Winnipeg | Indigenous Relations
Relations avec les Autochtones

JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION
LES CHEMINS DE LA RÉCONCILIATION

WELCOMING WINNIPEG – Request Summary

NOTE: Request summaries are compiled by Indigenous Relations employees to ensure that identifiable, or potentially identifiable, third-party personal information or information of a sensitive nature is excluded from what is made publicly available. Indigenous Relations permits viewing of the full original submission by appointment through 311.

Request ID: 2022-005

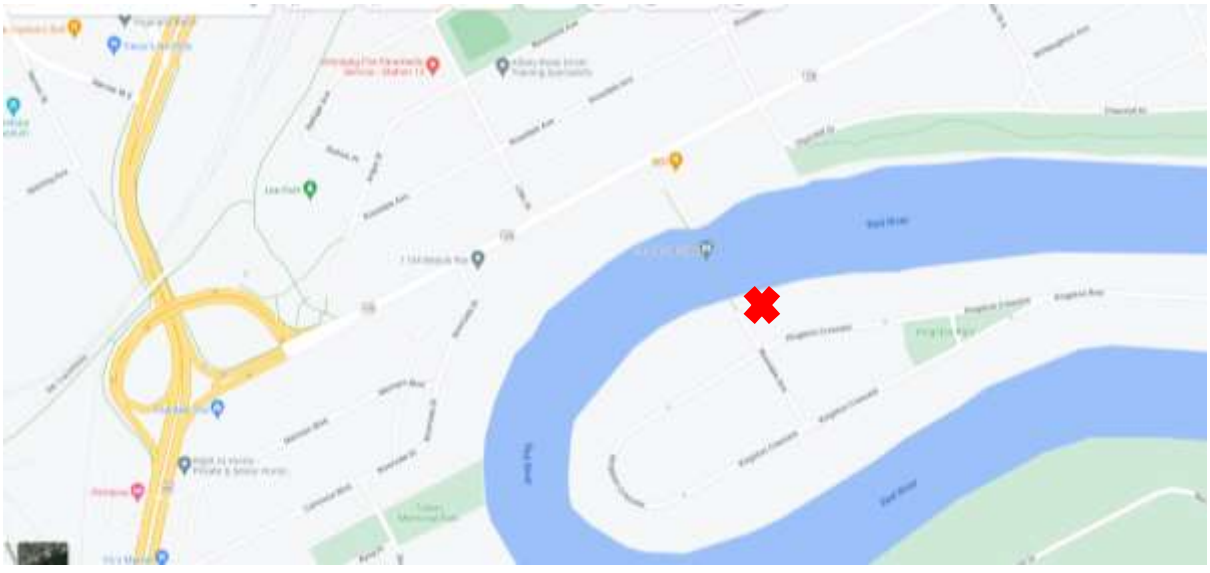
Name of Request: Creating New Historical Marker at the Elm Park Bridge

Address: South entrance to Elm Park bridge at the corner of Riverdale and Kingston Crescent

Demonstrated Community Support:

- Petition submitted: No. Due to COVID due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and physical distancing precautions, the City has temporarily suspended this requirement.
- Letters of support provided: *Yes, 4 letters of support provided*

Project Details:



The creation of two new interpretive panels at the base of Elm Park bridge will acknowledge the rich history of the Kingston Crescent neighborhood. These panels speak to both traditional teachings about the gifts offered by the trees, the importance of the Red River, and the history of the area after settlers arrived.

Draft Text Proposal

Panel 1: Purpose: to establish trees as important gifts, and demonstrate they were always here, and to thank Mother Earth by planting trees

THE GIFT OF TREES

Thick forests have always lined the banks of Miskwagmi Ziibi (Red River). The native elm, ash, cottonwood, maple, burr oak, trembling aspen, balsam poplar,basswood and willow offer gifts of medicine, food, transportation and the oxygen we breathe.

Indigenous peoples offered each other safe passage when traveling on the river and sheltering under the trees.

Anishinaabeg teach that we all depend on the gifts the earth provides. We are all connected to the land, the water and the beings that surround us, and we share the responsibility to care for Mother Earth.

We invite all visitors to give back: Plant a tree native to your neighbourhood today.

Panel 2: Purpose: to describe the creation of Elm Park because of trees, Pontoon bridge linking to Elm Park, creation of neighbourhood forest lots… focus on need for people to care for trees.

WELCOME TO ELM PARK

The majestic forest that existed here inspired the creation of Elm Park in 1890. People strolled across the pontoon bridge on summer days to picnic under the cool shade of the natural elm and oak forest canopy.

