

## Introduction

Calgary's urban forest is a remarkable achievement given that the city is located in an arid climate that doesn't naturally support trees. The urban forest we have today is much closer to the "city of trees" envisioned by William Pearce in the 1890s. It is the result of the commitment of successive generations of Calgarians to planning, caring for, and protecting the forest. Today, The Calgary Parks Urban Forestry provides leadership, both within the Corporation and to the public, on the stewardship and long-term sustainability of Calgary's urban forest. See below a timeline on how Calgary's urban forest developed.

## Timeline of Trees in Calgary

Pre-Settlement	Trees have always been and continue to be a priority for people living in the Calgary area. Prior to even the idea of European settlement the Piikani, Siksika, Kainaiwa (the Blackfoot Nations of the Peigan, Siksika and Blood), the Tsuut'ina (Sarcee Nation) and the ȩyā́hé Nakoda, Chiniquay and Sioux (the Stoney Nations of the Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley/Goodstoney) used the tall, straight trunks of the Lodge Pole Pine trees to provide a structure for their homes, the tee pee. They also used material from Willow trees for sweat lodges and the Birch tree is associated with a Napi story.
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1880s	In the 1880s, during the European settlement of North America, both the environmental and aesthetic benefits of planting trees were the subject of considerable discussion in developing cities. For early Calgarians living in the essentially treeless, wind-swept landscape, practicality and trees used for wind breaks was likely the primary motive.
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1884

The Bow and Elbow rivers that surrounded Fort Calgary, with their fresh running mountain water and small wooded islands, provided a stark contrast to the parched prairie land surrounding the rivers. But civic leaders dreamed that the barren Calgary landscape could be transformed into a “city of trees”. Once The Town of Calgary was incorporated in May 1884 it started to distributed spruce trees to taxpayers upon request for a small fee.

Calgary owes much of the early beginnings of its urban forest to William Pearce. Pearce was heavily influence by the City Beautiful Movement which supported beautification and formality to encourage order and harmony within society. Pearce envisioned Calgary as a city with grand boulevards connecting a series of park spaces. In 1884 Pearce used his position as an inspector for the Dominion Land Agencies in Ottawa to reserve land along the north side of the Bow River. Today it is the city’s landmark boulevard — Memorial Drive.



1889	<p>In 1889 Pearce purchased his homestead from the CPR, known today as Pearce Estate Park. The federal government’s Forestry Branch credits Pearce with having established the first tree farm in Western Canada. It was in the 1890s that Pearce developed his experimental farm, testing a variety of trees to encourage Calgarians to improve the appearance of the city by planting trees around their homes.</p>	 <p>Glenbow Archives NA-3898-5</p>
	<p>In 1889, the Town of Calgary and the CPR resolved a dispute over unpaid property taxes by the CPR turning over a tract of its lands to the city, with the stipulation that it be used as a park. One of that “park’s” earliest functions was as the first civic tree nursery. Today that park is known as Central Memorial Park.</p>	 <p>CENTRAL PARK, CALGARY, ALTA. Glenbow Archives PA-3689-5</p>
1895	In 1895, The City of Calgary introduced a boulevard tree-planting program that saw trees going in along Calgary’s main roads.	
1899	In 1899 The City of Calgary Council passed the first tree protection bylaw and started actively promoting tree planting.	

1913

In 1913 William Reader became Calgary's third Superintendant of Parks and Cemeteries. One of his first priorities was the development of the new civic nursery, located at the bottom of Union Cemetery hill. Reader also noted in his 1913 annual report that he "devoted a considerable part of my energies during the past season to the construction of new boulevards, and have prepared a big program for the future, as I very much doubt if any other public improvement will tend to create and foster a civic pride in Calgary to the same extend as will the making of boulevards, and planting of trees on our streets, nor will any other feature of our city impress visitors so favorably."

Glenbow Archives NA-3423-4

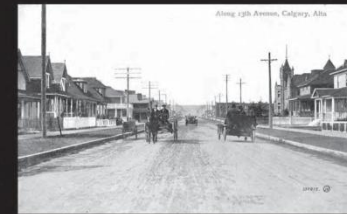


1913-1942

Reader continued to plant trees within Calgary Streetscapes until his tenure ended in 1942. Some of those streetscapes still exist today and were mentioned specifically in annual reports. Ones that still exist and were also noted in an annual report have been evaluated by the Calgary Heritage Authority and added to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources.



*Street scenes  
in  
Calgary  
showing effects  
of  
Boulevards  
and  
no Boulevards  
also  
Street trees  
and  
no Street trees.*



1915 In 1915 Reader planted Green Ash trees along 5A Street SW (from 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Royal Avenue SW). In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added this streetscape to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources. Reader also planted Lilac shrubs on the median on 11<sup>th</sup> Street NW in 1919 that were added to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources in 2009.

