

VEOC Discussion Highlights

for

Kingston to Lower Brewers

Fort Henry, a component of the fortifications protecting the mouth of the Rideau Canal is a well-known heritage experience destination within Ontario, and to a lesser extent within Canada and northeastern United States. So too is the City of Kingston with its array of stone heritage buildings and Lake Ontario waterfront.

Unlike the Ottawa Reach, this Reach of the Corridor has for the most part a rural or predominantly natural environment character. Virtually immediately inland of the line of fortifications – Fort Henry and the fortified towers and their “line of fire” – the inner harbour area is a combination of safe and accessible open water, wetlands and marshes. Belle Island is a prominent landscape feature and significant First Nations archaeological site on the western side of the harbour.

While surrounded to a large extent by urban land uses, the character of the harbour waters easily permit guests to imagine its heritage use.

Inland of the harbour the Cataraqui River descends over the eastern edge of the Frontenac Arch down to the lowland plain topography of the harbour, the City and the shores of Lake Ontario. This descent, viewed from below seems as it would have been during the Canal era.

Above the descent is Kingston Mills lock station, a near full array of lock station related heritage buildings and infrastructure, including: four locks, a turning basin – also used for steamship repairs, a swing bridge, a stone arch dam and spillway, a blockhouse – now outfitted as a soldier’s barracks, a lockmasters house and related outbuildings. This one compact lock station set in a quite natural rural setting aside Colonel By Lake is a valuable opportunity to experience much of the heritage resources and character of the Rideau Canal locks system.

The railway overpass presents a complementary heritage storyline, it being the road bed of the Grand Trunk Railway.

During canal construction, the Cataraqui River’s natural flow was blocked by the stone dam to create the slackwater section, known as Colonel By Lake. Three of the four locks are connected in a staircase of locks, descending the river gorge over a series of rocky terraces with the lowest lock terminating at the level of Lake Ontario.

Above Colonel By Lake, the River Styx waterway is a flooded stretch of the river, which submerged the Billidire Rift rapids at the head of this stretch. The flooded forest environment is clearly evidenced by boaters. The waterway is surrounded by secluded peaceful settings of farmlands, punctuated by the imposing presence of Joyceville Penitentiary,

Exploration Themes

Participants felt that this Reach offers a diversity of both cultural and natural heritage exploration themes in a very concise area, as compared to other Reaches. In a matter of a few kilometers from the mouth of the Cataraqui River, guests are able to experience almost a full array of the heritage themes directly associated with the 'Canal' itself.

Particularly at Kingston Mills, it was felt that a full array of stories may be told and effectively demonstrated, including: lock design and construction, lock station defense and living arrangements, slackwater solutions to river navigation challenges, and engineering ingenuity in descending the Frontenac Arch. This same location reveals steamship heritage and railway heritage.

Along the Lake Ontario waterfront, the "arch of fire" from Fort Henry and its companion military towers was designed to protect the City of Kingston, the naval establishment and the mouth of the Rideau Canal. "Military Heritage" is the most popular aspect of the City's heritage experiences.

The heritage buildings of the City of Kingston, itself, reveal how important this community was and intended to be as the capital of an emerging nation. Of course, being within sight of a volatile neighbour, unfortunately warranted the move of the emerging capital to a more defensible location inland at Ottawa.

The evidence of the City's economic, industrial and political heritage is readily available to cultural heritage explorers and history buffs, as well as leisure travelers. Its market place and boutiques bring to the fore the agricultural and artisanal heritage and contemporary lifestyles of Kingston.

Equal opportunities are also readily achievable to connect with the natural heritage of the lake, the river and the Frontenac Arch and lakeside lowlands. The inner harbour beyond the causeway is a safe and accessible opportunity to explore the marshes and wetlands of the Cataraqui. The river gorge clearly presents the geology of the Arch; and above the decent, the waters of Colonel By Lake and the River Styx are evidence of the flooded inland topography of the Cataraqui River valley.

