



# MEMORIAL DRIVE

*The Landscape of Memory*

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

JUNE 2005



# MEMORIAL DRIVE

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## MEMORIAL DRIVE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

prepared for The City of Calgary Parks  
June 2005

cover images: **Glenbow Alberta Archives**  
Thomas Mawson Plan for Calgary c. 1914  
panoramic view of Calgary from Crescent Heights c.1940

**Stantec Consulting Ltd.**  
Memorial Drive pathway and trees  
Memorial Drive carriageway  
Royal Canadian Legion monument at Louise Crossing



THE CITY OF  
**CALGARY**  
PARKS



## **MEMORIAL DRIVE THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In September 2004, the City of Calgary Parks Department issued a Request for Proposals for Phase II of the Memorial Drive project – The Landscape of Memory. The proposal called for the preparation of a Design Development Plan for Memorial Drive furthering the overall project objective, to protect and enhance the legacy and future character of Memorial Drive defining its role in the City's urban landscape.

The Council-approved Vision Statement, established in Phase I of the project, provided the context for preparing the Design Development Plan.

*“The Memorial Drive corridor is both a Major Street in Calgary’s road network, and 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.”*

#### Vision Statement for Memorial Drive – Phase I

The study area for Phase II of the project remains approximately 9.5 kilometres long and is located between the intersection of Parkdale Boulevard and Shaganappi Trail and the intersection of Memorial Drive and St. George’s Island Zoo access. The work program, as with the Phase I work program, included public participation and observed the principles of the City of Calgary’s framework for citizen engagement entitled Engage!

The process incorporated the exploration and findings of the consultant design team, stakeholders and the public. A Stakeholder’s Workshop was held on November 26th, 2004. A Public Open House was conducted on January 22nd, 2005.

The ideas developed during the plan development process and the information recorded during the workshop and open house events formed the basis for analysis presented in the Design Development Plan Summary and proposal of The Pilot Project.

The Design Development Plan and plan process were positively supported at the public Open House and it is recommended that the Phase II report is used for subsequent project work and to guide additional planning and detailed design.

Information collected and compiled during Phase II of the project is available on the City of Calgary’s website. The circulation and future publishing of this report is subject to Council approval.

**MEMORIAL DRIVE  
THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY**

**Table of Contents**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>E.1</b>
<b>1.0 PROJECT INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Memorial Trees</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Vision for the Future</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.3 Phase II - Design Development Plan</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2.0 PLAN PROCESS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1 The CALL Principles</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2 Responding to the “Call to Commemorate”</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.2.1 Continuity.....	4
2.2.2 Accessibility .....	5
2.2.3 Legibility.....	5
2.2.4 Legacy .....	5
<b>2.3 Framework Plan and Design Tools</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.3.1 Layers.....	11
2.3.2 Oasis.....	11
2.3.3 Weaving.....	11
2.3.4 Rhythm .....	12
2.3.5 Event.....	12
2.3.6 Light.....	12
<b>2.4 Design Development Plan</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>3.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>3.1 Participant Comments</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>3.2 Drawing Ratings</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>3.3 Participation Overview</b> .....	<b>23</b>
3.3.1 Pattern - The Trees of Memorial Drive .....	23
3.3.2 Pattern - Pedestrian-Friendly Environment .....	24

**MEMORIAL DRIVE  
THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY**

---

3.3.3	Pattern - Establish a Distinct Identity for Memorial Drive Corridor.....	26
3.3.4	Pattern - Establish a High Quality of Landscape Development for the Memorial Drive Corridor .....	27
3.3.5	Pattern - Degree of Visual Interest and Complexity .....	28
3.3.6	Pattern - Palette of Materials that is Consistent and Appropriate for the Memorial Drive Corridor .....	29
3.3.7	Pattern - Establish Consistency in Roadway Treatment.....	30
3.3.8	Pattern - The Open Spaces of the Memorial Drive Corridor are Fully Accessible to all Calgarians .....	31
3.3.9	Pattern - Connected Series of Spaces and Experiences .....	32
3.3.10	Pattern - Children in the Landscape.....	33
3.3.11	Pattern - Seating/Rest Node Development .....	34
<b>4.0</b>	<b>MOVING THE PLAN FORWARD .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Implementation Strategy.....</b>	<b>35</b>
4.1.1	Landscape Foundation Components .....	35
4.1.2	Landscape Enhancement Components .....	37
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Preliminary Opinion of Probable Cost SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Operating Costs.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>PROPOSED PILOT PROJECT.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Commemorative Node Pilot Project .....</b>	<b>46</b>

**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A – Stakeholder Workshop
APPENDIX B – Public Open House
APPENDIX C – Workshop / Open House Display Materials
APPENDIX D – Participant Comment Matrix
APPENDIX E – Drawing Rating Matrices
APPENDIX F – List of Participants
APPENDIX G – Project Acknowledgements

# MEMORIAL DRIVE THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY

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## List of Figures

### Project Introduction

- 1.1 Development of Plan Process

### Project Process

- 2.1 Continuity – CALL Principle Illustrated
- 2.2 Accessibility – CALL Principle Illustrated
- 2.3 Legibility – CALL Principle Illustrated
- 2.4 Legacy – CALL Principle Illustrated
- 2.5 Framework Plan
- 2.6 Design Organizing Tools
- 2.7 Continuity – CALL Principle Applied
- 2.8 Accessibility – CALL Principle Applied
- 2.9 Legibility – CALL Principle Applied
- 2.10 Legacy – CALL Principle Applied
- 2.11 Final Draft – Design Development Plan