1922 In 1922 Memorial Drive was established. Memorial Drive is Calgary's Road of Remembrance. Roads of Remembrance were actively promoted by the International Order of the Daughters of the British Empire, and were the result of a desire to create a lasting memorial to fallen soldiers of WWI. The use of trees, instead of statuary, symbolized the triumph of life over death. In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added Memorial Drive to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources.



1929 In 1929 Reader planted Elm trees and Lilac shrubs along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (from Centre Street N to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE), Green Ash trees and Lilac and Caragana shrubs along 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (from Centre Street N to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE), Elm trees and Lilac and Lilac shrubs along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue N (from 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW to 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE), Elm trees and Lilac and Caragana shrubs along 9<sup>th</sup> Street SE (from 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Adelaide Avenue SE), Elm trees and Dogwood shrubs along Frontenac Avenue SW (from Carleton Street SW to Wolfe Street SW), Elm trees and honeysuckle shrubs along Riverdale Avenue SW (from 5A Street SW to Elbow Drive SW and from 9<sup>th</sup> Street SW to 10 Street SW), and Green Ash trees along Sifton Boulevard SW (from Elbow Drive SW to 7<sup>th</sup> Street SW). In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added these streetscapes to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources. Reader also planted Lilac shrubs in the medians on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW in 1929 and in the boulevards on Shelbourne Street SW in 1927 that were added to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources in 2009.

1930 In 1930 Reader planted Poplar trees and Caragana shrubs along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (from 21<sup>st</sup> Street to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street SE), Elm trees along 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue N (from 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW to 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE), Green Ash trees and Caragana and Honeysuckle shrubs along Montcalm Crescent SW (from Quebec Avenue SW to Frontenac Avenue SW), Elm trees and Lilac and Cotoneaster shrubs along Montreal Avenue SW (from 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW to Wolfe Street SW), Green Ash trees and Honeysuckle shrubs along Quebec Avenue SW (from Montcalm Crescent SW to Wolfe Street SW) and Poplar trees and Lilac shrubs along Sharon Avenue SW (from 17<sup>th</sup> Street SW to 18<sup>th</sup> Street SW). In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added these streetscapes to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources.

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Reader also planted Lilac shrubs in the boulevards on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue N and Cotoneaster shrubs on Senlac Street SW in 1930 that were added to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources in 2009.

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1932 In 1932 Reader planted Elm trees and Lilac shrubs along 4A Street NW (from Alexander Crescent NW to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW). Green Ash trees and Caragana shrubs along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (from Edmonton Trail to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE), Green Ash trees and Caragana and Cotoneaster shrubs along 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW (from Crescent Road to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW), and Green Ash trees and Cotoneaster shrubs along 6A Street NW (from Crescent Road to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW). In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added these streetscapes to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources. Reader also planted Lilac shrubs in the medians on Bowness Road NW and Lilac shrubs in the boulevards on 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW in 1932 that were added to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources in 2009.

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1942 In 1942 Reader planted Elm trees and Lilac and Dogwood shrubs along 8<sup>th</sup> Street NE (from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE). In 2009 the Calgary Heritage Authority added this streetscape to Calgary's Inventory of Historic Resources.

Tree planting continued after Reader's tenure and continues today.



2008

In 2008 the Heritage Tree Foundation of Canada printed Heritage Trees of Alberta and identified 73 locations of Historic Trees. This includes:

