



RAVEN

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CANADIAN CITY FLAGS

NORTH AMERICAN CITY FLAGS

Part 2: Canada

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★ provincial/territorial capital

(c) placement on the list is based on the population ranking of the city, rather than the metropolitan area or agglomeration

Note: Where cities lack flags, Bridgewater NS replaces Kentville NS, Happy Valley-Goose Bay NL replaces Grand Falls-Windsor NL, Hanover MB (no flag) replaces Springfield MB, St. Andrew's MB replaces Hanover MB.



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The North American Vexillological Association (NAVA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of vexillology, the scientific and scholarly study of flag history and symbolism. Its members come from all fields of vexillology, including flag collectors and historians, government officials, museum directors, and flag manufacturers and retailers, as well as those interested in flags as a hobby. NAVA publishes *Raven: A Journal of Vexillology* and a newsletter, *NAVA News*, hosts the website www.nava.org, holds annual meetings, undertakes special projects, and participates in international vexillological events.

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Editor's Notes



It has been an honour and a pleasure to bring to print the most significant body of information about Canadian municipal flags ever compiled. Of course, the work is never done; cities will continue to adopt and change their flags. However, we hope this documentation of the current state of the civic flag world in Canada will spur continued interest in such flags, and perhaps even improvements in some designs (see NAVA's guide to flag design, *Good Flag, Bad Flag*).

This book follows *Raven 9/10, American City Flags*, which documented 150 flags from Akron to Yonkers in a similar format, and received the 2005 Vexillon award from FIAV, the International Federation of Vexillological Associations, for the most important contribution to vexillological scholarship in the preceding two years.

While we have endeavoured to find the most accurate and up-to-date information about Canadian city flags, we expect inevitable errors, for which we apologize. They may result from the vagaries of volunteer research in a field often marked by incomplete, inconsistent, and elusive evidence. Municipal flags represent one of vexillology's most difficult subfields to document for various reasons, among them limited community knowledge of its own flag, poor record-keeping, remote areas, municipal mergers, and multiple flag adoptions. In some cases we have made assumptions; we try to identify those.

Compiling a list of Canadian municipalities for such a project poses several challenges.

The first challenge is nomenclature—we apply the term “city” in the title of this book to municipal entities ranging from a hamlet of under 500 to a megacity of over 5 million. We do so for simplicity, understanding that “municipality” would be more accurate but also more awkward.





The second challenge—how to balance the conflicting demands of presenting a group broadly representative of the entire country versus assuring inclusion of the largest cities—is resolved by doing both. We include five municipalities, regardless of national ranking, from each of Canada’s thirteen provinces and territories, as well as the 67 largest municipalities in the country. In the four cases where cities on the list did not have flags, we substituted the next city in the ranking. All capital cities are represented.

The third challenge involves the definition of municipalities for the purposes of selecting the largest 67 and the largest five per province and territory. Our selection is based on the 2006 list of census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and census agglomerations (CAs) by Statistics Canada. For each CMA or CA, we present the flag of the central/largest city among its census subdivisions (CSDs). The population rankings in the book thus mostly refer to the metropolitan area, rather than the city itself. For those provinces and territories without enough or any CMAs or CAs, we established the local five-city selection directly from the CSD list. In those cases, the population ranking refers to the CSD list, a difference we denote with a “(c)” in the Table of Contents. In the case of Nova Scotia, we adapted the methodology further. Nova Scotia had exactly five municipality clusters on the CMA/CA list, but one of them (Kentville) had no flag. Because the CSD list for Nova Scotia did not match municipal divisions as closely as in other provinces and territories, we chose the central cities from the top five provincial Census Divisions (CDs).

Overall, favouring metropolitan areas over cities allows us to present more recognizable cities that are also more permanent than suburbs, which over time may be merged or annexed to a central city. It also reflects the demographic curve of provinces more accurately—had we opted for a direct ranking by city population, British Columbia and Ontario (with a greater number of suburbs) would have been overrepresented to the detriment of Alberta and Québec. We understand that some large suburban cities missed our list, being part of a larger CMA or CA—however, those with populations over 200,000 are included in the articles on their CMA (nine cities in the CMAs of Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver).





Although many Canadian cities have used flags or banners to commemorate important events, such as expositions, centennials, sporting events, and the like, and some have flags representing police/fire departments, port authorities, and sports teams, we have reluctantly excluded those interesting and compelling images from this book—this additional layer of civic vexillology deserves deeper study and more consistent coverage than we could provide.