In the early 1900s, Elm Park was sold as individual forest lots. People built homes in amongst the towering trees on what is now Kingston Crescent and Kingston Row.

Sadly, development, disease, old age, and storms have taken a toll on many ancient trees in Elm Park.

Look up and cherish the gifts of the remaining trees. They are calling us to care for them, so they may care for us and future generations.

How does this renaming contribute to a 'Welcoming Winnipeg', as defined in the policy and what kind of evidence/research can be provided to support this state

The Historical Walking tour project, comprised of multiple points of interpretation, is framed as a path towards reconciliation. The applicant is committed to providing a counterbalanced narrative that privileges Indigenous perspectives while also sharing stories of the area after settlers arrived. Phase 1 of the project incorporated a land acknowledgement developed in collaboration with a Knowledge Keeper. Throughout the project, we continue to acknowledge and honour the original peoples of the land we live on and their sacred connections to the land. The process of walking this path with a traditional Knowledge Keeper feels like reconciliation in and of itself as we learn about our shared responsibility to care for Mother Earth and to learn traditional teachings about the land, all of the beings that share their gifts with us and how we can build respectful relationships.

By presenting Indigenous perspectives on interpretive panels about a settler-developed area, we have the opportunity to share knowledge and inspire dialogue that may lead to others embarking on a journey towards reconciliation and healing.

Does this site have historical significance to the Indigenous community? Research Support:

We have learned, through shared traditional teachings, of the importance of the river that surrounds our neighborhood and the dense forests that once grew along the riverbanks. We understand, through Anishinaabeg teachings, the story of Miskwagmi Ziibi, named for the river running red with the blood of battles fought in the area (pre-contact). We also understand the importance of the river for safe travel, and that it was an agreed upon route of safe passage. The trees of the riverbank were offered as a place of safe rest. We also understand the gifts offered by the trees, through a sharing of the original Anishinaabeg agreement - when the trees and other beings offered their gifts to the helpless human beings. It has been shared with us that the trees offer gifts of shelter, medicine, and oxygen. We understand, with humility, that the Trees have called us together to help them, to care for them, and to give back to them.

If this application is not supported, what would the negative impact on the community be? (If applicable)

Should our request not be supported, we fear that we would be losing a tremendous opportunity to contribute to shifting the narrative with regard to the history of the

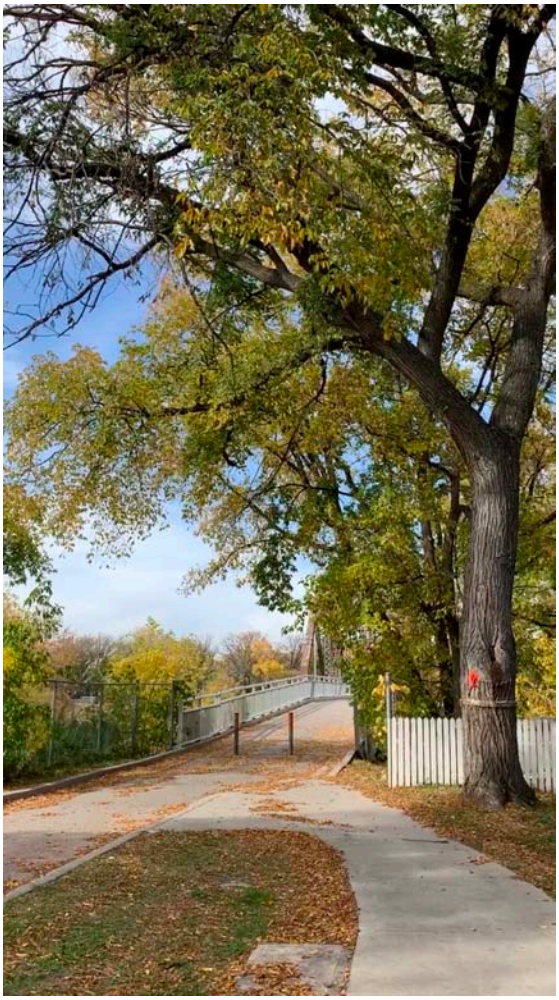
neighborhood. These panels not only share the stories of the neighborhood we live in, but also contribute to the broader history of the city we now call Winnipeg.

Any additional information the applicant would like the CCM to consider in making their recommendation.

See below.

1. Detailed Project Description

Imagine what the 100-year-old elm tree at the end of the Elm Park bridge would say if it had the chance to tell us about its life, ancestors and descendants. What would we learn?



The last old elm tree at the entrance to Elm Park has contracted Dutch Elm Disease. Rather than cutting down the tree, we are working with the City of Winnipeg to leave 15 feet of the trunk in place, for an artist to create a work of art that draws attention to the important history and role of elm trees.

