

FAQ: Changes for the 75th Appleton Flag Day Parade

What's new for the 2026 Appleton Flag Day Parade?

- The Flag Day Parade will have a shorter route: move east on College from State Street to Drew Street. (Note: This is the same route for the Downtown Appleton Christmas Parade.)
- The Flag Day Parade will no longer spotlight a single branch of the military each year.
- There will be no reviewing stand or announcer for the parade.



Why has the route changed?

- While the former route provided excellent vantage points for our spectators on Wisconsin Avenue, State Street, and College Avenue, challenges emerged.
 - The former route is more than two miles in length, which presented difficulties for some marchers and vehicles, especially on a hot June afternoon.
 - A railroad runs through State Street.
 - Despite notifications from the City of Appleton Parade Committee and Police Department, trains have interrupted the Flag Day Parade numerous times over the years.
 - This creates logjams and gaps, but more importantly, it introduces a safety hazard.
 - The main reason for the change is to enhance security for the event's spectators, participants, and volunteers.
 - Securing the traditional route stretched City and private resources.
 - While internal discussions began more than a decade ago, recent incidents expedited the conversation between the City of Appleton Mayor, Parade Committee, and Police Department as well as other stakeholders in the event.
 - Changing the route allows Appleton to be proactive.

Why was College Avenue selected?

- The Flag Day Parade will use the same route as the Downtown Appleton Christmas Parade. It's tried and tested.
- Condensing the route allows the Appleton Police Department to strongly secure the route and viewing areas.

Where will units stage and prepare for the parade?

- Most units will stage on State Street (south of College Avenue), Lawrence Street, 8th Street, and 7th Street.
- A staging area map will be posted on the [Flag Day Parade page](#) on the City of Appleton website.

How might the change impact Downtown Appleton?

- College Avenue has traditionally been the final leg of the Flag Day Parade route, so most road closures, parking restrictions, and traffic changes remain consistent from past years.
- The City of Appleton and Parade Committee will communicate and collaborate with affected residents, businesses, and events near the parade route. Some changes to plans may be necessary, however, so please plan accordingly.

What are the reasons behind the other changes?

- The Flag Day Parade will no longer spotlight a single branch of the military each year, but it will continue a strong tradition of honoring our veterans, active duty servicemen and servicewomen, and fallen heroes, allowing *all* branches to be recognized.
- The Flag Day Parade will no longer have an honorary parade marshal, but it will continue to honor a local hero as the Escort to the U.S. Flag. (The U.S. Flag is and always will be the Parade Grand Marshal.
- Since there is no honorary parade marshal, there will be no reviewing stand or announcer for the parade. Dignitaries will ride through the parade and disperse at Drew Street.

What traditions remain?

- The 75th Appleton Flag Day Parade begins at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 13, 2026.
- The Parade Grand Marshal, as always, is the United States Flag.
- Fox Cities residents have honored “Old Glory” on the second Saturday in June since 1950, making the Appleton Flag Day Parade the nation’s oldest.
- The celebration annually draws more than 50,000 spectators and participants from throughout the state and nation to Appleton.

What can I do to be a part of the 75th Appleton Flag Day Parade?

- Organizations interested in participating in the 75th Appleton Flag Day Parade must complete and submit an official application before April 15, 2026.
- Groups can access the applications online via the new City of Appleton website (appletonwi.gov/community/appleton_parades) or the **City of Appleton Parades Facebook page**.
- Applicants are highly encouraged to incorporate the U.S. Flag, America’s 250th birthday, and/or the theme for the 75th Appleton Flag Day Parade: “Stars, Stripes, and New Beginnings.”
- Local businesses and donors can become Parade Partners by providing monetary support for bands and other units. If you’re interested, contact the City of Appleton Parades Committee at appletonparades@gmail.com.

