



To: Mayor and City Council
From: Dylan Mulfinger, City Administrator
Subject: City Flag
Date: 9/14/2026

The city can improve its current flag and create something that is fun, brings pride to the community, and gives residents a reason to come together and create something great. A city flag should be a positive experience for the community and help promote the incredible things happening in Oelwein. Flags are a serious business. They have people who study them, and even a group of people who grade flags. They have symbolism and deep meaning for communities. Flags will be flown from homes, business, and public buildings.

The North American Vexillological Association even offers assistance in creating a flag. Here is a bit from their website:

Fundamental and generally accepted principles underlie effective flag design (vexillography), supported by observation, experience, and empirical analysis. However, any discussion about what makes a good design is strongly influenced by individual tastes, color preferences, and a sense of proportion and balance. Not all people will like the same thing and many flags may not meet the generally accepted principles of good design, but still inspire the people they represent.

If you really want to take a deep dive into the flag world, this video is crucial in getting started on flag design: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnv5iKB2hl4>

Here are the Five Principles for flag 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 or 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.

Let's do something fun, let's take our time, and let's unveil a new flag in June of 2027.



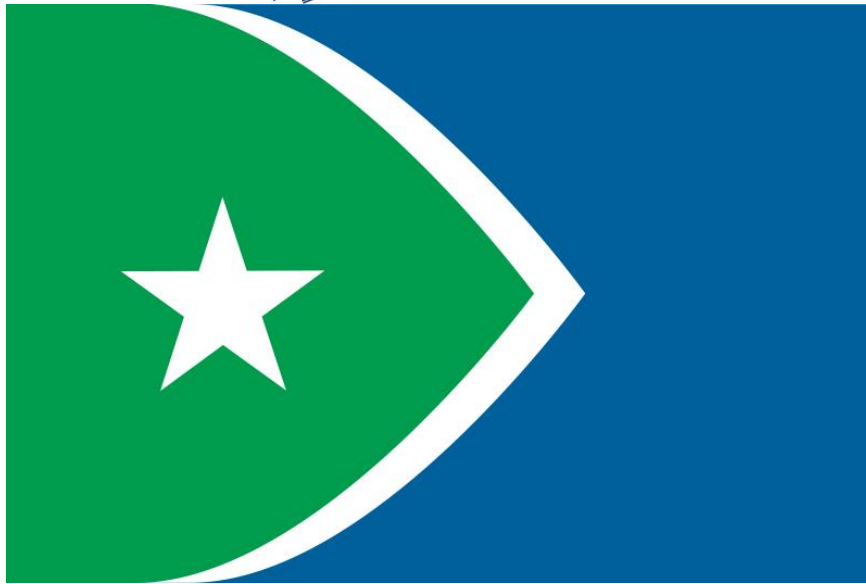
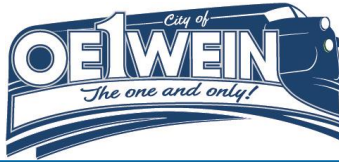
Cities who recently adopted a flag:



Urbandale: <https://events.urbandale.org/flag/>



Colfax : <https://colfaxia.gov/about/city-flag/>



Cedar Rapids: https://www.cedar-rapids.org/discover_cedar_rapids/city_flag/index.php