The passing of the last elm has initiated the next Elm Park Walking Tour location entitled **Phase 2: If This Tree Could Talk.**

We plan to create two interpretive panels to be located near the tree art project. Visitors and residents will be introduced to the rich history of elm trees in Elm Park, from Indigenous use, to the establishment of Elm Park, to today's role of shade trees making the area an idyllic and popular gathering place for thousands of Winnipeggers.

"If This Tree Could Talk" is part of a series of projects and interpretive panels.

This proposal covers Phase 2 of the Walking Tour: "If This Tree Could Talk". [1]

[1] Phase 1 includes an honourary street name dedication to Lawson Ogg, a volunteer who lost his life in 1950 flood, along with two interpretive panels. These provide historical background on the geography of Elm Park, Indigenous knowledge of the area, and the 1950 flood. To be completed in June 2022, the panels will be located in Kingston Park in the heart of Elm Park.

The main goal of Phase 2 of the Walking Tour is to use art and the unique history of Elm Park to promote awareness of the role of trees in our City and neighbourhood, and to encourage protection of our existing canopy by the planting of new shade trees everywhere for the next generation to enjoy.

There are three separate, but related projects all to be located at the south end of the Elm Park Bridge, thereby welcoming visitors and residents to Elm Park:

1. **History:** Create two accessible interpretive panels that provide a) an Indigenous perspective on elm trees, b) the establishment of Elm Park and c) the present and future of elm and other native shade trees;

2. **Art:** Create a permanent art work from a large elm tree (recently diagnosed with Dutch Elm Disease - DED - shown on the first page) located at the historic entrance to "Elm Park", at the south end of the Elm Park bridge;

3. **Landscaping:** Planting of native shade trees as an allée along either side of the start of Riverdale by the bridge, plus landscaping that includes Indigenous plantings. Site preparation by the City of Winnipeg for the panels is part of the landscaping project.

Each element of this project can stand on its own, but together they will provide important public education on elm trees and their role in both our past and future.

Location

Phase 2 interpretive panels will be placed at the base of the bridge, ideally to the left of the Art Tree project. The final location will be determined in collaboration with City representatives.

Please the photo below with the proposed location of the panels.


Complimentary Tree Art Project. Create a permanent art piece from massive DED Elm Tree.
Historical Panels. Proposed Interpretive Panels Placement

Panel Style

Our committee will use SH Immersive Environments to fabricate the panels and will be in the same style as Phase 1. SH Immersive Environments are based in Quebec and specialize in outdoor interpretive panels fabrication on high quality metal that is completely weather proof, graffiti proof, and lasts for 30 years.

The proposed size of each panel will be 28 x 36 inches, with the size to be finalized during the design process. A recent quote is included in our budget.

Accessibility

The panels will be designed to be accessible to people with reduced mobility, and use high contrast colours and appropriate font sizes to ensure accessibility to the visually impaired.

Site preparation will be designed and prepared by City Parks staff.

Developing the Text and Photos: a Path Toward Reconciliation

We are very pleased to have started a new relationship with a Knowledge Keeper who has had a long relationship with one of our community residents. They are leading the members our committee to engage in a process to work respectfully to ensure our next historical project is done in collaboration with Indigenous participants.

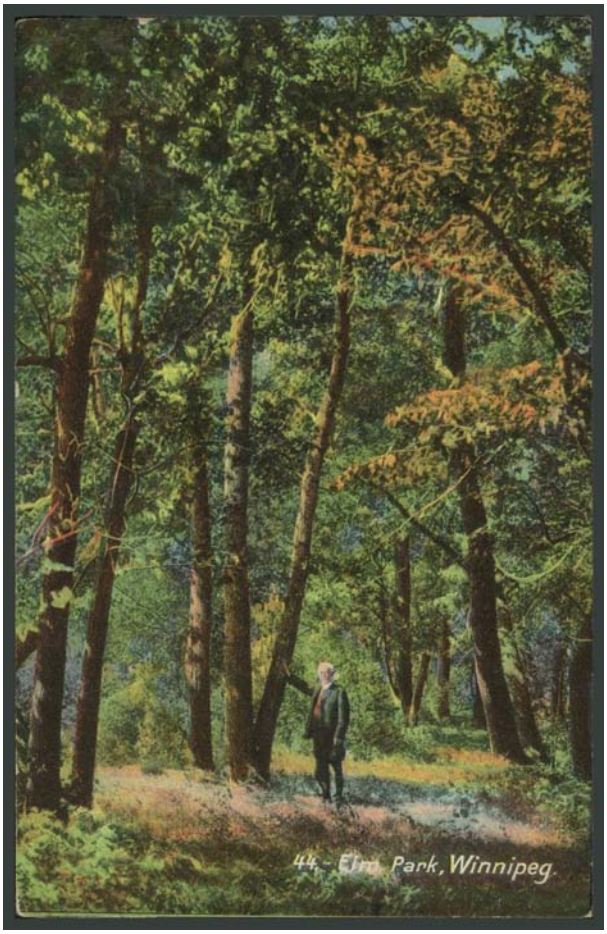
Therefore, our panels will be developed in concert with the Knowledge Keeper from the very start of the project, in keeping with the advice and guidance we have received from the City of Winnipeg's Welcoming Winnipeg committee members. We are also ensuring that the panel text is translated into an Indigenous language (if advised) as well as French.

