easy resizing and reproduction of the image.

In addition to the TED Talk's guidelines, here are some bonus tips & considerations for your flag design:

Consider your flag's aspect ratio (height:width). The top 3 ratios used by national flags are 2:3, 1:2, and 3:5.

When you flip your design backwards (as in looking at the back of the flag), is it still recognizable and appealing?

Does your design look good in grayscale? This exercise helps ensure a high-contrast design that's clear at a distance.

To see how your design looks when flapping in the wind like a real flag, upload its image file here: <https://krikenoid.github.io/flagwaver>

Inkscape (available at **Inkscape.org**) is a free vector graphics editor. (The AJC flag was created with this tool.)

FOR THE NDAs: KEEN TO HOLD A NEIGHBORHOOD FLAG DESIGN CONTEST, BUT UNSURE HOW? SOME STARTING GUIDELINES TO WORK FROM:

Step 1: Get the word out

Use your mailing list, socials, events, the Pilot, etc. to alert folks to your upcoming flag contest. Point them to the TED Talk (see back fold) and tell them to stay tuned for details. For now, the goal is to reach all interested designers and give them time to conceive and create.

Step 2: Decide logistics

Some things to decide for your upcoming contest:

- Deadline for submitting;
- How and what to submit (image size/format, design description, etc.);
- Where and how neighbors can view and vote on submissions.

Step 3: Announce contest

Get back on those socials, put up posters, contact the Pilot, etc. to tell all interested designers exactly what, when, and how to submit.

Also let the broader neighborhood know where/when/how they can view the submissions and cast their votes.

Step 4: Hold contest

Just make sure things run smoothly. Get multiple people to supervise the proceedings. Ensure adequate signage, keep a steady supply of blank ballots (if you're using paper), and so on.

Keep using your email, socials, etc. to remind neighbors to vote.

Step 5: Announce winner

When the votes are in, it's time to show your neighborhood its new flag. An exciting moment!



Yet again, get back on the socials, contact the Pilot, etc. to announce the winning design.

Step 6: Get to work!

Post your new flag to your NDA's website, MilwaukieOregon.gov, etc. to begin its public availability and visibility.

Next, get physical! Start getting flags and flag merch produced, so your neighbors can fly their new colors and the NDA has a fundraising source!

What the AJC NDA did: They put their submissions (8½" x 11" flag designs with each designer's description—250 words max) on display at the Milwaukie Café on SE 32nd, plus a ballot box for paper ballots. Display did not include designers' names. Ballots used the STAR voting method (which works better than classic "choose one" voting when there are more than 2 options). Display remained up for one week of voting.

What the AJC NDA did: They got flags printed by Anley (available at their Etsy shop or **Anley.com**) and worked with Made in Milwaukie (at SE Monroe & 21st / **MadeInMilwaukie.com**) for guidance on production of other merch: t-shirts, stickers, etc.