

A LOCAL'S GUIDE

2026 EDITION

A Local's Guide to Edmonton

The newcomer's orientation to Edmonton: seasons, transit,
neighbourhoods, cost of living, utilities, schools, and healthcare.



Jody Lambertus

REALTOR® SRES® · CENTURY 21 MASTERS

jody@jodylambertus.ca · (780) 399-5114 · jodylambertus.ca



Canada's Festival City. Home to the world's largest urban parkland, a booming economy, and a community that makes newcomers feel like they belong the moment they arrive. Here's the orientation Jody gives every client relocating to Edmonton.

Why Edmontonians love it here

Edmonton surprises people. It's the northernmost major city in North America with a metro population over a million, yet it punches far above its weight in culture, food, outdoor recreation, and economic opportunity.

The river valley: over 18,000 acres of connected parkland with 160+ km of trails, larger than New York's Central Park many times over, free and accessible year-round.

The festivals: more than 50 a year, including North America's largest fringe theatre festival and one of the world's largest multicultural celebrations.

Affordability: noticeably more attainable than most major Canadian metros (ask Jody or view live listings for current pricing).

No provincial sales tax: Alberta is the only province with no PST.

A strong, diversified job market and a genuine, welcoming community.

Sources: City of Edmonton: River Valley Parks - Travel Alberta

Edmonton by the numbers

Edmonton has been among the fastest-growing of Canada's million-plus cities. A few figures to orient newcomers (demographic data, updated periodically):

City population (2025): ~1,238,000; metro (CMA): ~1.6 million.

Annual growth rate: ~3.0% — the fastest-growing major metro (Statistics Canada, Jan 2026).

Median household income: ~\$99,200 — 2nd among peer metros (ESRI, 2024).

Median age: ~37.6 years (ESRI, 2024); homeownership rate: ~70%.

No provincial sales tax — Alberta is the only province with no PST.

Over 42% visible-minority population; 333,000+ residents speak a mother tongue other than English or French.

Sources: City of Edmonton: Facts & figures - Statistics Canada



Edmonton by the season

Edmonton's four seasons are distinct and dramatic, and the city averages over 300 sunny days a year, so even a cold winter day is usually a bright one.

Winter (Nov-Mar): highs around -4 to -7°C ; locals skate, ski the river valley, and lean into it. Chinooks bring occasional warm spells.

Spring (Apr-May): short and stunning; the river valley greens up and patios open early.

Summer (Jun-Aug): spectacular long golden evenings (nearly 17 hours of daylight at the solstice) and festival after festival.

Fall (Sep-Oct): arguably the most beautiful season, as the river valley turns gold and amber, and the air turns crisp.

Sources: Travel Alberta

Neighbourhoods

Edmonton has over 400 officially recognized neighbourhoods, from historic inner-city gems to thriving new suburbs. A few Edmontonians love most:

Old Strathcona: independent restaurants, vintage shops, live music, and the historic Whyte Avenue strip.

Oliver (Wihkwêntôwin): Edmonton's densest, most urban neighbourhood, just west of downtown.

Glenora & Westmount: mature, prestigious inner-city communities near the river valley and the 124th Street gallery district.

Garneau & the University Area: walkable, academic, and close to the U of A (see the University Area guide).

Terwillegar / Windermere & other southwest communities: newer builds, top-rated schools, and suburban comfort.

Griesbach, Chappelle, Keswick & Summerside: newer planned communities, several with lake features and family-oriented design.

Getting around & transit

Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) runs the city's bus network and the Capital and Metro LRT lines, connecting downtown, the University of Alberta, and NAIT. The river-valley trail network also makes cycling and walking genuinely practical for much of the year.

LRT connects downtown, the U of A, and the north end; U of A employees receive free LRT between South Campus and campus.

The ETS Trip Planner maps bus + LRT routes door to door.

160+ km of river-valley trails link many central neighbourhoods on foot or by bike.

Sources: Edmonton Transit Service (ETS)



Economy & top employers

Edmonton is Alberta's capital and the province's government, education, and healthcare hub, with technology, construction, engineering, and life sciences growing quickly.

Government & public administration: provincial and federal operations are major employers.

Healthcare & life sciences: the University of Alberta Hospital campus is one of Canada's largest.

Energy: Edmonton is the management and refining hub for Alberta's oil sands.

Education & research: the U of A, MacEwan University, and NAIT anchor a large post-secondary sector.

Major employers include Alberta Health Services, the Government of Alberta, the U of A, the City of Edmonton, EPCOR, Stantec, and PCL Construction.

Schools & education

Edmonton is served by two primary school boards, each offering a "Find a School" tool to identify your designated school by address. Alberta's open-enrolment policy also lets families apply beyond their catchment, subject to space.

Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB): 215+ schools, with English, French Immersion, fine-arts, sport, and alternative programs.

Edmonton Catholic Schools (ECSD): 96 Catholic schools across the city.

Surrounding boards serve St. Albert, Sherwood Park/Strathcona County, Spruce Grove, and Parkland County.

Post-secondary: University of Alberta, MacEwan University, NAIT, NorQuest College, Concordia University of Edmonton, and King's University.

Sources: Edmonton Public Schools - Edmonton Catholic Schools



Healthcare

Edmonton's healthcare system is anchored by Alberta Health Services, Canada's largest provincial health authority. All Edmonton hospitals accept Alberta Health Card (AHCIP) coverage; for 24/7 health advice, call 811 to speak with a registered nurse.

University of Alberta Hospital (UAH): a leading academic health-sciences centre, home to the Stollery Children's Hospital, Mazankowski Heart Institute, and Cross Cancer Institute.

Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH): including the Lois Hole Hospital for Women and the Eye Institute of Alberta.

Misericordia & Grey Nuns community hospitals (Covenant Health): full acute care with 24-hour emergency departments.

Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital: Canada's largest free-standing rehabilitation hospital.

Sources: Alberta Health Services

Utilities & everyday services

A quick reference for setting up a new home in Edmonton:

Water & power: EPCOR, epcor.com · 780-412-4500.

Natural gas: ATCO Gas, atco.com · 1-800-511-3447.

City services, waste & 311: call 311 (or 780-442-5311 from outside Edmonton).

Registries & driver's licences: Alberta.ca/registry.

Library: Edmonton Public Library, eplibrary.ca.

Emergency: 911 · Police non-emergency: 780-423-4567 · Health advice: 811.

Sources: City of Edmonton: 311 - EPCOR

Relocating to Edmonton?

Relocating is easier with someone who knows the neighbourhoods, the timing, and the trade-offs first-hand.

Jody Lambertus, REALTOR® SRES®

jody@jodylambertus.ca · (780) 399-5114 · jodylambertus.ca

BOOK A CALL →

CENTURY 21.
Masters

“Jody helped us buy and sell in the most seamless manner possible. She is a fantastic communicator, expert negotiator, pays attention to the details and is such a joy to work with. It’s thanks to Jody that we are in a great house, in an even better neighbourhood. 10/10. Will recommend over and over again!”

GAVIN & HAYLEY · PATRICIA HEIGHTS

Know someone moving to Edmonton? Pass this guide along.

SHARE THIS PDF »

More free Edmonton guides:

jodylambertus.ca/resources



Scan to book a free call