In combination these near urban and rural environments are thought to be capable of welcoming and supporting the full range of explore types and leisure travelers

Participants identified a number of exploration themes which they felt would be of interest to Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers and the array of leisure travelers and recreationalists. These included exploring and discovering places which feature:

Canal Heritage

- Insight into design and development challenges faced by builders
- Lock operations – evolution through time
- Slackwater technology - human modification of watersheds
- Economic and industrial significance of canal & corridor
- Canal's military and political significance
- Canal linking two capitals – Ottawa and Kingston

Community Heritage

- Founders of Kingston and the Corridor - settlers, canal builders, industrialists
- Economic implications of canal on Kingston's evolution

- Kingston's continuing military heritage – from initial fortifications through RMC
- Kingston's political heritage - evolving social & economy
- Kingston history in Museums & Living Heritage places
- Rideau Canal - a unique piece of Canadiana

Connecting with People of the Rideau

- First Nations heritage – Belle Island
- Kingston lifestyles - a reflection of yesterday's and today's realities
- Rideau Corridor artisans - arts, food, music, sport fishing

Natural Resource Heritage Exploration

- Natural and modified Cataraqui river and lake systems
- Harnessing the river's power
- Canal geological challenges
- Corridor's evolving terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems
- Confluence of Cataraqui and Lake Ontario ecosystems
- Corridor forests, plants - land and water ecosystems
- Corridor wildlife - resident and migratory
- Marshes, wetlands, and backwaters
- Bird watching and sanctuaries

Human Heritage in Natural Environments

- The inner harbour wetlands
- Ecology and geologic heritage of Corridor
- Experiencing the solitude of remote lakes and streams
- Canal waterways and parklands - diversity of natural environments
- Biodiversity of plants and explore species at risk
- Urban escape to Rideau Canal and Cataraqui River's natural serenity

Participants identified the following lists of 'must experience opportunities' within the Reach and Corridor. They felt these are locations and perspectives through which explorers and leisure travelers can connect with the significance and personalities of this special piece of Canada.

Compelling opportunities within Reach

- Kingston Mills locks and the lock station infrastructure
- Fort Henry and the waterfront fortifications – advanced battery viewpoint
- The inner harbour wetlands and the Lake Ontario waterfront and islands
- Kingston built heritage of municipal buildings, museums and residences
- Industrial heritage of Kingston
- The Frontenac Arch and the descending cascade of locks
- The serene environment of the Brewers Locks
- The outstanding beauty and engineering accomplishment of the Jones Falls locks
- Kingston Museums & local heritage museums & places
- Heritage festival & special events - multi-cultural and historic event / people festivals
- Agricultural and artisan heritage and contemporary lifestyles – markets and studios
- Evening and night natural & social places

When asked about the Corridor as a whole, participants spoke of venues and experiences considered perhaps a bit beyond day trip hub and of adventures based out of Kingston. They noted:

Corridor's Compelling Opportunities

- Places of engineering accomplishment: Newboro, Jones Falls locks,
- Mills and small heritage villages throughout Corridor
- The cultural countryside landscapes revealing the settlement history
- Every lock station's unique story and evolution of history
- Locks, blockhouses, fortifications, lockmaster's houses.
- Architecture of Merrickville, Perth, Kingston
- Settlement pattern of Rideau waterway
- Outstanding natural conservation areas along the waterway

Desired Images for this Reach and Corridor

Participants were first asked how they thought this Reach and the Canal as a whole are currently perceived; and subsequently how they would like them to be perceived in the near future.

All agree that the Canal and Corridor beyond Ottawa has little or no image and profile nationally. It was discussed that even within the tourism image of Kingston the canal has only a minor portion of the destination's image and identity in the minds of current guests.

They concur that the limited image of the Ottawa portion of the Canal, that of "boats and skaters", is incorrect and undesirable for the Corridor as a whole; and is not related to the reality of the heritage experiences available within this particular Reach.

They felt that there is considerable opportunity to grow the role and profile of canal and corridor related heritage experiences within the image of Kingston as a gateway to experiencing the Rideau Canal Heritage Corridor.

