



STATE STREET FLAG PROGRAM: DESIGN GUIDELINES

I. Executive Summary

A. Design Objectives

1. Strive for dynamic and creative representations, using bold, colorful graphics or artistic images.
2. Stylistic elements should be consistent with those of the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District.

B. Technical Considerations

1. Aim for bold colors with strong contrast; avoid fine lines and subtle gradation.
2. Avoid flag designs with white backgrounds or large swaths of white.
3. Photographic images are not encouraged and if approved, a limited number of flags using photography may be selected in any given year and must have strong definition and clarity.

C. Design Considerations

1. Inclusion of a logo in a flag design must be done artistically; simple reproduction of a logo as used on an organization's stationery is unlikely to be accepted by the Downtown Santa Barbara Décor & Flag Committee.
2. At the discretion of the Décor & Flag Committee, text may be incorporated sparingly on flags, for the sole purpose of identifying an organization.
3. Text shall cover no more than 3% (104 square inches) of the flag's surface, and must be subservient to the graphic image.

II. Background

Informed by years of Flag Program administration, these Design Guidelines are intended to offer guidance to applicants regarding best practices for the development of strong, attractive flag designs. For the benefit of applicants and the Downtown Santa Barbara (hereinafter “DSB”) Décor & Flag Committee (hereinafter “Committee”) members alike, engagement of an experienced graphic designer and adhering to these Guidelines, will aid in a streamlined review and approval process. **Organizations new to the Flag Program are strongly encouraged to invite their graphic designer to participate in the Committee meeting(s) at which proposed designs are reviewed.**

Please feel free to contact staff at DSB with any questions.

III. State Street Flag Program Design Objectives

- A. Utilize bold, colorful graphics or artistic images to convey the identity of the non-profit organization represented on the flag, with limited reliance on text.
- B. Maintain consistency with the intent of the City of Santa Barbara’s requirements for signs in the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District (hereinafter “EPV” or “District”). Summarized from the City’s Municipal Code:
 1. Signs in the EPV shall contribute to the retention or restoration of the historical character of the area.
 2. Colors shall be consistent with the Hispanic styles of architecture in the district and the typeface used shall be consistent with the District, except that where the business logo or trademark uses a particular typeface, it may be used.
- C. Non-profit organizations newly selected for participation in the Flag Program are strongly encouraged to visit the Flag Program page on DSB’s website at <http://www.downtownsb.org/state-street-flag-program> to view examples of previously approved flag designs. The flags featured on the website include both recently approved flags, as well as those that received approval seven (7) or more years ago, and are useful examples to keep in mind as you review these Guidelines.

IV. Technical Considerations

- A. General
 1. All flags must be four (4) feet wide by six (6) feet tall, and must have two grommets at the top and a third patch reinforcement grommet at the side, to allow them to be tied to City lampposts for display.
 2. Flags must have a fiberglass rod rolled in vinyl and sewn into the top of the flag to enable display.

3. Flags must be well-constructed of appropriately durable fabrics – *e.g.*, Glaser nylon.
4. Flags are hemmed after printing, which should be taken into consideration when design elements bleed off the edge of the flag.
5. Flags may be printed using a digital or silk screen process, or may be created with layers of fabric through a stitch or applique technique.

B. Digital Printing

1. Most flags are generated using digital printing, similar to an office inkjet printer, as a broad range of colors can be produced, as well as photographic images and graduated tones and textures.
2. Images are printed onto tight-mesh nylon fabric; the colors and images are deposited on one side of the fabric only, which makes each flag’s reverse side slightly less intense in color and definition.
3. With the sun shining through a flag, the result is less contrast and definition, as compared to a digital print on paper. This is important to take into consideration when generating a flag design, as fine lines and subtle color differences tend to “get lost,” especially at the typical flag viewing height and distance. Over time, fine lines and subtle color differences will become even less distinguishable, as the flags age and dirt accumulates.
4. To compensate for these issues, Program participants are strongly urged to use larger blocks of bold colors with strong contrast, and to minimize small details.
5. Flag designs composed primarily of pastel colors with low contrast between adjacent areas, and/or which have substantial fine line work, tend to be less impactful.
6. Flag designs with white backgrounds or large areas of white should be avoided, as the flags will appear gray and dingy over time.
7. Photographic images may become dated before the life of the flags have been completed; for this reason, photography is strongly discouraged.
8. To approximate how a flag design will translate to fabric and evaluate the viability of a design, print it using an ink-jet printer on thin paper, and hold the print-out up to a sunlit window.

V. Design Considerations

- A. Flag designs must be dynamic, bold, and creative graphic representations.
- B. Flag designs may include an artistic expression of an organization’s logo – *e.g.*, placing the logo off-center, enlarging it, and/or designing the flag such that it bleeds off the edge. Adjustments to the logo’s color, and/or the addition of other color elements may

be necessary, and simple reproduction of a logo as used on an organization's stationery is unlikely to be accepted.

- C. Text – lettering, initials, and/or acronyms – may be used sparingly, at the discretion of the Committee to identify an organization, in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - 1. Text may cover no more than 3% (104 square inches) of the flag's surface, and shall be used only to identify the organization represented.
 - 2. Generally, the text area shall be determined by the area of the smallest rectangle required to enclose all parts of the text, which includes, for example, ascending and descending font elements and the length of the entire text line.
 - 3. Given the great variety of font types and different visual weight, ranging from all-capital block letters to lacy script, the Committee has the discretion to determine the appropriate method for measuring the surface area containing text, which may include using the average height of the text, or taking into account widely-spaced letters in an acronym.
 - 4. In all flag designs, text must be subservient to the graphic image. Preferably, text should be incorporated into the graphic elements of the flag; where that approach is not feasible, font style, size, and color will be taken into account in the evaluation of the flag design. The Committee may consider an exception to the text area limitation where the graphic design comprises an abstraction of a limited number of letters into the composition. Typically, this would be initials representing the organization, but not words or registered logos that are solely letters.
 - 5. In keeping with the City's Municipal Code requirements for the EPV, font styles (except when part of an entity's registered trademark style) shall be serif or script. Sans serif and block letters are discouraged.
 - 6. Dates, times, locations, and marks indicating "registered" or "trademark" are prohibited.
- D. Flag designs must not include elements that resemble or conflict with traffic control signs or devices.
- E. Colors used in flag designs must be compatible and harmonious with the EPV district; fluorescent and Day-Glo colors are prohibited.