We have provided some information below on the rich history of the area. Photos show the magnificent elm forest that stood in the peninsula in the late 1800's.

Elm Park was established in 1890 as a private park where people went for Sunday picnics, healing walks and recreation. The photos below were taken some time after the establishment of the park in 1890. In 1912, the City started building the steel Elm Park Bridge familiar to anyone who has come to the Bridge Drive Inn for ice cream.

In the early 20th century, Elm Park was sold off as "forest lots" for housing, which is now known as Kingston Crescent. Many of the 100+ year-old elms and 200+ year-old oaks have died, and the remaining giant shade trees are threatened due to effects of climate change, disease, and old age.







Top: Postcard of the pontoon bridge that connected Winnipeggers to Elm Park. Postmarked 1917. Photo prior to 1912.

Left: Postcard of Elm Park prior to it being sold as forest lots. Postmarked 1906.

Above: Entrance to Elm Park circa 1900. Winnipeg Tribune Western Pictorial Index

APPENDIX 4: PHASE 2 IF THIS TREE COULD TALK DRAFT TEXT AND PHOTOS

DRAFT TEXT: PHASE 2 PANELS, ON TREES, AT THE BASE OF ELM PARK BRIDGE]

[**PANEL 1:** Purpose: To establish trees as important gifts, and demonstrate they were always here, and to thank Mother Earth by planting trees]

[TITLE:] **THE GIFT OF TREES**

[DRAFT TEXT:]

Thick forests have always lined the banks of Miskwagmi Ziibi (Red River). The native elm, ash, cottonwood, maple, burr oak, trembling aspen, balsam poplar, basswood and willow offer gifts of medicine, food, transportation and the oxygen we breathe.

Indigenous peoples offered each other safe passage when traveling on the river and sheltering under the trees.

Anishinaabeg teach that we all depend on the gifts the earth provides. We are all connected to the land, the water and the beings that surround us, and we share the responsibility to care for Mother Earth.

We invite all visitors to give back: Plant a tree native to your neighbourhood today.

[**PHOTOS:**
Main photos will feature old pictures of trees in Elm Park, and appropriate Indigenous imagery to be determined with Knowledge Keeper input]

[**CHART:**
listing native trees, characteristics (height, age, etc) and traditional medicinal properties.]

[**PANEL 2**: Purpose: to describe the creation of Elm Park because of trees, Pontoon bridge linking to Elm Park, creation of neighbourhood forest lots… focus on need for people to care for trees]

[TITLE:] **WELCOME TO ELM PARK**

[DRAFT TEXT:]

The majestic forest that existed here inspired the creation of Elm Park in 1890. People strolled across the pontoon bridge on summer days to picnic under the cool shade of the natural elm and oak forest canopy.

In the early 1900s, Elm Park was sold as individual forest lots. People built homes in amongst the towering trees on what is now Kingston Crescent and Kingston Row.