Currently held tourism Images of Reach & Corridor

Reach:

- Fortifications, in particular Fort Henry
- Historic city, in particular it's built heritage places
- Edge of Canadian Shield
- Wetlands
- Lake Ontario and beginning of Thousand Islands
- Beginning of Rideau Canal

Corridor as a Whole:

- Unknown or little to no image
- Historic and natural
- Small town Ontario and countryside

Desired Image:

Reach:

- Vibrant and diverse entrance to a UNESCO WHS and Biosphere
- A 'snap shot' of the Rideau Canal's natural and cultural heritage
- Opportunities for both water and land based explorations
- Kingston a world class city & heritage area, unique experience opportunities
- Urban and rural environments
- Stage for variety of cultural heritage festivals and events
- An engaging place for both active and passive explorers
- A respected heritage resource with continuing authenticity and integrity
- A significant Canadian heritage place and experience opportunity

Corridor:

- An important piece of Canadiana - element of our history
- Remarkable Canadian engineering achievement
- Living heritage place - much more than an historic canal
- Diverse natural landscapes characteristic of eastern Canada
- Sustainable nature & culture experience opportunities
- Year round destination, diverse array of opportunities
- Accessible safe day tripping – land and water

Desired Outcomes of Contributing to the VEOC Discussions

Discussion participants expressed the following desired outcomes and/or opportunities for change:

Assurance of heritage integrity

This assurance had at least two perspectives. From the historic perspective, that the enjoyment and appreciation of the canal is respectful and celebrates the historic significance of the canal building and operation achievement. And in a contemporary sense, that the resources with which guests enjoy and appreciate this world and nationally significant heritage place are restored to adequate levels to ensure ongoing requirements for conservation, restoration and recreation. Better maintenance of resources and operations was deemed a requirement.

Collaborative pursuit of shared direction

Again a two part desire, the first being that these discussions would contribute to the setting of a shared direction for enhancing the awareness and appreciation of the Canal and the Corridor as a whole; and that actions to pursue and achieve would be founded upon collaborative action by all levels of government, and all private and non-profit interests within the Corridor.

Heritage district leadership

Building upon the above outcome, it was cited that in a number of places within the United States and in other countries, canals and other types of heritage places are established as heritage or historic districts and are led by a body of private sector, local NGOs and public sector land management agencies. The

outcome was clear leadership assignment and accountability. The concern was that at present there are too many leaders and each has too small a focus and little accountability to others.

Partnerships

Specific, result oriented alliances amongst the private sector, amongst the public sector and between both, are seen to be essential in realizing the tourism potential of the Corridor and this Reach. A clear commitment of resources and effort towards specific outcomes was considered essential to build trust and partnership. At the moment, individual action is too often taken without clear awareness and concern for its effect on others, both guests and hosts.

Stable investment environment

Realization of the potential of the Corridor as a national and international tourism destination and world class heritage area requires a larger amount of and a stable infusion of investment in operations and recapitalization and growth of experience opportunities, by both private and public sector operators and development agencies.

Local community empowerment and responsibility

The idea that one body can be left responsible to carry the load of financing and operating the Canal and related heritage attractions was deemed no longer a feasible proposition. Rather, shared responsibilities and in some cases delegated or adopted responsibilities to municipal and NGO interests needs to be considered in setting a feasible direction for the future.

Be better hosts and support more guests

Again a two part outcome, the first was that the members of the Reach and Corridor's tourism community would move beyond the travel supplier role to adopt the role of hosts, who find innovative ways to respond to guest desires. The second, being recognized as outstanding hosts offering compelling experience opportunities causes the number of guest to grow and diversify.

Living Canadian icon of heritage based tourism destinations

The participants felt that both within this Reach and the Corridor as a whole, awareness of and valuing of the Corridor and its historic and contemporary resources is under-realized and under-appreciated. This place should become a cornerstone of Canadian tourism, a Banff, a Niagara, a Green Gables in the minds of Canadian and international leisure travelers and explorers. Future sustainability of this Corridor is to a great extent dependent upon realization of its potential.

Sustainable tourism activities and support

The recreational and heritage appreciation use and enjoyment of the Reach and the Corridor must be achieved through sustainable tourism practices, which simultaneously assure ecological and cultural integrity and economic viability.

Heightened economic vibrancy of communities and attractions along the Corridor and within this Reach was desired; and to this end innovative and enhanced means of transportation, accommodation, recreation and heritage appreciation should be applied.

The vision was expressed that this World Heritage Site would be a model of sustainability for others.

Paradigm Shifters

With these outcomes and objectives in mind, participants shared some fundamental changes in how guests could be hosted and the tourism industry enhanced with related benefits to local communities and residents.