Location Name	Common name	Scientific Name	Address	Location Name	Common name	Scientific Name	Address
<b>Calgary Centre North</b>				<b>Calgary Central</b>			
	White Spruce	Picea glauca	318 - 16th St NW	Courthouse Cherries	Amur Cherry	Prunus maackii	530 - 7th Ave SW
	Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	304 - 16A St NW	Veteran Memorial Trees	Balsam Poplar	Populus balsamifera	Memorial Dr - East of Langevin Bridge
	Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	408 - 11 Ave NW				
	Poplar	Populus sp.	S. corner of 15 Ave NW	Memorial Drive Willow	White Willow variety	Salix alba var.	S. side of Memorial Dr
	Plains Cottonwood	Populus deltoides sargentii	1201 - 2 St NW				W. of 4 St NE bridge
	Balsam Poplar	Populus balsamifera	3 St & Crescent Rd NW				
	Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa	120 Crescent Rd NW				
	American Elm	Ulmus americana	11 Ave NE	Whiteway's Grove	Silver Poplar	Populus alba	Beside the Lion & Ostrich enclosures
Avenue of Trees			between 2 St NE & 1 St NW	Entrance Trees	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	At entrance to Conservatory
	European Mountain Ash	Sorbus aucuparia	119 - 7 Ave NE	Sanna's Sisters	Manchurian Walnut	Juglans mandshurica	Prehistoric Park
Veteran Memorial Trees	Balsam Poplar	Populus balsamifera	Memorial Dr - East of Langevin Bridge	Hickey's Maple	Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum	Eagles' enclosure
					Littleleaf Linden	Tilia cordata	Prehistoric Park
Memorial Drive Willow	White Willow variety	Salix alba var.	S. side of Memorial Dr	William Pearce Park	Trembling Aspen	Populus tremuloides	14 Ave & 17 St SE
			W. of 4 St NE bridge	Helen McLeod's Tree	White Spruce	Picea glauca	1240 - 8 Ave SE
The Huntley Buckeye Tree	Ohio Buckeye	Aesculus glabra	425 - 20 Ave NW	Inglewood Cottonwoods	Plains Cottonwood	Populus deltoides (sargentii)	1216 - 8 Ave SE
Mountview Poplar	Poplar	Populus	627 - 26 Ave NE	Stamped Elm	American Elm	Ulmus americana	Olympic Way SE
Northmount Poplar	Balsam Poplar	Populus balsamifera	48 Northmount Cres NW				parking lot between 12 & 13 Ave
<b>Calgary South</b>					Manitoba Maple	Acer negundo	Suntree Park
Fish Creek Birch	Alaska Birch	Betula neoalaskana	Shannon Terrace - Fish Creek Park				Stampede Grounds
Patton's Park	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	200 block, Patton Court		Laurel Leaf Willow	Salix pentandra	Suntree Park
	Bristlecone Pine	Pinus aristata	348 Sackville Dr SW				Stampede Grounds
Carburn Park	Poplar	Populus sp.					Macleod Tr S. & 25 Ave SW
Burns Trail	Russian Poplar	Populus x petrowskyana	Remnants along Macleod Trail S. S. of 162 Ave - West side				
<b>Ellistown Park</b>				Reader Rock Garden	Mugho Pine		
Ellistown Park Birth Place Forest	Various species		17 Ave & 60 St SE	Reader Rock Garden	Japanese Tree Lilac	Syringa reticulata	
<b>Calgary West</b>				Reader Rock Garden	European Mountain Ash	Sorbus aucuparia	
Bowness Montane Forest	Douglas-Fir	Pseudotsuga menziesii glauca	Valley Ridge bike trail overlooking Stoney Trail	Reader Rock Garden	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	
				Reader Rock Garden	Ohio Buckeye	Aesculus glabra	
Baker Park Douglas-Fir	Douglas-Fir	Pseudotsuga menziesii glauca	Baker Park	Reader Rock Garden	Scots Pine	Pinus sylvestris	Union Cemetery
			9333 Scenic Bow Rd NW		White Spruce	Picea glauca	Union Cemetery
Mabel White's Oak	Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa	Baker Park	Memorial Park Spruce	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	11 Ave & 4 St SW
			9333 Scenic Bow Rd NW	Tomkin's Square Elm	American Elm	Ulmus americana	17 Ave & 8 St SW
Old Pines	Scots Pine	Pinus sylvestris	Between 24 Ave & 32 Ave NW		White Spruce	Picea glauca	141 - 18 Ave SW
			E. of Alberta Children's Hospital	FCJ Centre			
University of Calgary Landmark	American Elm	Ulmus americana	Craigie Hall courtyard	Sacred Heart Convent	European Mountain Ash	Sorbus aucuparia	225 - 19 Ave SW
	Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	2411 Charles Dr NW	The Big Poplar	Plains Cottonwood	Populus deltoides sargentii	316 - 20 Ave SW
Grant MacEwan Memorial Tree	Norland Apple	Malus 'Norland'	2556 Toronto Cr NW	Cliff Bungalow Avenue	Green Ash	Fraxinus pennsylvanica lanceolata	5A St SW
Grant MacEwan Tree	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	2634 - 12 Ave NW				1110 Prospect Ave SW
	Colorado Spruce	Picea pungens	2204 - 9th Ave NW	The Scott House	American Elm	Ulmus americana	868 Hillcrest Ave SW
	Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	304 - 16A St NW	Cliff Bungalow	Russian Olive	Elaeagnus angustifolia	610 - 25 Ave SW
	White Spruce	Picea glauca	318 - 16 St NW		Poplar	Populus	E. end of median at Garden Ave SW
Bow Trail Sentinel	Poplar	Populus	NE section of Crowchild & Bow Trails		Laurel Leaf Willow	Salix pentandra	Garden Crescent SW
Sacred Willowmen	Willow	Salix sp.	Shaganappi Valley Golf Course		Mugho Pine	Pinus mugo	308 Roxboro Rd SW
			8th Tee Box		Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa	317 - 38th Ave SW
					Balsam Poplar	Populus balsamifera	3815 - 7th St SW
	Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	Corner of 5th Ave & 36 St SW				
Avenue of Trees	Crabapple	Malus sp.	Windermere Rd SW				
	Pear	Pyrus sp.	167 Wildwood Dr SW				
Boulevard Trees	Japanese Tree Lilac	Syringa reticulata	3 Grove Hill Pl SW				
	Laurel Leaf Willow	Salix pentandra	4416 - 16A St SW				

Today

Today the urban forest consists of approximately 630,000 trees in manicured parks, green spaces and boulevards trees.