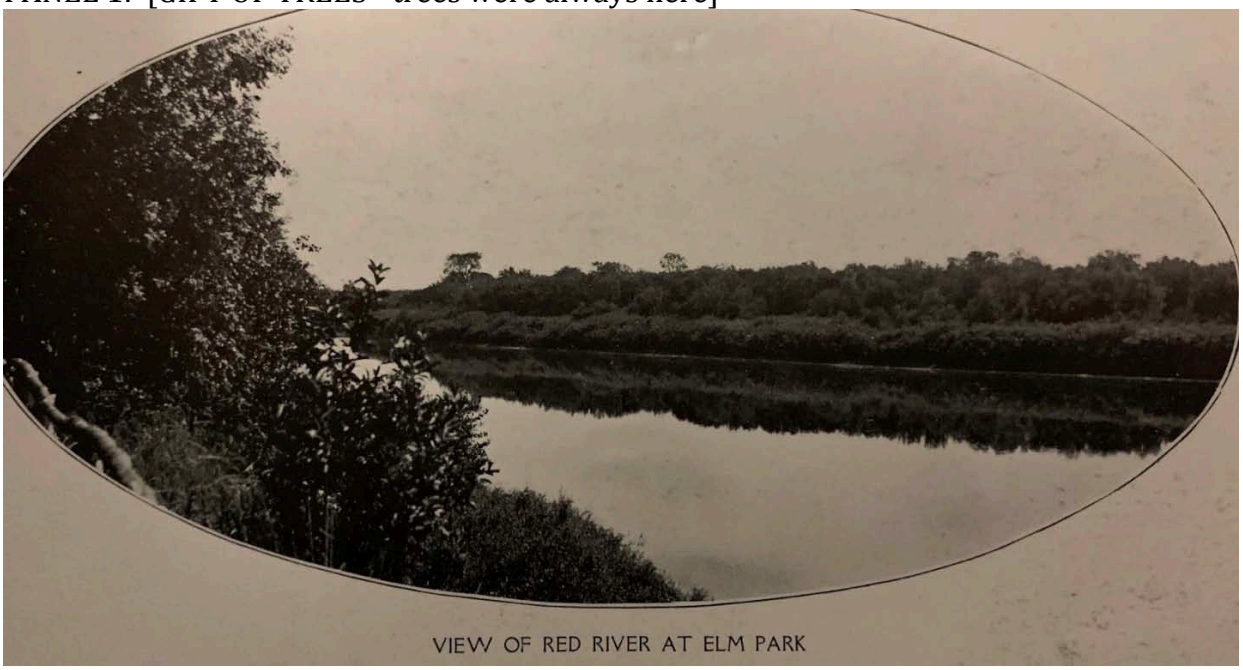
Sadly, development, disease, old age, and storms have taken a toll on many ancient trees in Elm Park.

Look up and cherish the gifts of the remaining trees. They are calling us to care for them, so they may care for us and future generations.

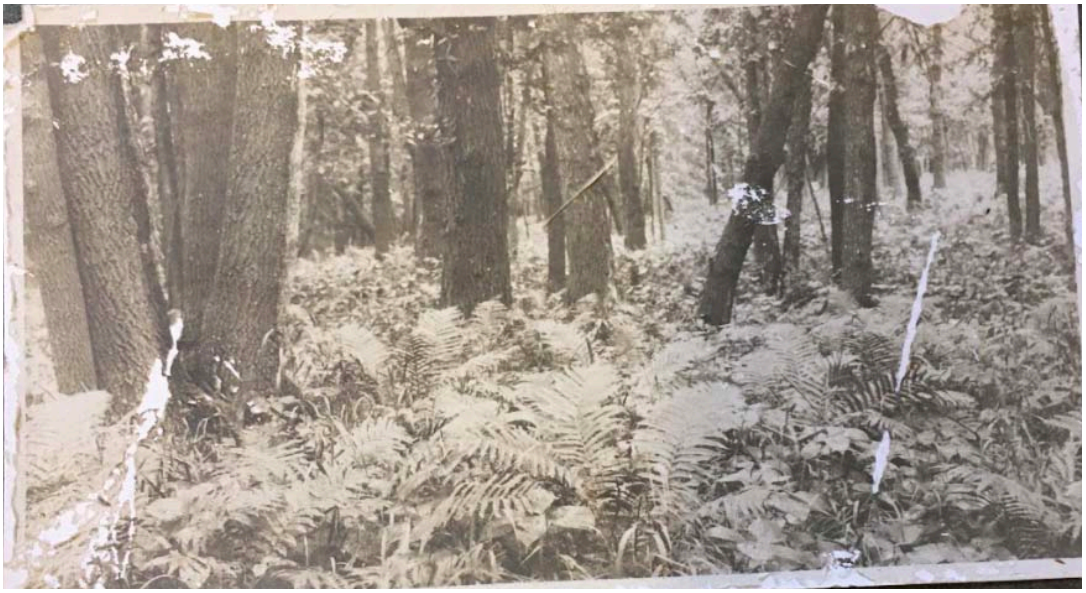
[PHOTOS: Elm Park activities focusing on interacting with trees.]