Historic district approach to management – shared leadership and responsibility

Considerable discussion was focused upon finding a new or enhanced management approach for a future 'historic district' of the Rideau Canal. The United States national heritage districts program was mentioned as perhaps a model to build upon, as was using the Ontario Heritage Act to create an historic district. Reference was made to previous arrangements in other locales, such as the Tennessee Valley and canal trust models of England. The approach to Canadian airport management was also noted.

The envisioned shift was towards a governance model which engages vested interests from the private sector together with non-profit organizations and three levels of government in setting direction and being accountable for its realization.

Reviewing the ideas contained in the previous CORTS study regarding collaborative management of the Rideau and the Trent Severn waterways was suggested as a potential ingredient in formulating a direction for a contemporary approach to district leadership.

Collectively approach destination branding and promotion marketing

The desire was expressed that the Corridor or district and this specific Reach be marketed under a single strategy; coordinated by a single tourism marketing organization drawing upon marketing resources from throughout the Corridor and benefiting operators and communities alike. It was envisioned that this might take the form of an RTO or perhaps in the interim a cooperative tourism marketing alliance for the full Corridor, and being more comprehensive and capable than the current marketing alliances influencing the positioning of the Canal and Corridor.

Honour, and build upon, UNESCO WHS and Biosphere designation

It was recognized that few places in the world have been recognized both for their potential to celebrate a place and achievement of world significance and for the potential to serve as a model biosphere for collective sustainable tourism action.

The positioning of the Canal and Corridor as a welcoming and engaging world heritage site, where hosts facilitate guests in innovative ways to connect with this outstanding natural and cultural corridor will elevate this special place from its current 'little known' status to a world class experiential tourism destination.

Accomplishing this tourism direction in ways which are respectful of the heritage resources and their national and international significance adds to the challenge and the success which will be achieved.

Multi-modal network of exploration routes with shuttle service support

Significantly enhancing the quality and diversity of the existing network of routes conveying guests throughout the Corridor's natural and cultural landscapes and connecting to its array of communities and attractions, and supporting this with a world class support system of shuttle-like services would heighten the international drawing power of the district; and its ability to be a multi-day travel destination.

Enhancement & Innovations
For
Reach Specific Experience Opportunities

Improving Experience Opportunities

Having identified the potential exploration themes and subjects of interest for the explorers and having assessed the desired exploration opportunities and their current quality and availability, the VEOC discussion participants

- First turned their attention to enhancing existing opportunities, programs, services and infrastructure provided by host communities and tourism attractions and services;
- Then focused their attention on identifying innovative experience opportunities and related support programs and services.

Each of the nine explorer types was considered separately, although it was recognized and noted that many of the suggested improvements would be valued by a number of the explorer types. Tweaking an idea or improvement had the potential to make it of value to more than the explorer types it was identified to facilitate.

It is anticipated that the following “enhancements and innovations” will be approached in a collaborative manner involving complementary action and investment by all sectors of the tourism industry.

An Integrated Set of Enhancements and Innovations

A review of the enhancements and innovations identified for this Reach reveals the following framework of ideas for improving guest experience opportunities and the service offered by their hosts. These enhancements and innovations are gathered under a framework of improvements respecting:

- Guest Information, Welcome and Sense of Arrival
- Cultural Heritage Connection Opportunities
- Natural Heritage Connection Opportunities
- Augmented Appreciation / Passive Observation Opportunities
- Recreation / Relaxation Opportunities
- Accommodation Services and Related Experience Opportunities
- Transportation Services

Guest information, welcome and sense of arrival

Discussion participants recognized the importance of communicating a clear sense of welcome and arrival; a welcome which would communicate the diverse array of natural and cultural heritage experiences opportunities afforded throughout the Reach.

Welcome and exploration launch

Participants felt that a network approach to the strategic provision of information and orientation would encourage guests to more thoroughly experience the diversity of the Corridor and this specific Reach.

Gateway role

It was felt that Kingston could be better positioned and recognized as the southern gateway to exploring the Canal and heritage corridor. Uniquely positioning this gateway in connection with its fortifications was thought to distinguish it from the positioning appropriate for the Ottawa gateway.

