

6

McDougall Hill Heritage Trail

CENTRAL EDMONTON – THE HEART OF THE CITY



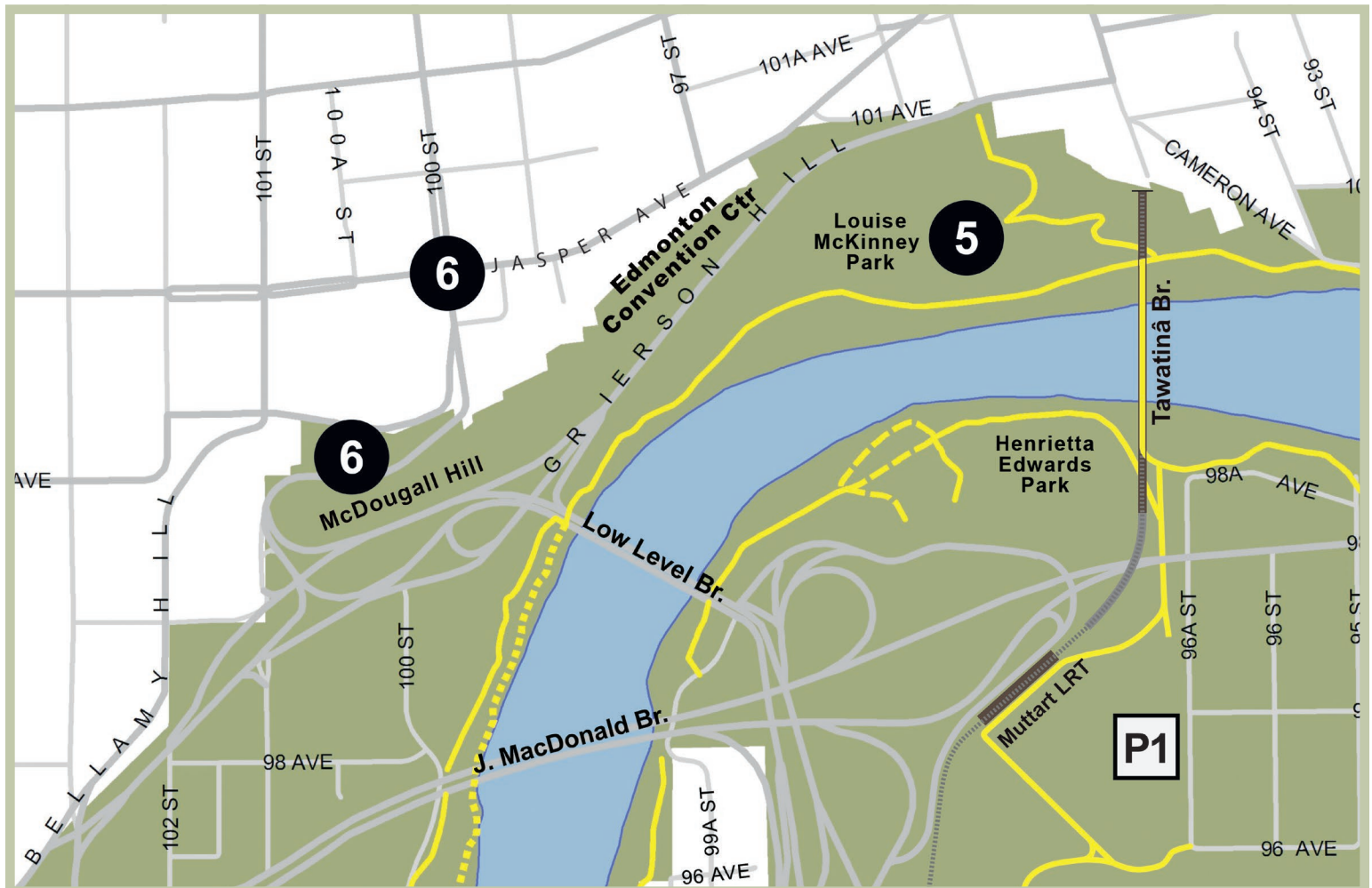
easy

Although this walk through the heart of the city is more “urban” than any of the others in this guide, it is well worth taking. It introduces city residents and visitors alike to Edmonton, past and present. The views from McDougall Hill highlight the challenges of keeping the incredible North Saskatchewan River valley from being filled with mega-roads and concrete structures. This walk can be combined with a visit to Louise McKinney Riverfront Park.