We attempt to show flags in their official proportions. However, in some cases manufacturers and others will alter the proportions of a flag. They do so either to match the national or provincial flags with which it will fly, when conforming to a standard size (such as for table flags), or out of inaccurate or incomplete specifications. And in many cases flags are unofficial, without formal specifications. When we rely on actual flags as a source, we try to note how proportions vary in usage.

We also attempt to show flags in their correct colours. However, flags in actual use often vary in colour, due to differences in manufacturing technologies, the use of standardized flag fabrics, lack of official specifications, and fading over time. Also, the standards of heraldry, which underlie a large number of the flags we document, do not make fine distinctions between colour shades. Furthermore, the translation of an image into print often causes variations in colour.

As usual, *Raven* generally follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*; however, it adopts the more logical British style of presenting quoted material inside the commas and periods that belong to the surrounding sentence. See the **Descriptive Conventions** below for some stylistic attributes unique to this text. Canadian spelling is used throughout.

Canadian City Flags ultimately reflects the support of the many hundred members of NAVA and the generous donors who contributed towards its publication. The world of vexillology thanks you!





Definitions, Conventions, & Authors

Key Definitions

Arch	A verb describing an item bending with its mid-point highest (see Curve).
Banner of Arms	A flag derived from the principal components of the shield of a coat of arms.
Canadian Pale Design	A flag format matching the national flag, generally in proportions of 1:2, where the central section (the “pale”) is square, usually white. The colours are given hoist-first.
Coat of Arms	A graphic emblem of a municipality, usually granted by a heraldic authority, with certain traditional components.
Crest	A component of a coat of arms, placed above all the other elements. The word is often used informally (but incorrectly) to refer to the entire coat of arms.
Curve	A verb describing an item bending with its mid-point lowest (see Arch).
Field	The background of a flag or shield, usually of a solid colour.
Fly	The far edge of a flag, opposite the flagpole—the part that “flies”.
Hoist	The near edge of a flag, next to the flagpole—the part that is “hoisted”.
Mantling	Stylized draped fabric sometimes topping or flanking a shield in a coat of arms.





Quarter	One of four sections of a flag or component parts of a shield, numbered 1) upper-left, 2) upper-right, 3) lower-left, 4) lower-right.
Saltire	A diagonally-oriented X-shaped cross, extending to the edge of the field.
Supporter	A heraldic image of a person or animal flanking (“supporting”) a shield.
Torse	A small horizontal wreath of alternating colours, used in a coat of arms.
Vexillology	The study of flags.





Descriptive Conventions

Proportions of flags are presented as height(width):length, for example 1:2. Colours and components, if not otherwise specified, are listed top-to-bottom or left-to-right.

Bold type denotes an inscription on a flag, for example **Iqaluit**.

Italics mean a quotation or non-English words, for example *The arms used for half a century*, and *tiluktuut* or *Sarnia Semper*.

Capital cities are marked with a star, for example **Charlottetown**, **Prince Edward Island**^{*}. A maple leaf 🍁 denotes the federal capital.

Population ranks are listed for each city's place among Canadian cities and among cities within its province/territory, for example **Abbotsford, British Columbia—Population Rank:** Canada: 23; Province: 4.

Population ranks refer to the city's metropolitan area or agglomeration, except in the cases of smaller entities, where the city rank, marked with (c) in the Table of Contents, is used. See the Editor's Notes for a full explanation of the methodology.

The adoption date denotes when a flag was first put into use, whether approved by law, granted by a heraldic authority, or otherwise adopted.

Authors

Authors are noted with initials at the end of each article:

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We owe a great debt to the many contributors and editors of *Flags of the World* (forw.net), that matchless online vexillological resource, who have researched and published invaluable information on many of the flags we cover in this volume. We especially thank those at the Canadian Heraldic Authority, including Catherine Fitzpatrick, Coppermine Herald, who provided many flag images; Darrel E. Kennedy, Assiniboine Herald, who helped with fact-checking; and Bruce Patterson, Deputy Chief Herald of Canada, who consulted throughout the project and reviewed the entire text. Kevin Harrington, president of the Canadian Flag Association, gave invaluable advice and research assistance. The indefatigable Eugene Ipavec took a wide range of graphic images and produced the consistent, professional artwork for all the flag illustrations—a monumental task. Zach Harden created the locator maps and helped in other ways. Natalie Bussieres helped with some of the original Ontario research, as did Dean McGee for British Columbia and Brian Erickson for several cities. Jon Radel provided ISBN assis-

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Ultimately this book would not have succeeded without the nine outstanding researcher/writer volunteers—dedicated NAVA members in Canada and the United States—who contributed countless hours over several years, planning the project, researching the flag information through published and first-person sources, then writing, editing, and checking the results. They have advanced our knowledge of a large body of flags, and our profound thanks go to them.