It was envisioned, that in a location within sight of the Canal would perhaps be an ideal location for launching explorers and leisure travelers. Opportunities discussed included areas related to: Fort Frederick, at the mouth of the Cataraqui River and Lake Ontario shore; the causeway with views of the inner harbour and the locks descending the Frontenac Arch and Kingston Mills lock station, given its diversity of heritage resources and sense of being in the Canal corridor.

As was envisioned for the Ottawa gateway, this facility would use contemporary technologies to provide guests with remote connections with the array of experience opportunities, places and people they will be able to connect with along the Corridor. Being linked to a network of web cams, and providing introductory displays and exhibits of Corridor heritage exploration themes and opportunities, the complex would be an attraction in itself for both residents and guests – an overview of the Rideau Canal Heritage Corridor.

The complex hosts would have the capabilities to connect guests with experience facilitators along the Corridor and perhaps provide a central booking service for packages, programs and services. In this regard, the complex would be an actual offer of similar support provided via the Corridor web site.

This complex might serve as the centre point of ‘hub and spoke’ explorations of the Corridor emanating from Ottawa.

Discovery centre

Complementing an exploration launch complex, it was suggested that a canal heritage discovery centre might be created in the area of the Woolen mill, industrial heritage area. This concept would complement the central corridor Rideau Canal Museum in Smith Falls and the By Town museum at the Ottawa Locks.

In each and all cases, the discovery centres would convey the array of heritage themes respecting the building and operation of the Canal; and in each case show the specific implications of this history on the nearby communities, in this case Kingston.

The discovery centre would be a year round attraction and a learning opportunity for all ages. It would celebrate and share the importance attached to the Canal and its fortifications; and perhaps could be a presentation outlet respecting the UNESCO Frontenac Arch Biosphere programs and initiatives.

The discovery centre might be located in a restored Shoal Tower. This might more strongly link the ‘fortification theme’ to the Canal development and operation. Its location on the waterfront might be ideal for presenting the role of the arch of fire emanating from the Towers and Fort Henry.

Incorporate heritage canal experiences into Kingston positioning

Participants felt that at present the Kingston travel destination positioning does not adequately incorporate recognition of the canal heritage and historic places, nor does it position this city and its historic fortifications as defence for the Canal.

They envision the gateway role and the Reach’s experience opportunities being more prominently positioned as City travel attractions. Further that the City should be better positioned in regards to the ‘hub and spoke’ travel opportunities which emanate from it.

Suggested Kingston - Hub and Spoke Opportunities

- From Kingston harbour up the locks to Kingston Mills and back
- Jones Falls and Westport and back – by car
- Upper Brewers to Jones Falls loop
- Seeleys Bay to Jones Falls and Rock Dunder –by water – loop
- Follow FAB developed themed loops that touch on the Rideau
- Motorcycle route up Perth road or Hwy 38 to Westport and return
- Bike, hike, paddle Chaffeys locks, Jones and Brewers loops
- Flavours loop, colour loops, artisans loop,
- Fort Henry to Kingston Mills and back
- Kingston to Kingston Mills to Lower Brewers and back
- Bike, hike, paddle from Kingston to Kingston Mills
- Climbing face at Kingston Mills and return

Signage

Even without creating the above noted guest attractions, participants felt that the signage announcing and motivating discovery of the Canal within the Kingston area was inadequate.

The feeling was that at present the state of signage reflects the lower profile and importance attached to experiencing the Canal as compared to experiencing the fortifications, in particular Fort Henry, and the historic city and its many travel assets.

It was suggested that enhanced signage on the 401 would be of assistance and similarly signage within the City and in conjunction with the attractions surrounding the inner harbour and the lake front fortifications would be a valuable improvement.

The participants suggested that the existence of a collage of signing at the Corridor, county, municipality and attraction / service level creates confusion. They recommended a common-look and messaging be used throughout the Reach and the Corridor. They felt a Corridor-long shared branding and marketing strategy would assist in this regard.

Menus of opportunities

Developing “menus of experience opportunities” for different EQ types of guests was identified as an early opportunity to enhance hosting capacities throughout the Reach. Similar action at the Corridor level was anticipated supporting Corridor-long guidance and support.

