



MILL CREEK TRESTLE BRIDGE

92 STREET & 76 AVENUE NW

CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

Located in a south Edmonton ravine, parallel to 76 Avenue and spanning Mill Creek, the Mill Creek Trestle Bridge is a simple wood trestle structure that was an integral part of the early rail connection between the towns of Strathcona and Edmonton and remains as a valuable part of the Edmonton River Valley pedestrian and bikeway system.

HERITAGE VALUE

The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge is significant as a part of the first rail connection between Strathcona and Edmonton, for its association with prominent railway entrepreneurs Sir William MacKenzie and Sir Donald Mann, as a symbol of Edmonton's industrial development, and for its present-day landmark status within the Mill Creek community.

The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge is one of the last physical reminders of the existence of the Edmonton, Yukon, and Pacific Railway line, which was the first connection between the towns of Strathcona and Edmonton. Completed in 1902, the railway followed the Mill Creek Ravine alignment and crossed over the North Saskatchewan River over the Low Level Bridge, providing reliable and convenient passenger and freight transportation services between the two towns as an alternative to John Walter's ferry further west. Passenger services were provided until 1928, but the railway continued to provide a vital link until the 1950s between the river valley industries and Edmonton's south side commercial centre, which offered rail connections to the remainder of the Province.

The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge is associated with prominent railway entrepreneurs Sir William MacKenzie and Sir Donald Mann, President and Vice President of the Canadian Northern Railway, who were responsible for the construction of the trestle bridge. MacKenzie and Mann purchased the Edmonton District Railway in 1896, which they reorganized as the Edmonton, Yukon, and Pacific Railway in 1899, and then constructed forty-five kilometres of new track. The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge has important associations with industrial development in the river valley and with the development of Edmonton as a railway centre, linking Edmonton industry to the rest of the province.

The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge is also significant as a prominent visual landmark in the Mill Creek Ravine, adjacent to 76 Avenue, where it is now used regularly by pedestrians and cyclists as part of the Edmonton River Valley trail system.





CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

Key elements that define the character of the Mill Creek Trestle Bridge include its:

- + location in a wooded ravine with steep banks that lead to the meandering Mill Creek at the bottom of the ravine;
- + form, scale and massing as expressed by the linear roadbed supported on cross-braced vertical supports; and
- + all extant wood features including the round vertical supports or bents, the horizontal angled braces from dimensioned lumber that are bolted to the bents, the dimensioned lumber stringers that support the railway ties and rest of the top of the bents, and the ties that are bolted to the stringers.

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 13472 in August 2004.

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