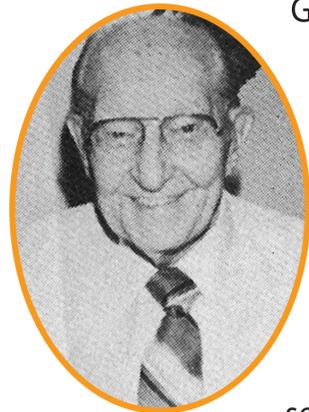


History of George W. Touhy Park

Shortly after Sanford was incorporated on September 29, 1877, a plat of the new city was drawn by E.R. Trafford. The city was laid out on a grid with east-west streets having numbers and north-south streets given the names of local trees. Land was set aside for churches, schools, and six square parks. Five of the original parks still exist today. They are Centennial Park, Park on Park, Red Barber Park, Paw Park, and George W. Touhy Park.



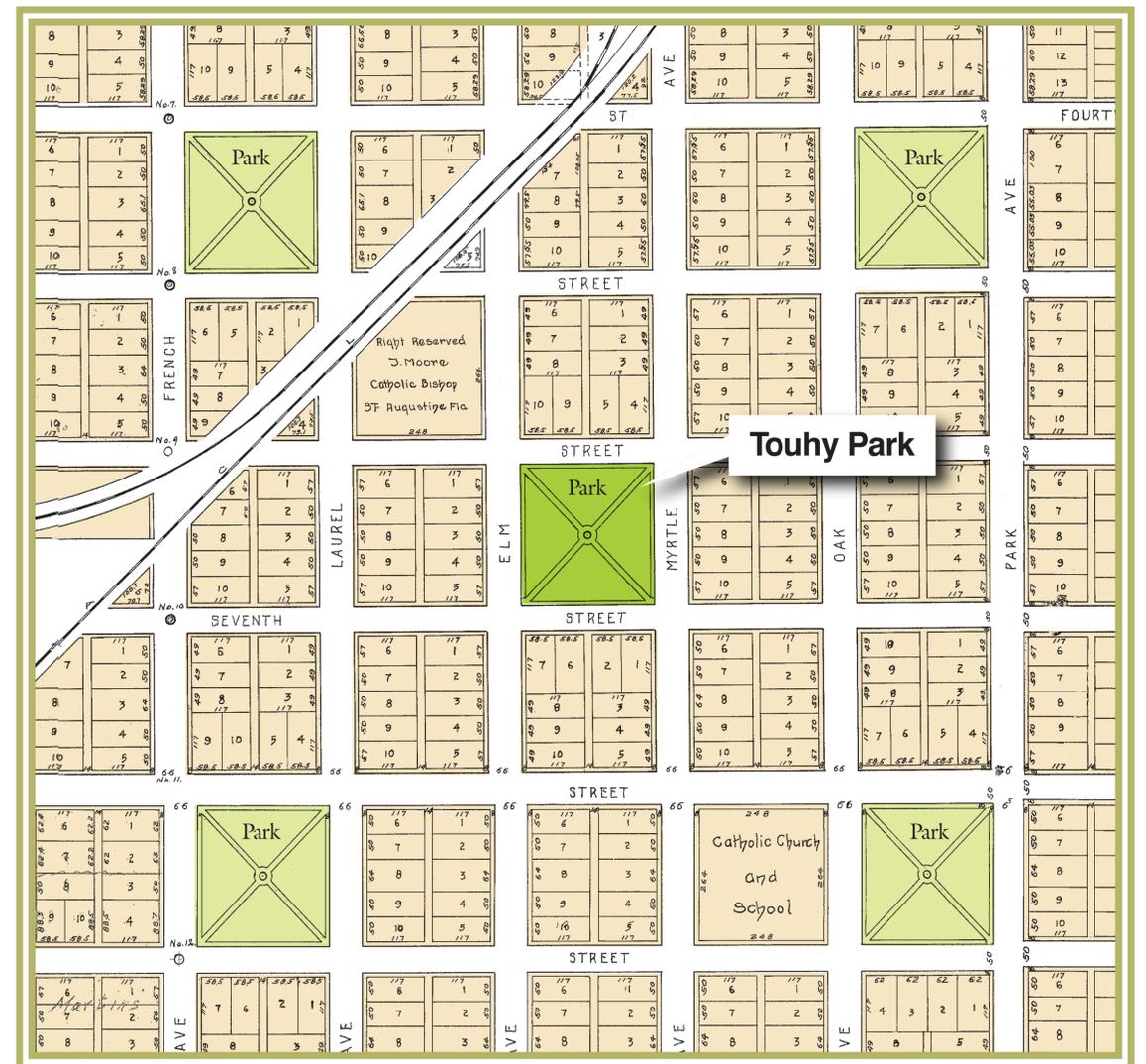
George W. Touhy was a Sanford businessman and community leader who was active in many local organizations including the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the Salvation Army, and the Boy Scouts of America. In October 1995, the Sanford City Commission voted to honor Touhy's memory by renaming Elm Avenue Park. In June 1996, the park was rededicated as George W. Touhy Park.

In 1992, the Parks Division of the City of Sanford began planting seedlings from the American Forests' Famous and Historic Trees project. The parents of these seedlings were trees with a connection to important people and places in American history. The trees were planted in Fort Mellon Park on Sanford's historic waterfront. The first tree planted on February 10, 1992, as part of an Arbor Day observance, was the Mount Vernon Red Maple. This tree was planted in honor of the founders of Sanford.

In 1998, a plan was proposed to build a convention center in Fort Mellon Park. While the project was in the planning phase, the decision was made to relocate the Famous and Historic Tree project seedlings from Fort Mellon Park to George W. Touhy Park. The park was renovated with new sidewalks and benches. The Famous and Historic Tree Grove in George W. Touhy Park was dedicated on Sanford's 122nd birthday, September 29, 1999. At that time the grove had 88 trees and was the largest historic tree grove in Florida.



The idea for the Historic Tree Grove at Touhy Park came from Howard Jeffries, who was the Landscape Architect for the city. Mr. Jeffries is pictured in Touhy Park with one of the first trees planted there.



Plat showing Sanford's original parks.



Scan me to find out more!

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to learn more about Touhy Park and its historic trees.