Website and web communications

It was recognized that guests’ abilities to receive and request information prior to and during their travels are evolving quickly through the use of web based services and personal communication devices. It was accordingly noted that investment in enhancing the reach of our messages and information services must

be responsive to our guests' requirements, as well as enhancing traditional information outlets and services.

- Establish a web-based network of information with front-line terminals throughout the Reach to support the dissemination of accurate and up to date travel and experience opportunity information
- Equip front-line staff with the information and capacities to create travel experience packages and to cross-sell, refer guests to other experience opportunities and service providers

Rideau “App” – An extension of the Website would be an “app” which guests could use throughout their travels to connect with the Corridor website or to connect with a specific Reach attraction, service provider or experience opportunity. These are desired by Authentic Experiencers, Cultural Explorers and No Hassle Travelers and Free Sprints.

Geo-fencing

The provision of a geo-fence perimeter to the Corridor and in particular at the guest perceived entry points to the Corridor and the Canal, perhaps in relation to Highway 15 within this Reach would be an awareness generator.

Please note – Following the title of an enhancement or innovation, there is a forecasted indication of which explorer types may be attracted to this type of opportunity or service. The types in bold are likely most attracted, and others are identified as having some interest.

Enhancement and Innovations of Cultural Heritage Experience Opportunities

Discussion participants identified the following innovations and enhancements to support guests in connecting with the authentic character of this Reach's people, places, communities, history and heritage.

“Locking through” (AE, CE, B, PHT, NHT, GE, FS)

Participants felt that the experience of “locking through” a set of locks would prove a most meaningful experience for land-based explorers and leisure travelers.

The Kingston Mills Locks were suggested to be one of the three best opportunities to experience the diversity of the locks and their related infrastructure. The Ottawa and Jones Falls locks were also noted.

It was suggested that Parks Canada in collaboration with others could facilitate more meaningful experiences for some guests by providing water crafts with which these land based travelers could lock through.

Locking through opportunities might capitalize upon the lower demand periods of the early and late portions of the operating season and perhaps the evenings.

Remote Connection to virtual lock design and operation (AE, CE, B, NHT, PHT, FS, GE)

In an earlier discussion respecting the Rideau Canal Museum in Smith Falls it had been suggested that perhaps a “simulation program and room” in the Museum might provide an opportunity for guests to acquire insight into the challenges faced and overcome by lock designers and builders. If this facility

came into being, it might be connected to a remote experience opportunity within the discovery centre or explorers launch complex in Kingston or Kingston Mills.

Animation of locks (GE, NHT, CE, AE,)

It was suggested that a greater sense of theater might add to the experiences achieved by both land based and boating guests at the Kingston Mills lock station. In this regard, it was suggested that lock staff might be costumed in the period dress.

The full array of infrastructure related to a lock stations: the locks, turning basin, the block house, lock master's house, stone dam, spillway, power station and other related historic buildings present numerous staging opportunities for animation and storytelling. It was foreseen that this complex and its setting may afford one of the best opportunities to share an array of perspectives concerning the Canal, its design, building and operation.

It was also suggested that scheduled performances be added to the normal operations. These might be provided by local performers. These performances would be revenue generating opportunities. As feasible and appropriate, the performers might lead guided explorations of the locks and related structures.

Dry locks exploration (AE, CE, B NHT, FS)

It was suggested that exploring the Kingston Mills locks by foot, particularly during the evening hours of low light has proven to be an exhilarating experience opportunities for most who have had the opportunity. One achieves a much different perspective than the normal land based traveler achieves above the lock.

This concept was extended into the non-operating season and in particular to experiencing the locks in their winter hibernation state.

Recreational opportunities were also identified in regards to winter use of the Kingston Mills locks and descending the gorge in winter conditions.

QR code post network guiding cultural explorers (All)

Within the Kingston Mills lock lands and surrounding Colonel By Lake shores, it was envisioned that QR coded information posts could be established to assist guests in connecting with the natural and cultural significance of this location.

This same support was envisioned as appropriate at other lock stations, in conjunction with exploring the array of Kingston fortifications.

Network of Rideau chairs & cultural vantage points (All)

Participants suggested that a network of special places from which to observe and connect with the surrounding living history within the Kingston's Lake Ontario and inner harbour shorelines and at selected locks, in particular the Kingston Mills locks area and Lower Brewers would be strategic for cultural heritage explorers and leisure travelers..