POSSIBLE PHOTO PICKS FOR PHASE 2 PANELS - KCRA - NOT COMPLETED

PANEL 1: [GIFT OF TREES - trees were always here]



Winnipeg Souvenir Book (no bridge in photo), but not a great photo…



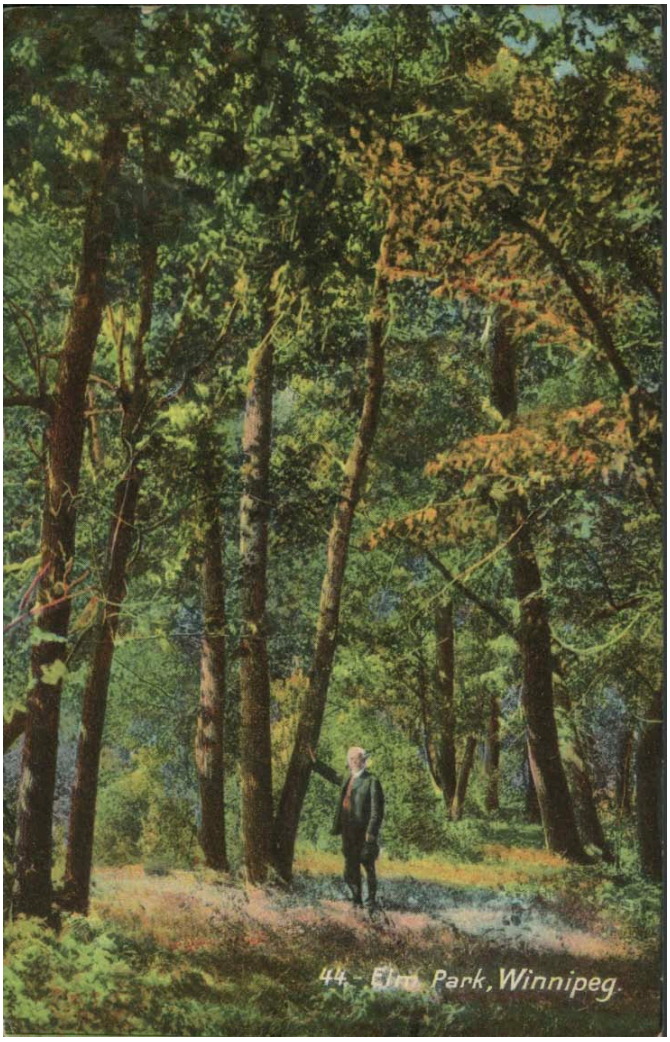
Bracken Ferns, Elm Park, St. Vital Museum (not altered from original state)



Camping at river, Rindisbacher painting, c. 1820?, Manitoba Museum - to demonstrate abundance of trees along river, need discussion with Knowledge Keeper regarding use of a Rindisbacher painting.



Elm Park path, B1D177_berman_7105_full (Can see the size of the mature tree prior to 1900)

