

COUNCIL POLICY



Document Name: Flag Policy

Department Name: Communications & Engagement

Document Number: PRC-220

Effective Date: July 15, 2021

Next Revision Date: July 2024

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

- Strategic Priority 1 – Responsible Government

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

This Policy is to ensure that all Flags at Municipal Facilities are flown and displayed in a consistent and appropriate manner in accordance with accepted national and provincial Flag protocols and guidelines. Flags will be flown on a permanent, as well as on a temporary basis, to raise awareness of significant causes or events that benefit, enrich, or honour the community and region.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Definitions:

- 1.1. “Canadian Heritage” means a branch of the federal government responsible for the cultural, civic and economic life of Canadians. This branch is responsible for the National Flag of Canada.
- 1.2. “Community Flag” means a Flag that represents a community organization or community initiative and includes, but is not limited to, the Indigenous Community.
- 1.3. “Courtesy Flagpole” means the flagpole located at Kiyám Community Park.
- 1.4. “Employee” means all exempt and union regular full-time, part-time, seasonal, contract or term employees, summer, internship or cooperative education students on the municipal payroll.
- 1.5. “Flag” means a piece of cloth or bunting, usually with a pattern or device, generally rectangular or square in shape and attached to a pole or staff and used to draw attention and represent ownership. For the purposes of this Policy, Flags include the National Flag of Canada, the Flag of Alberta, the Municipal Flag, the Treaty 8 Flag, the First Nations Flag, the Métis Flag(s), and Community Flags.
- 1.6. “Half-Mast” means a Flag flying halfway up a mast or pole and is a symbol of respect, mourning or distress.

- 1.7. "Indigenous Community" means the First Nation and Métis groups of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Smiths Landing First Nation, Mikisew Cree First Nation, Fort McKay First Nation, Fort McMurray 468 First Nation, Chipewyan Prairie First Nation, Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, Fort McKay Métis Nation, McMurray Métis Local #1935, Willow Lake Métis Nation, Conklin Métis and Chard Métis.
- 1.8. "Jubilee Centre" means the municipal building located at 9909 Franklin Avenue.
- 1.9. "Municipal Facilities" means any building, structure or area of land owned by or under the direction and control of the Municipality. This includes treatment plants, fire halls, leisure centres, sports and fitness facilities, arenas, parks, park amenities, exhibition facilities and bridges.
- 1.10. "Municipality" or "Municipal" means the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.
- 1.11. "Rural Offices" means municipal offices in rural communities.

2. Responsibilities:

2.1. Council to:

- 2.1.1. approve this Policy and all amendments as required.

2.2. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designate to:

- 2.2.1. review and determine the eligibility of lowering Flags to Half-Mast and the raising of Community Flags;
- 2.2.2. determine the location of Flags; and
- 2.2.3. approve the use of the Courtesy Flagpole.

3. General Procedures:

- 3.1. All Flags, including the National Flag of Canada, the Flag of Alberta, the Municipal Flag, the Treaty 8 Flag, the First Nations Flag(s), and the Métis Flag(s) are symbols of honour and pride, and will be treated with respect and dignity.

4. Displaying of Flags:

- 4.1. The Municipality will display Flags at the following Municipal Facilities:
 - 4.1.1. Jubilee Centre (9909 Franklin Avenue);
 - 4.1.2. Council Chambers (First Floor Jubilee Centre);
 - 4.1.3. Rural Offices,
 - 4.1.4. Fire Halls; and
 - 4.1.5. Other Municipal Facilities that currently have flagpoles.

- 4.2. Current Municipal Facilities that do not have flagpoles are not required to install them.
- 4.3. The inclusion of flagpoles at newly built Municipal Facilities will be determined on a project-by-project basis.
- 4.4. The Municipality will display Flags at Municipal Facilities in the following manner:
 - 4.4.1. Flags will be flown on separate flagpoles.
 - 4.4.2. Flags will be flown at the same height.
 - 4.4.3. Flags flown in a group will be the same size.
 - 4.4.4. Flags will be flown in the order established by the Canadian Heritage.
- 4.5. The following Flags will permanently be flown from the flagpoles in front of the Jubilee Centre and in Council Chambers:
 - 4.5.1. Canada
 - 4.5.2. Alberta
 - 4.5.3. Municipal
 - 4.5.4. Treaty 8
 - 4.5.5. Métis
- 4.6. An Indigenous Community may request that the Municipality display their Flag in Council chambers.
- 4.7. The following Flags will permanently be flown from the flagpoles in front of the other locations referenced in 4.1:
 - 4.7.1. Canada
 - 4.7.2. Alberta
 - 4.7.3. Municipal
- 4.8. Where additional flagpoles are available in Municipal Facilities, the following Flags will be flown:
 - 4.8.1. Treaty 8
 - 4.8.2. Métis
 - 4.8.3. Indigenous Community (Rural Service Area)
- 4.9. Flags may be displayed at any official event where the Mayor is officiating a municipal event. When other levels of government are participating, the corresponding Flag will be displayed, if appropriate.

