

Portland Willamette Waterfront

This waterfront walk takes you on a loop through the heart of Portland, from downtown's riverfront to the booming Central Eastside and the popular Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade. While the freeway noise is loud on the Esplanade, views are fabulous and on sunny days at lunchtime, the human scene is ever changing.

Start on the west side of the Willamette River at Governor Tom McCall Waterfront Park at SW Salmon Street and Naito Parkway. Walk north along the seawall, built after floods repeatedly ravaged downtown businesses. From 1940 to 1974, a freeway ran here.

Pass under the Morrison and Burnside bridges. At the Steel Bridge, take the bike/pedestrian path on the bridge's lower deck. The bridge, which dates from 1912, brings you to the 1.5-mile Eastbank Esplanade, with its 1,200-foot-long floating walkway. The walkway's concrete and steel sections were poured in Bellingham, Washington, trucked to Portland and floated into place. The walkway leads to dry land at Ash Street and to what was once a separate city, East Portland. Historic markers along the way provide interpretation of the waterfront scene. Walk south, passing under the Burnside and Morrison bridges and by mature plantings of native willow, alder, snowberry and roses.

Leave the Esplanade by taking the ramps or stairs up to the Hawthorne Bridge. Cross it to return to Waterfront Park. Head north to Salmon Street Springs, at the starting point.

2.6 miles

5491 steps

difficulty

45.515, -122.672

PORTLAND: WILLAMETTE WATERFRONT

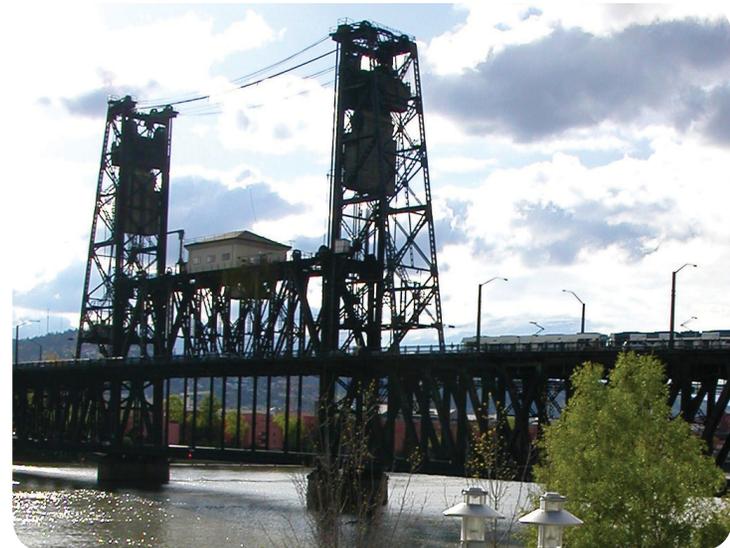
Willamette River Bridges

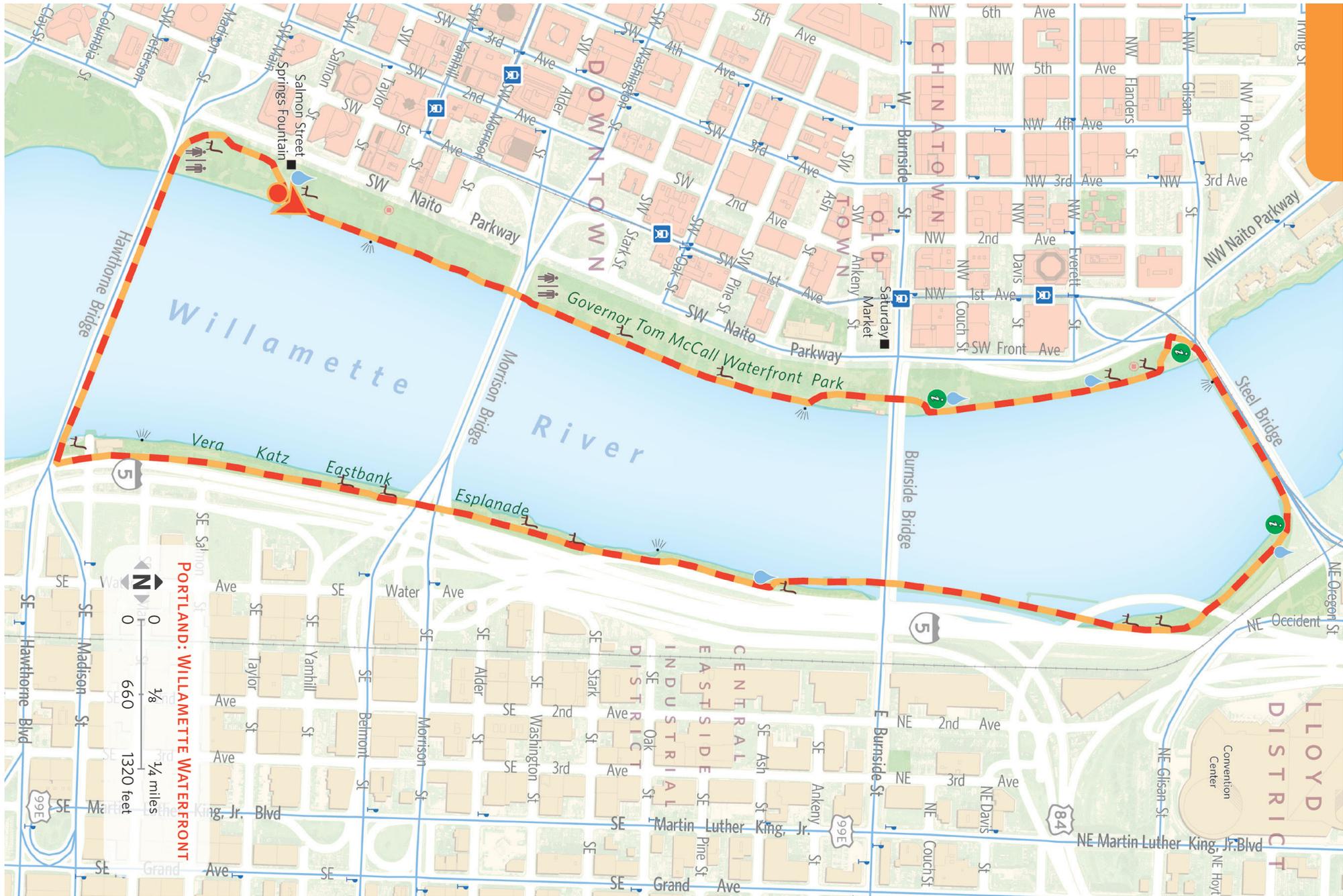
The 187-mile Willamette River drains the 5,800 square miles of the Willamette Valley, one of the most fertile agricultural regions in the nation. In downtown Portland, the river is just 12 miles from its confluence with the Columbia River.

The Morrison Bridge opened in 1958 and replaced two earlier bridges, from 1887 and 1905. The 1887 bridge was the first to span the Willamette and replaced the Stark Street Ferry. The Burnside Bridge was built in 1926. During high water only, a bridge operator sits in the west tower. Other times of the year, the bridge is operated remotely, as is the Morrison. The Hawthorne Bridge is the state's busiest bike/pedestrian bridge. (Bridge facts courtesy of *The Portland Bridge Book* by Sharon Wood Wortman and Ed Wortman.)



Steel Bridge





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0 0 660 1320 feet
0 1/8 1/4 miles