Welcoming Winnipeg – Creating New Historical Marker at the Elm Park Bridge

Feedback Summary

June 2022

Welcoming Winnipeg

The Welcoming Winnipeg initiative is just one aspect of the reconciliation process the City of Winnipeg is committed to, and will help ensure that the contributions, experiences, and perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are reflected truthfully in our stories, historical markers, and place names.

To date, this has included Council passing a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to or remove/rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous perspectives, experiences and contributions in the stories remembered and commemorated.

This new process includes posting change requests on the City of Winnipeg website for two weeks, to provide the opportunity for residents to provide feedback by:

- Completing a short online survey;
- Calling 204-986-4549 and leaving a voice message;
- Registering to appear as a delegation before the Committee of Community Members.

Background

All City requests to create new historical markers now go through the Welcoming Winnipeg process which is about ensuring a proactive lens of balance, inclusion and Indigenous perspectives is used when making changes to the City's historical markers and place names.

A request was submitted by a member of the public on behalf of a Residents' Association to create a new historical marker. This marker would be located at the South entrance to Elm Park Bridge at the corner of Riverdale Street and Kingston Crescent. This park is located in the St. Vital ward. Details of the request can be found here.

Residents were invited to provide feedback from April 25, 2022 to May 9, 2022.

Following the collection of feedback, input was provided to the Committee of Community Members to make a recommendation for Council's consideration.

Promotion

Opportunities to provide input on the renaming were promoted using the following methods:

- City of Winnipeg website – posted April 25, 2022
- Welcoming Winnipeg e-mail distribution list with over 190 recipients – April 25, 2022
- Internal City of Winnipeg e-mail distribution list – April 29, 2022
- City of Winnipeg Facebook post with 29,000 followers – May 2, 2022
- City of Winnipeg Twitter post with 112,000 followers – May 2, 2022

What We Heard

6 responses were received through the online survey. 0 voice messages were received.

In response to the question: Do you think the Committee of Community Members should support this request?

- 5 respondents said yes
- 1 respondent said no
- 0 respondents said undecided

A reason identified for not supporting the change was:

"The research into First Nations history of the area seems shallow and undocumented.

Who were the peoples who lived here? Were they Cree? Ojibway? What specifically are their teachings about the trees/forests? What battles (pre-contact) were fought along this river?

As it is the marker sounds patronizing and smacks of appropriating "feel good' sentiments about Indigenous peoples without any real recognition of their true history."

To learn more about Welcoming Winnipeg please visit winnipeg.ca/WelcomingWinnipeg

Winnipeg

A reason identified for supporting the change was:

"A historical/educational marker at this well used footbridge would be an asset to this neighborhood, connecting neighborhoods, and Winnipeg as a whole. Accompanying this with some public art would be great as well!"

How Input was Considered

Below is a summary of changes that have been made, based on input.

What We Heard	How It Was Considered
Lack of Indigenous history and detail provided in the request.	The Committee of Community Members considered how the applicants of this request have been working directly with an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper and Elder to guide the proposed messaging of these panels.