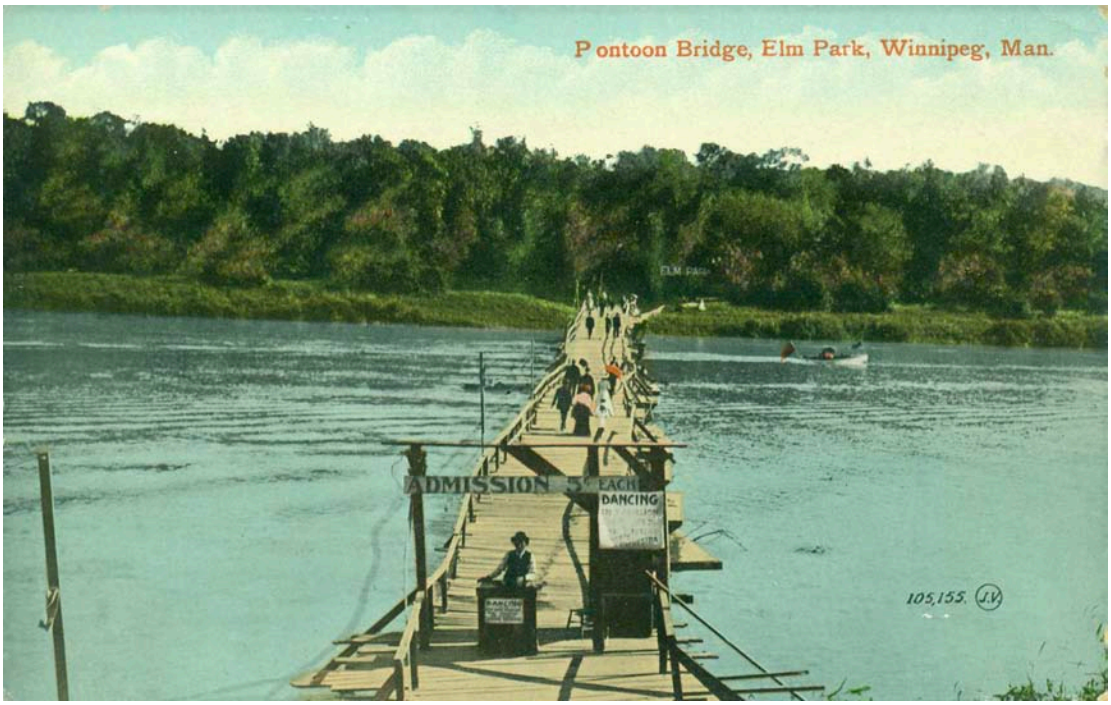


Man beside trees- can clearly see size of trees. Could be on Panel 2 as well.
B1D163_berman_7617_full

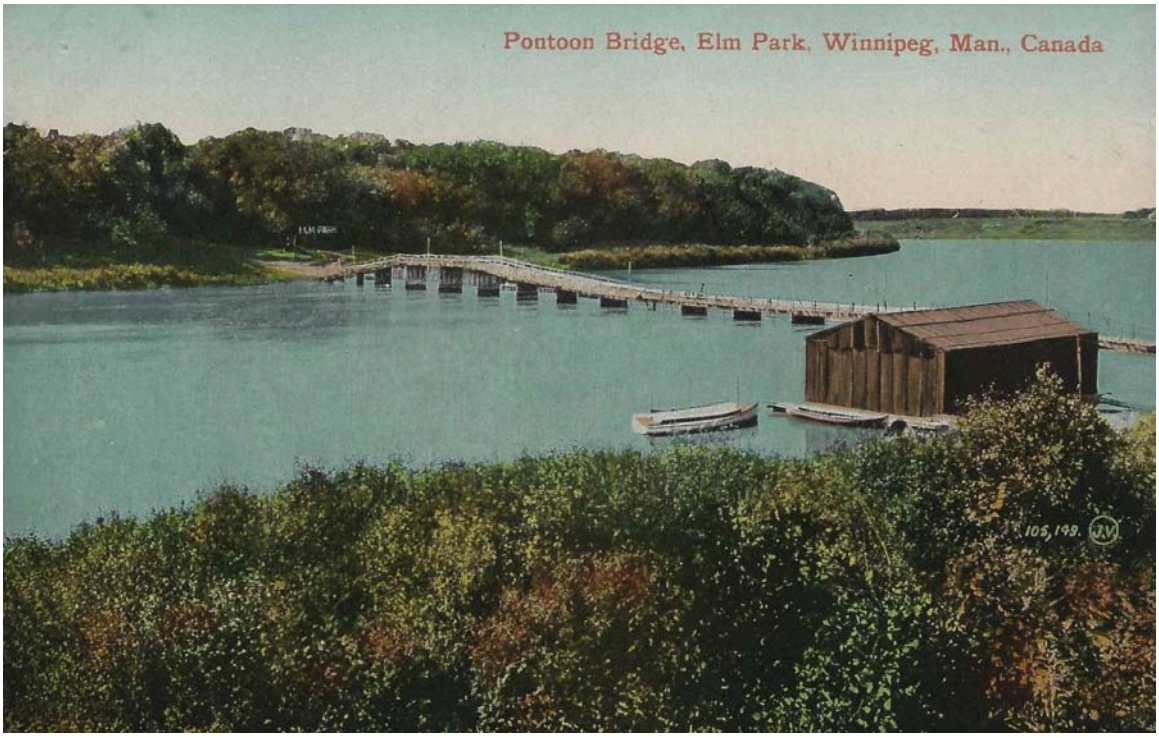
CHART PROMOTING TREE KNOWLEDGE

Native Tree	**Height?**	**Lifespan?**	**Description**	**Trad'l Medicine**
Willow				
Elm				
Burr Oak				
Balsam Poplar				
Manitoba maple				

PANEL 2: [ELM PARK - establishment of Elm Park]



