



## Edmonton, Alberta

**Population Rank:** Canada. . . . 6  
Province. . . . 2

**Proportions:** 1:2

**Adopted:** 12 December 1966,  
updated in the 1970s,  
in 1986, and after 1995



**DESIGN:** The flag of the City of Edmonton is a Canadian pale design of blue-white-blue with a coat of arms in the centre, nearly the full height of the flag. The shield is simple, with a curved top, rounded base, and black outline. A white horizontal stripe divides it into two panels, the upper one-third and the lower two-thirds. The upper panel is blue with a half-circle rising sun depicted with 15 rays, alternating wavy and straight, all in yellow outlined in black. The lower panel is light purple, crossed horizontally in its centre by a wavy blue stripe bordered in white. Above the stripe is a double-winged wheel and below is a sheaf of grain, both in yellow with black details. Behind the shield, extending above and below it, is a mace, containing two stylized wild roses flanking a larger marigold, all in yellow with black details. To the left stands an explorer in brown leather with a bag and powder horn, holding a rifle, in light brown. He wears a Métis sash of blue and brown checks. To the right stands Athena in a blue gown holding a torch and a book, in yellow. They stand on a mound of green. Below the shield is a ribbon in yellow in three sections, inscribed **INDUSTRY INTEGRITY PROGRESS** in black serifed letters. A ribbon in yellow reading **EDMONTON** in black serifed letters arches above the arms.

**SYMBOLISM:** White and blue are Edmonton's official colours and symbolize the ideals of peace and strength. The white also recalls the long months of snow and the blue represents the North Saskatchewan River and the brilliant blue summer sky. The mace acknowledges Edmonton as the capital of the province. The wild rose (*Rosa acicularis*) is the provincial flower of Alberta; the marigold (*Calendula officinalis*) is Edmonton's flower. As there are many varieties of marigolds, the flower symbolizes the more than 50 ethnic groups that make up the city's population. It also represents sunny Alberta, and Edmonton's role in the Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s, when many Canadian routes to the Klondike went through Edmonton. The rising sun symbolizes Edmonton's above-average amount of summer sunshine. The double-winged wheel represents Edmonton as a centre of aviation and industry, and as a gateway to the North, which it became during World War II as the southern terminus of the famed Alaska Highway. The wavy stripe represents the North Saskatchewan River, which flows through the city. The wheat sheaf symbolizes the importance of agriculture. The explorer recalls the history of the city as a fur trading post; Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, symbolizes education and the colleges and universities in Edmonton, including the University of Alberta. "Industry-Integrity-Progress" has long been the city's motto.

**HOW SELECTED:** By bylaw (ordinance) of Edmonton's city council. The city arms were adopted by the city council in 1949, but a formal grant by the Chief Herald of Canada of a similar coat of arms was not made until 8 October 1995.

**DESIGNER:** The flag was originally designed in 1966 by Norman Yates, Associate Professor of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, as a gift for the upcoming centennial celebration in 1967. It was adopted by the city council and shown at Expo '67.

**FORMER FLAGS:** At least four former versions of the flag have existed, some with outer bars narrower than on a Canadian pale design. Originally the City of Edmonton approved two versions, identical except for one with **CITY OF EDMONTON** in black sans-serif letters below the arms (later **THE** was added above the other words), for use outside Edmonton. Slight changes were made to the design over the years and the flag was officially updated in 1986 and after the formal grant of arms in 1995. The flag now includes a scroll bearing the city's name above the coat of arms, along with changes to Athena. These changes have been a source of contention for the original flag designer.



When preparing to donate a signed copy of the flag for a local fundraiser in 1986, Professor Yates went to City Hall to get one, and found that it significantly differed than his 1966 original. The city had no official records to indicate how or why the design had changed but suggested the original design was forgotten over time and that when the flag was ordered again in the 1970s, it took on a design including the original arms. In a hearing in 1987 to determine the flag's fate, the city decided on a more updated version of the city arms suggested by the

city's visual identity committee. After the hearing, a disappointed Yates commented that the new Athena resembled a "modern-day Bo-Peep". He added that the new flag was a bad decision and placing the name of the city on the flag seemed provincial; he felt his original flag was truer to good flag design.