

**April 1, 2015**

**McDougall United Church Background Information**

**Re: Announcement, Government of Alberta, City of Edmonton**

Today, with the support of the McDougall United Church council, trustees, Edmonton Presbytery and Friends of McDougall, Culture Minister Maureen Kubinec has announced her intent to seek provincial heritage status for the McDougall church building. With designation will come the Government of Alberta's generous contribution of \$750,000 towards the restoration of the building. The City of Edmonton, represented by Councillor Scott McKeen, has identified a possible further \$500,000 for a total of \$1.25M.

Minister Kubinec will formally publish her government's intent in the Alberta Gazette. That will trigger a 60 day review period for comments and questions. At the end of that period, and with the approval of McDougall United Church and the Edmonton Presbytery, the McDougall building will become a provincial historic resource.

**McDougall United Church Building Future Committee Chair, Treasurer, and Trustee Greg Greenough:**

"Our governments have given us genuine encouragement with this sum. It will kickstart the revitalization and I am hopeful the business community will come forward as we move to establish a sustainable framework that allows the building to remain a vital part of downtown Edmonton."

**McDougall United Church Council Chair Claire Redpath:**

"The funds committed today are a major contribution towards saving this historic building. The dollars are significant enough for us to go forward - we hope it will kickstart other contributions from the community. We welcome the province and the city coming to the table as we now share stewardship of this important part of our Alberta heritage. The province's support, and the intent to designate this building as a historic resource, recognizes what everyone in Edmonton already knows. This building is part of the history of Edmonton and – right now – it provides the community with a cultural centre and a meeting place. We hope the process of designating and preserving will assure its future as a vital part of the community for generations to come. We at McDougall believe building belongs to the people of Edmonton and the people of Alberta."

**McDougall United Church Property Chair and Trustee Gerald Watts:**

"For the past one hundred and forty four years, McDougall has been much more than a place of worship. Yes, we are a church, but we are also one of the musical and cultural centres of Edmonton. We have hosted political debates, union meetings, suffragettes, temperance rallies, music festivals, symphony, opera and theatre. For many years, we were able to do this without assistance from others. Because the challenges of maintaining such a large building, we have had to ask for help to rebuild our building, and our call has been heard. With the assistance of the Province of Alberta and the City of Edmonton, we are beginning the long and expensive process of ensuring that our building will last another hundred years, and will continue to serve the wider community as it has in the past.

Historic designation is a major undertaking, a decision that has not been taken lightly. With the support of the Province, the City and the many friends of McDougall, we are embarking on a major endeavor to revitalize our building and to help it accommodate the activities that we have fostered for many years.

To quote Churchill, this is the end of the beginning. There is a lot of hard work to be completed before the historic designation will be finalized. There will be a lot of effort to be made before there will be sufficient funds to meet the building's needs. And I am confident that there will be committed and ongoing support from all of our supporters. Thank you all for your support."