Pontoon Bridge option: WP0064_robmcinnes_1934_full.jpg



Pontoon Bridge option: WP0063robmcinnes_6822_full



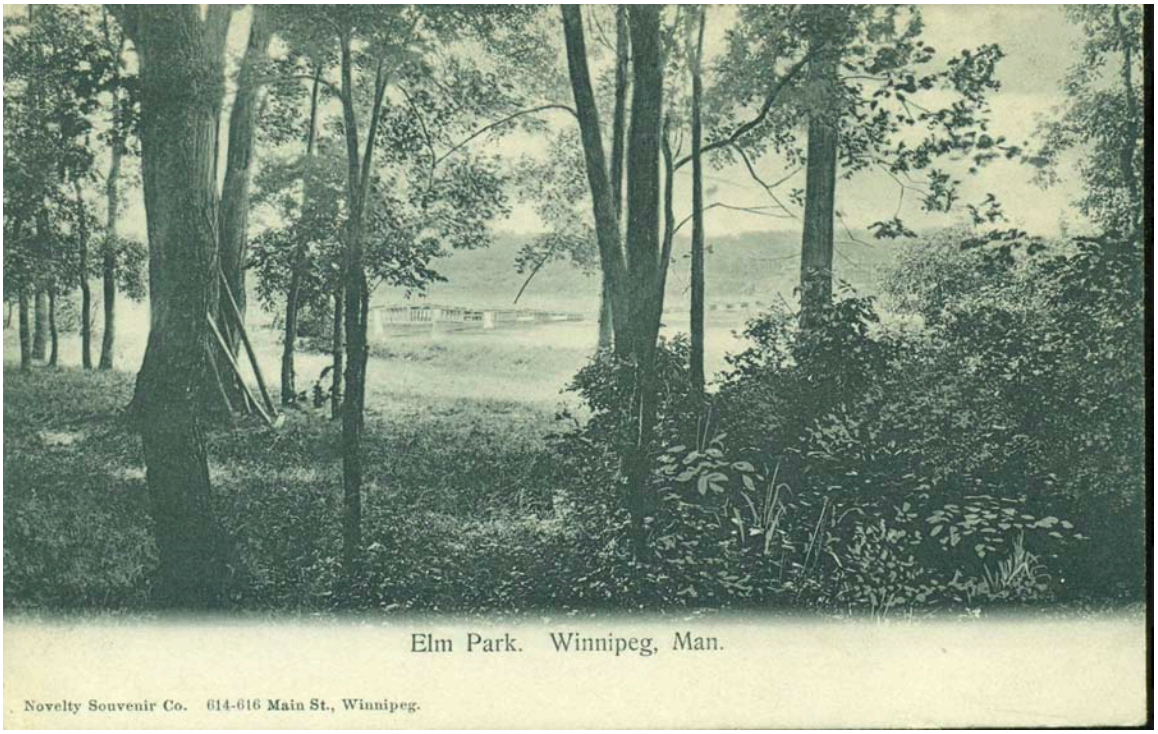
Entrance to elm park: WCPI_24963_A0835.PNG



Distant view of elm park with pontoon bridge:
WP0125robmcinnes_2009_full



A place to walk in Elm Park: Winnipeg Souvenir book



From Elm Park, pontoon bridge in background. Can see some tree detail.
WP0321_robmcinnes_2246_full



Men in Elm Park pathway. B1D171_berman_7024_full



Cycle Path in Elm Park: Winnipeg Souvenir book



Women on Cycle Path in Elm Park: Social Philosophy book: SocPhil_p33.PNG



ELM PARK LOTS

ONLY 200 ELM PARK LOTS

THE most beautiful spot in Winnipeg has been subdivided into building lots and is now offered to the public. Everybody knows Elm Park with its magnificent trees and unsurpassed natural scenery. It has been a most enjoyable recreation ground and picnic resort---think what a delightful place it would be for your home.

ONLY 200 ELM PARK LOTS

Elm Park Lots $15 -TO- $30 Per Front Foot. Some of the Lots are Nearly 300 Feet Deep

Elm Park Lots — 1/4 Cash Balance 1, 2, and 3 Years

Elm Park Lots for a beautiful home

Elm Park Lots for a safe investment.

Today Elm Park is offered the public for the first time. Every lot on this picturesque subdivision contains about one-quarter of an acre of ground and is heavily treed with gigantic elms---an ideal place for a suburban home with plenty of fresh air and all the joys of boating, etc., at your door. Entirely free, and always will be, from the noise, dust, smoke and objectionable features of railways, factories, etc. This splendid property is the cheapest and most desirable high class river frontage ever offered or that ever will be offered to the people of Winnipeg and Western Canada. Some of the lots running back nearly 300 feet from the water's edge. Reasonable building restrictions.

Prices, $15 to $30 Per Front Foot

Terms 1/4 Cash, Balance 1, 2 & 3 Yrs.

See plans at our offices or see our representative at the refreshment booth at the grounds.

Elm Park Lots easy of access to city

Elm Park Lots will not last long at these prices

The Standard Land Co. Phone 3226 222 Portage Ave.

The Imperial Land Co. Phone 5331 317 Portage Ave.



Possible modern day photo that shows the current neighbourhood from above? Look at all those trees! Photo by local resident Ivan Hughes