DIRECTIONS FROM THE MUTTART CONSERVATORY PARKING LOT (9626 – 96A STREET)

- Walk north on the multi-use trail over 98 Avenue and through Henrietta Edwards Park.
- Cross the Tawatinâ Bridge (the span across the river is 200 m) into Louise McKinney Riverfront Park and turn left.
- Walk past the Trans Canada Trail Pavilion and follow the multi-use trail that leads to the riverfront plaza and up to the Edmonton Conference Centre.
- Walk up the wooden steps to the Edmonton Conference Centre. Proceed up the escalators, or use the elevator, and out the door to Jasper Avenue.
- Walk west along Jasper Avenue, past the ANA (Army, Navy, Airforce) Peace Park with its eternal flame, and past the Marriott Courtyard Hotel and the historic Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. Cross the street and turn south on 100 Street, past Telus Centre North on your right to Macdonald Drive. You can enter the Telus Plaza at several locations.

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	PAVED MULTI-USE TRAIL		PARKING LOTS
	GRANULAR MULTI-USE TRAIL	P1	Muttart Conservatory
	GRANULAR PEDESTRIAN TRAIL		

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- Continue on Macdonald Drive and cross at the crosswalk to the Heritage Trail in McDougall Hill Park. Note that the historic McDougall United Church is also on Macdonald Drive just north of the Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe.
- Return to the Edmonton Conference Centre or walk east along Jasper Avenue to 101 Avenue (above Grierson Hill) past the inukshuk to get another view of the river valley. You may wish to cross Grierson Hill at the 95A Street walk light and walk down the stairs back to Louise McKinney Riverfront Park and the Muttart Conservatory. The outside access stairs at either side of the Edmonton Conference Centre take you down to the assembly area, where you can descend the stairs to Louise McKinney Riverfront Park.

FOR A LONGER WALK

Take a side trip by heading north to explore Edmonton's downtown and especially Sir Winston Churchill Square between 99 and 100 Streets, and 102A and 102 Avenues, where many activities take place during the summer. This square is bordered by City Hall, the Stanley Milner Library, the Winspear Centre (a concert hall), the Citadel Theatre and a new Art Gallery of Alberta. (A self-guided tour of Churchill Square is available on the City of Edmonton's website, www.edmonton.ca.) Then return to the Edmonton Conference Centre and back into the river valley.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Easy; noisy with city traffic. Wheelchair users should start this walk at Jasper Avenue, as currently there is no wheelchair access from Louise McKinney Riverfront Park to the Edmonton Conference Centre.

LENGTH OF WALK

From the Muttart Conservatory to the Heritage Trail, 1.8 km one way.

AMENITIES

- Washrooms available in the Louise McKinney Riverfront Plaza and the Edmonton Conference Centre. The conference centre is generally open from 6 am to 6 pm, and sometimes later.
- Lunch, coffee or snacks: food courts underground in Canada Place and Telus Plaza; coffee shops in hotels along the river (offering great views); Kids in the Hall Bistro in City Hall (generally requires a reservation for lunch).

DESCRIPTION

One of the focal points of this walk is the Heritage Trail in McDougall Hill Park, overlooking the river valley. A sign there states, "This trail follows the path that originally linked the Hudson's Bay Company Fort on the site of the present Legislature with the early settlement of Edmonton."

Look at the steep banks and appreciate the challenges of how early residents managed to get up and down from the river valley communities below to the top of the bank where new residents were starting to build. Look at the outdoor gallery photos and get a sense of how Edmonton grew from the first trading post in 1795 to its last trading post in 1830 (below the present legislature) to a city of 8,000 in 1904. In 2009 the city's population was over 780,000.

HISTORY

Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. Affectionately known as "The Mac," this historic hotel was opened in 1915 by the Canadian National Railway. It is named after Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. It was closed in 1983 and did not reopen until 1991, after being restored by Canadian Pacific Railways.

Rev. George McDougall (1821-1876) came to Edmonton in 1871 and claimed land on behalf of the Methodist Church. In 1873 he had Edmonton's first church built on top of the hill at 101 Street, where the current (1910) McDougall United Church now sits. The 1873 church has been moved to Fort Edmonton.

The design of the 10-storey **Edmonton Conference Centre** mimics the slope of the bank. Since it was built over the crest of the valley wall and on the site of a former coal mine, major steps had to be taken to prevent this huge structure from sliding downhill. Hall D can seat up to 1,200 people for catered meals. This building officially opened as the Edmonton Convention Centre in 1983, and was renamed as the Shaw Conference Centre in 1997, until it reverted to Edmonton Conference Centre in 2018.

*"Climate is what you expect,
weather is what you get."*

– National Service Office Tucson, Arizona

As you enjoy the River Valley, please remember to be prepared for the weather and leave only footprints. Please take out your garbage.

Our River Valley will benefit as we reduce our Climate Change inputs.