

TO: Mayor Rogin and Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kim Mitchell, Community Relations Director
Kristen Bruckner, Arts and Cultural Services Coordinator

DATE: 12/30/2025

ITEM: Lyons Municipal Flag –Direction and Decision

☐ ORDINANCE
☐ MOTION / RESOLUTION
☒ INFORMATION

- I. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** In response to an earlier Board request, staff, in conjunction with the Lyons Arts and Humanities Commission (LAHC) issued a public call to local artists for the design of a municipal flag. The call included background information and design specifications and was broadly promoted through Town communication channels. For the original call, there were twenty-six submissions received from ten different, locally based Lyons artists. Nearly all of the artists expressed how engaged they were to design a flag for their local community which means so much to them. The call to artists emphasized community engagement and local identity. There is a \$500 stipend offered for the selected artist/final design.

The National League of Cities has a public facing document featuring the principles of good, municipal flag design. <https://www.nlc.org/article/2025/04/22/a-12-step-guide-to-redesigning-your-citys-flag/>

These include:

Key Principles (The 5 Rules of Good Flag Design)

- Keep it Simple: The flag should be so basic a child can draw it from memory.
- Use Meaningful Symbolism: Images, colors, or patterns should relate to the city's identity, history, or values
- Use 2-3 Basic Colors: Limit colors to a few that contrast well and are from standard sets.
- No Lettering or Seals: Avoid words and official seals; they are illegible at a distance, and the flag represents the people, not just the government.
- Be Distinctive or Related: Don't copy other flags but use similarities to show connections if relevant.

Artists were asked to adhere to a similar set of guidelines that include the principles of good flag design as described by the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA).

<https://nava.org/good-flag-bad-flag>

Following an initial review, the LAHC forwarded four finalist designs for Board consideration, in October 2025. Based on subsequent discussion and feedback, staff reached out to the four finalists and requested that each submit revised concepts. In December, the LAHC reviewed the revised submissions and narrowed the selection down to three final artists. For two of the artists, the LAHC preferred their original submission over the revised version.

Over the past several months, staff is not sure if there is clear direction in the approach of using a public call to artists. Staff and the LAHC hope that the current artist-led process will result in a flag that will meet the Town's long-term functional, branding, and representational needs.

The recent **public call for artists** emphasizes community engagement and local identity but may have also resulted in designs that require additional technical refinement to function well as the Town of Lyons flag. Conversely, hiring a professional "flag" designer or design agency provides expertise in flag design principles and reproducibility but may feel less community-driven if not paired with intentional engagement.

- II. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff seeks BOT direction if the full board is comfortable with continuing forward with the local, public artist process to select **a final artist** (rather than a final design), with direction to staff and the LAHC **to work collaboratively with the selected artist to refine the flag to meet BOT input, feedback and considerations**. This approach would allow the final design to be informed by Board feedback, community values, and practical flag design considerations.
- III. **LEGAL ISSUES:** None known.
- IV. **CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:** None known.
- V. **SUMMARY AND ALTERNATIVES:**
 1. Select one of the three recommended final artists and work with LAHC and staff, to work with the selected artist to make adjustments to the concept or theme of their flag design, based on BOT discussion and feedback. *Staff recommend this option for several reasons. A) The three local artists have put a lot of time, energy, skill and passion into their design. B) To start over or to use an outside agency doesn't feel that it is in the spirit of Lyons and our artistic community. C) This feels like the most efficient and effective path forward.*
 2. Decline to move forward with any of the finalist designs and provide direction for a *new call to artists*
 3. Pause selection and direct staff to engage a professional designer or agency to develop a municipal flag, informed by community values and feedback. This would be a more expensive option and is currently not budgeted.
 4. Try to adopt a hybrid approach by identifying the BOT's preferred concept or theme from the existing submissions and engaging a professional designer to refine and finalize the flag for long-term municipal use.