



WORLD TRADE CENTRE EDMONTON

BUILDING HISTORY

To local residents and business travellers alike the newly renovated structure that today is the World Trade Centre Edmonton has been a familiar sight on its historic downtown street corner for over 50 years.

Situated at Jasper Avenue and 100 Street directly north of the stately Fairmont Hotel Macdonald, this former Imperial Bank of Canada building was painstakingly rejuvenated during the winter of 2003–2004.

Prior to its present incarnation as a state-of-the-art office facility, the building stood empty and silent for a number of years, its owners waiting until market conditions made their investment property financially viable.

With good timing and assistance from three levels of government, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce has resurrected the structure as a testament to Edmonton’s rich urban past.

The property it occupies has a history as old as the city itself. In fact, this busy street corner delineates Edmonton’s first official intersection, and was home to its first permanent branch of the Imperial Bank of Canada.

In 1891 the bank opened the community’s first chartered financial institution in a one-and-a-half story frame building nearby on Second Street (now 102 Street).

While its staff eagerly grew their ledger of merchant and landowner accounts, workers were busy constructing a two-storey brick building at the strategic northeast corner of Jasper Avenue and McDougall Avenue (now 100 Street).

On opening day in 1893, the Imperial Bank of Canada shared this new facility with the Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation.



With a visionary core of merchants, traders and city fathers determined to grow their community, the town’s need for financial services quickly outgrew the existing supply. In an effort to keep pace, the bank expanded purchasing both the building and the property in 1898.

By 1906 it was forced, once again, to expand. The

Original CIBC building where the WTCE/Edmonton Chamber of Commerce is now located.

BY CHRIS O’BRIEN



**WORLD TRADE CENTRE
EDMONTON**
We know people
who know
people.

EDMONTON

www.wtcedmonton.com

Imperial Bank reaffirmed its status as Edmonton's leading financial institution by replacing the old brick structure with an imposing Neoclassical three-storey sandstone building and grand classical portico.

Forty years later, the bank would rebuild yet again.

In the summer of 1950 temporary accommodations were established on the south side of Jasper Avenue and tenders were called for a modern facility of steel, concrete and Indiana limestone.

This latest addition to the bank's structural lineage opened for business the following summer, albeit much reduced from the intended four-storey building.

Only the basement and ground floor were actually constructed because of post-war limitations on structural steel.

Under the direction of designer and builder Rule Wynn & Rule—the most influential architects of the early modern era in Alberta—six additional floors were added in 1953.

The now seven-storey facility was completed and occupied in mid-1954 appearing, from an exterior perspective, very much as it does today.

Thus, the new World Trade Centre Edmonton building is illustrative of the theme of banking history in the Alberta capital.

It is also a conspicuous modern landmark—a welcome revitalization heralding Edmonton's growing prominence in a truly global economy. ▲

AXE
axeproductions.com

Axe Productions Inc. is a full service production company offering complete sound, lighting, video and staging solutions for all sizes of concert, corporate and worship events.

12410 B 142nd Street
Edmonton, AB T5L 4K2
Phone: 780.452.4843
Toll Free 1.877.852-4843

Martin Salloum
President & CEO
World Trade Centre Edmonton

Keith Persaud
Vice-President
World Trade Centre Edmonton

Chris Skoropad
Research & Communications,
World Trade Centre Edmonton

Phone: (780) 426-4620

Gord Doran
Sales, Sun Media
gdoran@wpgsun.com

NorQuest
COLLEGE

www.norquest.ca

Join the thousands of **successful** NorQuest graduates in Alberta's vibrant economy

Achieve your academic and career goals in a supportive environment!

- Health and Human Service Careers
- Business and Industry Careers
- Employment Preparation
- Academic Upgrading
- Adult Literacy
- English as a Second Language

We offer

- Flexible alternatives—career laddering, recognition for prior learning, part-time study and distance education
- Culturally sensitive programming
- Programming for learners with disabilities
- Customized programs for communities and workplaces

Call 780-644-6000
Toll Free:
1-866-534-7218

Your **Quest** for a career starts here.