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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROCHESTER FLAG PROJECT ANNOUNCES OFFICIAL START OF CONTEST Round #1 of Citizen Flag Redesign starts May 15, 2017

May 8, 2017, Rochester, MN: The Rochester Flag Project Committee and Herold Flags & Flagpoles announce the official start of the contest to update the Rochester city flag.

The contest was first announced in February at the Rochester Art Center. Since then, a committee has been formed to set contest rules and voting systems, to seat a Judges' Board, and to gather community resources to support the project.

The Rochester Flag Project is following in the footsteps of many cities around the country that are updating their flags and reconnecting with urbanism and good design. The present Rochester flag dates from 1980, and calls for a new one have been in the works for several years now. The project goal is to tap into the substantial brainpower and talent in Rochester to create a truly grassroots flag design. In this way, Rochester citizens can envision their past, present, and future in one important civic symbol, their new city flag.

Rochester flag store owner, flag expert, and North American Vexillology Association (NAVA) board member Lee Herold adds, 'A flag must be a powerful design that attracts immediate interest and excitement. Citizens of Rochester must be attracted to their flag, and want to see it used because they like it, rather than as a duty and a loyalty. It must speak to the character of the citizens in a way they can identify with and say, 'Yes, that's us.''

As of this announcement the committee plans two rounds of entries, with the first from May 15th to August 15th, 2017 and the second from October 15th to November 15th, 2017. A final review round will take place in winter 2017-2018, with presentation of the final flag design to the Rochester Mayor and City Council in spring, 2018, in time for the city's 160th anniversary.

Both the public and the judges will vote in both rounds, and the top three of each vote will be awarded a prize and advance to the final review round. The committee plans to bring flag displays, flag maker 'labs,' and presentations to many potential community locations during the contest, including the Art Center, the History Center, and Rochesterfest. Voting will take place both online and in person at the Herold flag shop.

The Judges' Board includes: Melissa Amundsen, Emily Carson, Wasima Kausar, Judith A. McIlmail, Becca Stiles-Nogosek, Jessica Schmitt, Terry Thronson, and Bill Wiktor. Judges will receive instruction and coaching in flag design from Lee Herold of Herold Flags & Flagpoles.

Entry forms will be made available around Rochester at information kiosks and through social media and online. Anyone can enter and submissions are anonymous while being judged. Designs can be emailed at rochesterflagproject@gmail.com, dropped off to Herold Flags and Flagpoles, or sent by mail. Entry forms and further contest details and deadlines can be found at www.rochesterflag.com.

Volunteer help for this citizen effort is greatly appreciated. Contact us to join in with this unique, fun and meaningful project for our city of Rochester. If your community, media group, or organization would like a flag presentation or interview, or would like to help sponsor and co-market this project, please don't hesitate to ask.

Samples of city flags can be found at Flags of the World, <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/>. Another resource is Roman Mars's quintessential 2015 TED talk that has launched many a city flag contest, from his radio show '99% Invisible:' https://www.ted.com/talks/roman_mars_why_city_flags_may_be_the_worst_designed_thing_you_ve_never_noticed.

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