

Flag and Lighting Protocol

Cross-reference: GOV-001-036 Acknowledgement of Treaty Six

References: Canada Heritage Online Guidelines: Flag Etiquette in Canada
Canada Heritage Online Guidelines: Rules for Flying the Flag

Policy Statement

The flags flown at Strathcona County facilities are to be treated with respect and dignity. Proper flag etiquette is required to ensure that the presentation and cultural significance of the flags are honoured.

The flying of flags at half-mast is a strong visual statement that speaks to the sense of loss shared by all citizens, and so must be implemented only in circumstances that have exceptional importance to the County.

Strathcona County will lower flags to half-mast to commemorate solemn occasions. The lowering of flags to half-mast will be at the direction of the Province of Alberta and the Chief Commissioner.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the protocols for flying flags at Strathcona County properties and facilities, for the appropriate lighting of Festival Place, and to ensure the use of Strathcona County's flag poles is exercised in a consistent and appropriate manner.

Definitions

Community Group means a not-for-profit group, body, or organization established under an Alberta or Canadian statute or enactment, and that carries on activities benefitting the residents of Strathcona County;

County means Strathcona County;

RCMP means the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Treaty Six means The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations;

Métis Nation of Alberta means the Métis Government for Métis Albertans as per the Métis Government Recognition of Self-Government Agreement (MGRSA).

Guidelines

Flags will be raised, lowered, flown, maintained, and disposed of by Strathcona County in accordance with Canadian Heritage's guidelines on Flag Etiquette in Canada and Rules for Flying the Flag.

I. General Flag Protocol

1. If multiple flags are flown together in a set, all the flags must be flown at the same height (i.e., full-mast or half-mast).
2. All flags flown together in a set must be the same size in their vertical dimension.
3. Flags may be flown at night (i.e., flags do not need to be raised at sunrise and taken down at sunset, daily).

II. Precedence of Flags

1. When a single flag is flown, the National Flag of Canada will be flown.
2. When two flags are flown, the National Flag of Canada and the Provincial Flag of Alberta will be flown.
3. When three flags are flown, the National Flag of Canada, the Provincial Flag of Alberta, and the Flag of Strathcona County will be flown.
4. When five flags are flown, the National Flag of Canada, the Provincial Flag of Alberta, the Flag of Strathcona County, the Confederacy of Treaty Six Flag, and the Flag of the Métis Nation of Alberta will be flown.
5. Despite sections 1-3, Canadian Heritage's guidelines on Flag Etiquette and Rules for Flying the Flag may direct that another flag takes precedence (for example, the flag of the Sovereign). Those guidelines take precedence over any guidelines in this Policy.
6. When dignitaries from outside of Canada are visiting the County, the Flag of Strathcona County may be replaced by the Flag of the dignitary's country, and the precedence of flags adjusted accordingly.
7. Only one flag or banner may be flown on each flag pole. Two or more flags or banners may not be flown in a stacked position (one on top of the other).

III. Lowering Flags to Half-mast

Lowering flags in concert with Federal and Provincial governments

1. Strathcona County will lower flags as directed by the Prime Minister's Office and Canada Heritage (in relation to the Canadian Flag) and the Alberta Premier's Office and Alberta Protocol (in relation to the Canadian Flag and the Alberta Provincial Flag).

Lowering flags at all Strathcona County properties

2. Strathcona County will lower flags to half-mast on all Strathcona County properties and facilities:
 - a. from the time of notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral or memorial service for:
 - i. the Sovereign;

- ii. a member of the immediate Royal Family;
 - iii. a current or former Governor General of Canada;
 - iv. a current or former Prime Minister of Canada;
 - v. a current or former Lieutenant Governor of Alberta;
 - vi. a current or former Premier of Alberta;
 - vii. the current leader of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations;
 - viii. the current leader of the Métis Nation of Alberta;
 - ix. a current Mayor or Councillor of Strathcona County.
- b. from sunrise to sunset on;
 - i. March 11, the National Day of Observance for COVID-19;
 - ii. April 28, the National Day of Mourning (for those who have died in the workplace);
 - iii. June 23, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism;
 - iv. November 11, Remembrance Day, except where a Remembrance Day ceremony involves the raising or lowering of a flag or flags as part of the ceremony;
 - v. The second Sunday in September, Firefighters' National Memorial Day;
 - vi. October 4, Sisters in Spirit Day, National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada;
 - vii. December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.
 - c. whenever the Prime Minister's Office or Canada Heritage have lowered the flags at all Federal properties and buildings;
 - d. whenever the Alberta Premier's Office or Alberta Protocol have lowered the flags at all Provincial properties and buildings.

