

Memorial Drive Visioning

The Trees of Memorial Drive

history

The History

After the First World War, a proposal to plant a tree for each fallen soldier of the Great War was put forth. The hope was that a living memorial would bring solace to grieving families who did not have graves to visit.

A number of groups and individuals came together, and the first tree was planted on Sunnyside Boulevard, (now Memorial Drive), between 9 and 9½ Street NW by Mayor Adams at 3 p.m. on May 11, 1922.

Planting continued steadily through until 1928 and a grand total of 3,278 trees were planted.



trees

The Trees

A living tree mirrors the growth and endurance of nature's challenges, and in many ways is reflective of the human life-cycle. The trees of Memorial Drive represent a living legacy. A major goal of the project is to determine means by which this legacy may extend beyond the life of individual trees.



Quick Facts on Memorial Drive's Trees:

- The majority of trees planted from 1922 to 1928 were *Populus Wobbsitii*—more commonly referred to as poplars. These poplars are now at, or nearing the end of their life-cycle.
- The trees are thought to be wild trees brought to Calgary by miners returning from Drumheller.
- In 1922 the trees were sold for \$1.
- Metal discs were attached to stands in front of each tree. The discs were inscribed with the year, the donor's name and a tag number.
- City of Calgary parks began taking cuttings from the original poplars in 2001. Today we have 1,500 offspring growing in Grand Forks, BC.
- All the poplar trees along Memorial Drive are female, but one.
- Female poplars bear the cotton—which provides food for ducks, carries tree seeds and provides nesting material for birds and animals.

future

The Future

As a memorial, the regeneration of the existing trees and continued planting of new trees represents the animation of life, growth and spiritual renewal, and continues the legacy of Memorial Drive's original intent.

As many of the original trees are nearing the end of their life-cycle, City of Calgary Parks is spearheading the regeneration and revitalization of Memorial Drive. This plan will concentrate on improving the aesthetic value of the landscape by introducing a variety of new tree species. The plan's purpose is to protect the existing legacy and continue the historic and cultural integrity of Memorial Drive.

source: the City of Calgary Parks

PHASE I

Vision Statement

Vision Statement created through Stakeholder and Public Involvement
March 2004

PHASE II

Design Principles C.A.L.L.

identify opportunities

Continuity

Accessibility

Legibility

Legacy

Framework Plan

Stakeholder's Workshop
November 2004

design development

Continuity

Accessibility

Legibility

Legacy

Preliminary Design Development Plan

Public Open House

Public Input
January 2005

Revisit

Revise

Final Design Development Plan

Proposed Project Phasing

Preliminary Costing

City Review
&
Council Presentation

ORGANIZING DESIGN TOOLS

- Layers
- Oasis
- Weaving
- Rhythm
- Event
- Light



Phase 1 Vision Statement

adopted by City Council July 26, 2004

The Memorial Drive corridor is both a Major Street in Calgary's road network, as well as a unique urban landscape that is shaped by an understanding of its social and physical role, and by a deep respect for its commemorative history. Integral to this vision is a landscape that is supportive, safe, accessible and active, and is enriched by a unifying identity, trees and meaningful places to observe individual and collective memory.

This vision for the landscape of the Memorial Drive corridor as described by Calgarians integrates the following elements:

Identity

- a strong sense of place, with defined edges/boundaries and a recognizable & continuous identity along its length that announces it as a special landscape within the City
- social, environmental, & economical responsibility
- incorporates east and west gateway / portal elements that communicate to drivers that they are entering a unique area

Commemoration

- respect for the memory and the legacy of Calgarians who fought for freedom
- opportunities for commemoration, acknowledges that observing memory occurs both individually and collectively. (creating meaningful gathering places)

Circulation & Movement

- the landscape is safe and accessible for all Calgarians
- has a single name along its length from Shaganappi Trail to the Calgary Zoo
- has regular, convenient, fully accessible & safe places for pedestrians to cross
- any future roadway redevelopment respects adjacent communities, and complements / supports open space planning
- pathways support a wide cross-section of user types (walkers, joggers, cyclists, rollerbladers, etc.) and their design and layout ameliorates potential conflicts among users

Open Spaces & Activity

- the open spaces link a series of events or activity nodes, some of which are developed specifically as commemorative opportunities
- incorporates pedestrian amenities (such as places to stop and rest, trash receptacles, shelters, bike racks, washrooms)
- maximize views to the river, downtown, river valley escarpments
- incorporates trees as both landscape features and commemorative elements
- recognizes that the trees represent a living legacy, but a legacy that must extend beyond the life of any individual tree