Drawing upon 'local knowledge' of valued sites, it was suggested that a network of benches and contemplation points be developed at these special places throughout the Reach and connected to a similar network of vantage points throughout the Corridor. In some cases, augmenting some with QR coded information posts might motivate wider exploration of the Reach and longer stays.

Culinary experiences of heritage (CE, AE, PHT, FS, NHT, GE, R,)

It was suggested that the best way to connect with a destination is to taste it. The Kingston Market experiences were suggested as a foundation to build upon. Perhaps a stronger connection could be developed between the foods and producers of the Market and the heritage of such markets in the history of Kingston and its culinary history.

This same concept of 'field to plate' was suggested in supporting heritage picnics in community parks, at lock stations and heritage museums. It was also referenced in opportunities to have heritage dining experiences on canal boats, perhaps at times in costume celebrating heritage events.

The Waddell's' Orchard was suggested as one venue or participant in this type of experience opportunity.

Culinary guide books and access to expertise in food production, processing and fine cuisine would add to the real of experience opportunities.

Re-enact Colonel By's canal opening voyage (NHT, GE, B, CE, AE,)

It was suggested that perhaps in 2017 on the 150th anniversary of Canada, the opening voyage of Colonel By could be re-enacted beginning in Kingston and ending in Ottawa. The voyage in an appropriate vessel would make strategic stops along the route to host commemorative festivals and events in selected locations and communities. In each case, the event animation would be in period costume and guests, both corridor residents and travelers would be invited to don period costumes and participate in the celebrations. Each stop might have one of a series of themes celebrating the people of the canal and its development,

Fort Frontenac and Fort Frederick enhanced experience opportunities (CE, B, AE, NHT,)

Participants discussed the opportunity to enhance the experience opportunities afforded on either side of the mouth of the Rideau Canal at Fort Frontenac and Fort Frederick. At present, the later offers traditional static experience opportunities and displays. Perhaps, these venues could be animated and use more contemporary technologies to bring to life their heritage significance.

Fort Frederick was noted as a possible location for an exploration launch complex for the Canal as a whole. This would bring enhanced experience opportunities related to the Fort itself.

Belle Island First Nations heritage experience (CE, B, AE, NHT,)

The First Nation heritage resources on Belle Island might be shared with guests in a respectful and sustainable way to convey a special perspective on the inner harbour and the link between the Cataraqui River and Lake Ontario, prior to the Canal and the city development.

Enhancement and Innovations of Natural Heritage Experience Opportunities

Lower Brewers to Kingston Mills compelling outdoor recreation area (NHT, GE)

Participants felt that the lands of these two lock stations have unique natural and cultural resources and heritage experience opportunities to share. Further they can be introductory opportunities for Kingston residents, who may be subsequently motivated to explore other Reaches and lock stations throughout the Corridor.

It was suggested that at these locations, the rental of canoeing and kayaking and bicycling equipment could be enhanced with the opportunity to drop this equipment and a related lock or venue and be supported by a shuttle service.

Wolfe Island to Frontenac Park transact (AE, CE, B,)

Some participants suggested that there is a special opportunity to gain insight and understanding of the geological and biological heritage and evolution of this Reach by exploring a transact between Wolfe Island and Frontenac Park. They proposed a network of routes to see this nature in various places guided by a GPS based system to alert explorers as to what to expect and assist them in understanding their discoveries

Network of waterside and inland trails (All)

This network of trails would lead guests to experience the natural challenges overcome during canal building and to the modified natural features and areas which resulted from the flooding and diversion of natural flows.

In the inner harbour portion of the Reach, it was suggested that a trail circumnavigating the harbour waters would be a popular opportunity for residents and guests. They noted that such a trail might be linked to the 'third crossing' project foreseen in the future.

Floating QR code buoys network (AE, CE, NHT,)

As was suggested in other Reach discussions, a network of information buoys could be established at special experience locations to aid guests in understanding the significance of the places and resources – particularly aspects and resources less visible to the untrained eye.

A network of “shorefast” platforms (GE, NHT, R, AE, CE,)

Within the inner harbour and above Kingston Mills, it was suggested, as in other Reaches, that land based travelers, particularly Gentle Explorers, Rejuvenators and Authentic Experiencers would value special vantage points from which to observe the lakes and aquatic environments. These two might be equipped with QR coded information posts.