5. Flags at Half-Mast:

- 5.1. The lowering of Flags at Half-Mast is at the directive of the:
 - 5.1.1. Prime Minister's office acting through Canadian Heritage;
 - 5.1.2. Premier's office acting through the Alberta Protocol Office; or
 - 5.1.3. Mayor's office acting through the CAO's office.
- 5.2. Flags will be lowered at Half-Mast for:
 - 5.2.1. all occasions prescribed by Canadian Heritage or Alberta Protocol Office;
or
 - 5.2.2. a solemn occasion for the community, applicable only to the lowering of the Municipal Flag, the Treaty 8 Flag, and the Métis Flag(s).
- 5.3. In addition to 5.2, the Municipality will lower all Flags at Half-Mast on the following dates:
 - 5.3.1. May 5 – National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People
 - 5.3.2. October 4 – Sisters in Spirit Day
 - 5.3.3. November 16 – Louis Riel Day

6. Requests to Display Flags or Lower Flags at Half-Mast:

- 6.1. All requests to temporarily display a Flag on the Courtesy Flagpole or to lower Flags at Half-Mast for circumstances outside those prescribed by Canadian Heritage or the Alberta Protocol Office must be sent to the Communications and Engagement Department through an online request form available on the Municipality's website.
- 6.2. The CAO or designate, will review and approve requests to lower Flags at Half-Mast and for displaying Community Flags on the Courtesy Flagpole.
- 6.3. Where possible, all requests should be submitted two weeks in advance of the proposed date or event.
- 6.4. It is the responsibility of the requestor to provide the Flag for the Courtesy Flagpole and ensure that the Flag is in good condition.
- 6.5. Requests will not be approved for:
 - 6.5.1. intent that is contrary to the Municipality's bylaws and policies;
 - 6.5.2. Flags that may be considered offensive, controversial or divisive of the community; or
 - 6.5.3. organizations whose undertakings or philosophy espouse violence, hatred or racism.

- 6.6. The Courtesy Flagpole will be used under the following criteria, but is not limited to:
 - 6.6.1. Flags are flown from sunrise to sunset, over an approved period of time as part of the request. If the period of time is not indicated, the duration a Flag may be flown on the Courtesy Flagpole will be determined by the CAO's office.
 - 6.6.2. The Flag of a charitable or non-profit organization, to celebrate a special occasion or local achievement.
 - 6.6.3. The Flag of a local sports team on the occasion of the team winning their league championship at the national or international level.
- 6.7. Permitting a Community Flag does not constitute an endorsement from the Municipality or its employees. It is forbidden to give the impression that an event, service or product is endorsed or associated with the Municipality in any way if such endorsement has not been given in writing from the Municipality.
- 6.8. The Municipality reserves the right to cancel a request if an unforeseen circumstance occurs.

7. Lowering and Replacement of Flags:

- 7.1. When a Flag is to be lowered:
 - 7.1.1. the Flag shall never touch the ground; and
 - 7.1.2. the Flag shall be folded in accordance with the standard prescribed by Canadian Heritage.
- 7.2. When a Flag becomes tattered and is no longer in a suitable condition for use, it should be destroyed in a dignified way.
 - 7.2.1. A Flag is considered to be tattered or worn when the colour has faded, it has developed a hole, or the outermost seam (fly) of the flag has become frayed.
 - 7.2.2. Disposal of such Flags is prescribed by Canadian Heritage.

8. Rescind and Replace:

- 8.1. This Policy rescinds and replaces the Flag Protocol Policy PRL-050, dated March 17, 1987.

APPROVAL

This Policy was approved by Council. It will be reviewed not later than its next Revision Date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. It may be assessed before that time as necessary.

Don Scott, Mayor

Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer

Date

SUPPORTING REFERENCES AND POSITION RESPONSIBLE

Legal References: • Holidays Act, RSC 1985, c H-5

- Cross References:
- Flag Protocol Administrative Procedure (PRC-220-D)
 - National Flag of Canada etiquette;
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/flag-canada-etiquette.html>
 - Alberta Protocol and Ceremony, Flag Etiquette;
<https://www.alberta.ca/protocol-flag-etiquette.aspx>

Position Responsible: Director, Communications & Engagement

COUNCIL POLICY DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Description
July, 2021	Revision – Substantive	Review of Policy to reflect current protocol and practices