### Design Development Patterns

- 3.1 Patterns of Trees in the Landscape
- 3.2 Patterns of Pedestrian- Friendly Environment
- 3.3 Patterns of Identity
- 3.4 Patterns of Landscape Development
- 3.5 Patterns of Visual Interest
- 3.6 Patterns of Material Palette
- 3.7 Patterns of Consistent Roadway Treatment
- 3.8 Patterns of Accessibility
- 3.9 Patterns of Connected Spaces and Experiences
- 3.10 Patterns of Children in the Landscape
- 3.11 Patterns of Seating and Node Development

### Implementation Strategy Key Plans

- 4.1 Foundation Landscape Component- River Landscape
- 4.2 Foundation Landscape Component- Regional Pathway Conflict Improvements
- 4.3 Foundation Landscape Component- Roadway Landscape
- 4.4 Foundation Landscape Component- Regional Pathway Landscape
- 4.5 Enhanced Landscape Component- Roadway Lighting
- 4.6 Enhanced Landscape Component- Pathway Lighting
- 4.7 Enhanced Landscape Component- Major Nodes
- 4.8 Enhanced Landscape Component- Minor Nodes
- 4.9 Enhanced Landscape Component- Presentation Pavilion
- 4.10 Enhanced Landscape Component- Tree Planting
- 4.11 Enhanced Landscape Component- Commemorative Installations
- 4.12 Enhanced Landscape Component- Site Furnishings
- 4.13 Enhanced Landscape Component- Signage and Orientation
- 4.14 Enhanced Landscape Component- Primary Gateways/Portals
- 4.15 Enhanced Landscape Component- Secondary Gateways
- 4.16 Enhanced Landscape Component- Pageantry

### Proposed Pilot Project

- 5.1 Pilot Project- Axonometric View of Node
- 5.2 Pilot Project- Plan of Node

# MEMORIAL DRIVE THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY

## 1.0 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

*“Memorial Drive is one of Calgary’s most cherished corridors in terms of history, location, proximity to the Bow River, and its relationship with both the communities adjacent to the Drive and the larger community of Calgary.”*

The City of Calgary Parks - Request for Proposal Phase I

### 1.1 Memorial Trees

A living tree mirrors the growth and endurance of nature’s challenges and in many ways, is reflective of the human life-cycle. After the First World War, a proposal was put forth to plant a tree along Memorial Drive for each fallen soldier of the Great War. The hope was that a living memorial would bring solace to families who did not have graves to visit.

A number of groups and individuals came together to implement the proposal and the first tree was planted on Sunnyside Boulevard (now Memorial Drive) by Mayor Adams on May 11, 1922. The majority of trees planted were *Populus wobbstii* –more commonly referred to as poplars. This planting program continued through to 1928, with a total of 3,278 trees planted.

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. An official record book was started by the 1922 Tree Planting Committee. For many years, the record book was kept by a local service Club. The record book was then sent to the storage archives. The book has not been seen since the 1960’s.

Today, as many of the original trees are nearing the end of their life-cycle, City of Calgary Parks has spearheaded the regeneration and revitalization of the Memorial Drive landscape. In 2001, City of Calgary Parks began cloning the original poplars to continue the trees’ heritage. There are now 1,500 offspring growing in Grand Forks, BC.

The purpose behind the Calgary Park’s plan is to protect the existing legacy and continue the historic and cultural integrity of Memorial Drive. The plan initially concentrated on improving the aesthetic value of the landscape by introducing and planting a variety of new tree species. A major goal of this project, as part of the larger plan, is to determine means by which this legacy may extend beyond the life of individual trees.

### 1.2 Vision for the Future

The Phase I work program identified defining characteristics of the project site and explored new and traditional ideas to commemorate the legacy of Memorial Drive. A Vision Statement was established through the participation of Calgarians and is considered highly valuable as the litmus test for further stages of the project. This Vision Statement is understood as a measure of the values that Calgarians hold most highly with respect to the future development of the Memorial Drive Corridor. City Council approved the Vision Statement in July 2004.

The Phase I work program illuminated that the Memorial Drive Corridor is a complex system of physical, cultural, historical, social, and recreational attachments. Calgarians relate to the Memorial Drive Corridor on a number of levels: on a practical level as a transportation and recreational corridor;

## **MEMORIAL DRIVE THE LANDSCAPE OF MEMORY**

on an aesthetic level as a ribbon of green open space through the inner City; and symbolically as a repository of collective civic memory.

Particularly important to Calgarians were the symbolic commemorative associations carried by Memorial Drive. The Phase I report identified that these associations are vital to Calgarians comprehension and appreciation of the Corridor.

### **1.3 Phase II - Design Development Plan**

Phase II builds upon the work of Phase I with the goal to prepare a Design Development Plan that can guide future planning and design of this unique urban landscape.

It was important that the Phase II work program continue to be characterized by a public consultation process that respects the voices of citizens already heard, and find additional ways to enfranchise voices that have yet to be heard. The design of the public consultation process aimed for the creative and collaborative involvement of existing and future users of the corridor, including: City staff, external interest and Community stakeholders and the larger community of Calgarians.

The Design Development plan process was regarded as a working and learning opportunity in which stakeholders were actively engaged in the design process. Stakeholders were provided with a palette of design tools to use in the workshop session. Their input helped determine the direction of the Draft Design Development Plan.

A framework plan was developed by incorporating key design principles established from the Vision Statement. The purpose of the framework plan was to engage stakeholders in a design process and obtain consensus regarding the preparation of a Development Plan. The results of the workshop culminated in a preliminary Design Development Plan, which was presented at the Public Open House. The following Figure 1.1 outlines the Design Development Plan Process.

## PHASE I

### Vision Statement

Vision Statement created through Stakeholder and Public Involvement- March 2004  
Approved by City Council- July 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



FIGURE 1.1