Lowering Flags at Council's Direction

- 3. Council may pass a resolution directing that Strathcona County lower flags to half-mast at any or all Strathcona County properties and facilities, for such time and under such circumstances as Council directs.

Lowering Flags in Accordance with RCMP Service Customs

- 4. Existing flag policies or procedures that the RCMP observes for flying flags at half-mast at the County's RCMP headquarters to honour former members on the day of a funeral or memorial service may continue to be observed.

Lowering Flags at Approved Memorial Locations

- 5. Despite being part of a set of flags, a memorial flag flown at approved memorial locations on County properties may be lowered on its own in accordance with the customs of the group or person the memorial is erected to honour.

IV. Community Flag Poles

Community flag poles are specific, designated flag poles that may be used to fly the County's flag, the flag or banner of Community Groups, and to honour special circumstances that do not fall within Canada Heritage's guidelines for lowering flags. Despite Guideline II, a community flag pole will not normally be used to fly the flag of Canada or Alberta. Each community flag pole must be both physically and visually separate from the County's standard flag poles.

- 1. Strathcona County may designate one or more flag poles on County properties as Community Flag Poles.

2. A Community Flag Pole may be used to display the flag or banner of community groups. A flag or banner may be displayed during a Community Group's event, or during an event that has a connection to the County.
3. A flag or banner, other than the County's flag, may be flown for up to 7 full days or, in exceptional circumstances, for the duration of an event that lasts longer than 7 full days.
4. Strathcona County will not display a flag or banner if:
 - a. it supports a political party or a cause associated with a political party;
 - b. the flag or banner could be unduly provocative, divisive, or disruptive in the County; or
 - c. the flag or banner promotes a commercial, for-profit enterprise, event, activity, or business.
5. The Chief Commissioner, in consultation with the Office of the Mayor, may direct that the County's flag be flown at half-mast on a Community Flag Pole, under exceptional circumstances including:
 - a. a significant international death or event that has international and local effect or import;
 - b. a significant national death or event that has national and local effect or import;
 - c. a significant local death or event that affects a significant portion of the residents of Strathcona County
6. A resident may make a request to the County to have the County's flag flown at half-mast on a Community Flag Pole under exceptional circumstances, as listed above.
7. In the event of a decision made to lower the County's flag on a Community Flag Pole, a Community Group's flag or banner may be removed and replaced with the County flag. The Community Group's flag or banner flying may then be rescheduled in consultation between the County and the Community group.
8. Any flag or banner flown on a Community Flag Pole will be lowered to half-mast when flags at other County properties are lowered to half-mast.

V. Festival Place Lighting

Festival Place has exterior, coloured lighting that may be used to display selected colours and colour patterns (in sequence). These lights typically run from 5:00pm (or later) to 11:30 pm.

1. The exterior, coloured lights at Festival may be used to display colours related to a Community Group, a Community Group's event, or an event that has a connection to the County.
2. The Festival Place lighting may display a Community Group's requested lighting for up to 7 full days or, in exceptional circumstances, for the duration of an event that lasts longer than 7 full days.
3. Strathcona County will not display particular colours or colour patterns if:
 - a. they supports a political party or a cause associated with a political party;
 - b. the colour display could be unduly provocative, divisive, or disruptive in the County; or

- c. the colour display promotes a commercial, for-profit enterprise, event, activity, or business.
- 4. In the event of exceptional circumstances, as listed above, the County may suspend the display of the Community Group’s colour display. The Community Group’s colour display may then be rescheduled in consultation between the County and the Community group.

Policy Record

Date of Approval by Council: May 4, 2021
2018/02/06

Resolution No: 2021/132
2018/56

Next Review Date: May 4, 2024

Policy No: GOV-002-036

Last Review Date: May 4, 2021

Replaces: N/A

Administrative Review: Facility Services