Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront

Milwaukie is one of the oldest towns on the Willamette River, at one time rivaling Portland as the pre-eminently local port. On this walk, you’ll discover Milwaukie’s connections to the river, see its historic downtown and glimpse where the city is heading in the future.

Begin at SE Harrison and Main streets at Milwaukie’s City Hall. Walk east on Harrison, passing the Ledding Library and also a Waldorf School, constructed in 1937 as a WPA project. From Harrison, turn right on 28th and then right on Washington. Walk west; after crossing McLoughlin, enter Riverfront Park and continue straight to the Kellogg Creek Trail. Walk on the asphalt path along the river.

Walk south on this trail 0.2 mile to Eagle Street and 19th Avenue. Stay straight on 19th to Spring Park’s entrance at Sparrow Street. Take the hiking trail from the entrance 0.2 mile as it winds around the south side of a bay from which Elk Rock Island is visible.

To return, walk north on 19th to the Kellogg Creek Trail at Riverfront Park. Walk straight (north) on the trail and cross the bridge near Washington Street. Continue north to Monroe. Turn right on Monroe, cross McLoughlin and turn left on Main. At Main and Monroe, pass Dark Horse Comics, one of the nation’s largest comic book publishers. Walk one block north to the intersection of Harrison and Main.

Elk Rock Island

Elk Rock Island in the Willamette River is part of a volcano that erupted 40 million years ago. Comprised of Waverly Heights Basalt, formed by lava flows, it is some of the oldest exposed rock in the Portland area. In 1910, Peter Kerr bought the island from the Rock Island Club, which had operated a dance hall there. In 1940, he gave the island to the City of Portland with the requirement that it be preserved in its natural state. The island is accessible on foot from late spring through autumn. Kerr’s estate in Dunthorpe lies directly across the river. Now called the Bishop’s Close, its magnificent clifftop gardens are open to the public during daylight hours.