Introduction



As the Honourable Ian A. Mackenzie remarked during the contentious 1945 parliamentary debates about Canada's flag, "In the life of every nation symbols are important, and perhaps the most important of these is the national flag." So, too, Canada's strong and vibrant tradition of civic flag use often provides meaningful symbolism to engage the allegiance of municipal citizenry. Their designs also often make clear connections to the nation, province, or territory, as well as to the shared history, geography, and values of the cities they represent.

Unlike cities in the United States, a large number of Canadian municipalities have coats of arms, most granted by heraldic authorities in Canada, England, or Scotland—except in Québec, where there is a prevalent tradition of "assumed" arms. Those arms find their way onto flags in three primary ways: 1) placing the entire coat of arms onto the flag, or using the shield from the arms as a device, 2) spreading the main elements of the shield across the entire field of the flag (called here a "banner of arms"), or 3) using elements of the arms in other ways in the flag's design. This heraldic tradition distinguishes Canadian municipal flags from those in the United States, where city seals are often used. Corporate-style logos, however, represent a growing trend on Canadian municipal flags, and seals do appear on some.

In addition, Canada's compelling national flag, adopted in 1965, introduced a new format—the "Canadian pale design", a 1:2 flag with a square panel (the "pale" itself) in its centre (usually white) and coloured bars at the sides. This

forms the pattern for many Canadian municipal flags, which place a device in the centre and often alter the colours of the bars. Further, most of those flags that do not follow the Canadian pale still have proportions of 1:2, which Canada inherited from British usage.

While municipalities' coats of arms, badges, crests, and seals may go back over a century, the adoption of civic flags appears to be a much more recent phenomenon. The oldest in this book, perhaps the oldest in Canada, is the flag of Montréal (1939), older than both Québec's *Fleurdelisé* (1948) and Canada's *Maple Leaf* (1965). Of those whose adoption dates we know, over four-fifths are after 1980. Sometimes external events spur flag design—such as Expo '86 in Vancouver, B.C. Sometimes a community anniversary or celebration will provide the spark. In any case, only a handful of the cities we identified for our list did not have flags. Their actual use, however, can vary from widespread in the community to nearly non-existent.

The story of Canadian municipalities differs over time and across the continent, with the flags of some of the older, eastern cities reflecting more religious symbolism and the newer, western cities using more secular images. In Québec in particular, many municipal flags incorporate elements from the former seigniorial families' coats of arms, many created by the *Collège canadien des armoiries*, a private Montréal-based heraldic design firm active in the late 1950s which designed coats of arms for French-dominant municipalities in Québec, Ontario, and New Brunswick.

As Canada's population became increasingly urban throughout the 20th century, many provincial governments chose to give their urban centres stronger administrative coherence to stimulate economic growth. In the late 1990s and early 2000s (and to a lesser extent in the 1970s) a wave of mergers and amalgamations swept the country's municipal institutions, especially in the larger metropolitan areas. A large number of new and successor municipal entities emerged, needing new or sometimes adapted symbols to represent and unify them. Many flags documented here date from that era.

Two areas of professionalisation characterize recent flag design, with varied success. First, the Canadian Heraldic Authority (CHA), able inheritor of the mantle of arms-granting in Canada since 1988, has taken an increasingly active role in developing civic symbolism. Second, the trend toward "branding" cities has led to the involvement of graphic design firms and "logo" flags.

Canada's current municipal system began in the mid-19th century. Some cities incorporated and adopted symbols even before the original four provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Québec united under the Canadian federation in 1867. Over time, English-dominant municipalities sometimes assumed arms of their own creation or were granted arms by authorities in London or Edinburgh. In 1988, the CHA granted its first coat of arms and flag to the city of Québec, Canada's oldest continuously-inhabited municipality. The CHA was mindful of the heritage of the Collège canadien des armoiries and often based its designs on those of its pioneering, though unofficial, predecessor.

In all, Canada's municipalities—large and small—have wholeheartedly embraced flag adoption and display, in an often successful effort to represent, differentiate, and inspire. From the hamlet of fewer than 500 inhabitants to the megacity of over 5 million, the municipal entities of Canada fly their colours proudly. This “civic flag parade” as Canadian Flag Association president Kevin Harrington so aptly calls it, shows that flags are more than static bits of cloth—they form a dynamic part of human public ritual.

Edward B. Kaye