Network of natural vantage points (All)

It was suggested that the above noted trail concept could be augmented and complemented by a network of land based and floating vantage points from which to observe special natural and cultural resources and conditions along the water's edge.

This system would allow non-boaters to perhaps achieve the experiences achieved by kayakers and canoeists. It would take guests into areas not presently available to them. It would be available in all seasons.

This Reach trail network could be linked with similar trail concepts suggested in other Reaches. The exploration experiences could be augmented with guidance systems; and the network could be a resource for guide explorations facilitated by Reach expertise.

Water based exploration routes (AE, CE, NHT, FS,)

It was suggested that themed maps and guidance could be developed for explorers of this portion of the Reach's waterways and be linked with similar guidance suggested for neighbouring Reaches. These guides would be of value to both boaters and land based travelers renting equipment to explore this and other Reaches.

Augmented Appreciation / Passive Observation Opportunities

Advanced Battery augmented appreciation (All)

It was enthusiastically supported that the "Advanced Battery" height of land adjacent to Fort Henry be a focus of augmented appreciation efforts. Currently nothing is there to help guests see the full array of experience opportunities and to understand what they are seeing. Quite simply, it was suggested to put in place traditional plaque / panel guidance. But going beyond the norm, it was suggested that using new technology to connect the plaque to a smart phone app or QR information post would be better. Cutting edge augmented appreciation viewing devices would assist guests in experiencing what was in view decades ago, or see what relicts are below ground or the Lake waters

"River Quest" (NHT, FS, AE, CE,)

It was suggested that a Rideau Quests type program could be developed as an interactive learning / exploration program. Interactive kiosks located at partner locations could reveal and respond to interactive questions to learn and at end provide discount coupons to help encourage visitation. This would be a novel network of information on a technology basis – a virtual concierge program combined with trivial pursuit type game that also rewards with coupon to encourage travel.

Low flights over the canal (CE, AE, FS, B NHT,)

The proximity of Kingston air services and the spectacular nature of the terrain and complex of cultural landscapes within this Reach were felt to support the offering of aerial tours.

Complementing guided water tours and guided land based programs and walks, it was suggested that an aerial view might be best to capture and understanding of the scope of natural challenges that were addressed by canal builders and similarly the scope of their impact upon the natural drainage systems and forested landscapes which were flooded as a result of Canal modifications of water flow and lake and river levels.

Underwater camera on Kawartha Voyageur and web cam on Wolfe Island Ferry (All)

Extending upon the network of web cameras noted earlier, it was specifically suggested that providing guests with access to views gathered from cameras aboard these two vessels would provide unique experience opportunities.

Seeing below the water as the cruise ship passes flooded forests or approaches and passes through locks would be one perspective. Seeing the approaching “arch of fire” from a camera mounted on the Ferry would provide unique perspective of what attacking forces might have perceived.

Virtual attack of the Kingston Fortifications (FS, CE, B, NHT,)

It was suggested that the Fort Henry guest centre might be an opportunity for guests to participate in a virtual attack of the Fortifications, with the assistance of augmented appreciation programming. In a similar vein, guests might be challenged to determine how landed troops might seek to penetrate the Fort defences.

Animation of Kingston Mills (NHT, GE, CE, AE, PHT,)

Given the growing demand for heritage experience opportunities, particularly for Gentle Explorers and No Hassle Travelers, who prefer to observe rather than explore and discover, it was suggested that there is opportunity for small and medium size enterprise to use historic venues as stages for bring history to life through their animation of events and activities.

The Kingston Mills lock station and surrounding lands and lake shore were identified as a potential theater for animation. These performances could be revenue sources for the presenters and the land owners.

Corridor long and reach specific themed festivals and performances (GE, NHT, CE, PHT, FS,)

Interest was expressed in expanding and diversifying festivals within Kingston and linking these to Corridor-long cultural heritage themes such as boat building, agriculture, multi-cultural and settlement history and community history and heritage lifestyle events.

Many of the communities within the Corridor host small events with themes similar to larger events hosted in Kingston, i.e. the blues and jazz festival. It was suggested that perhaps these currently individual events could be gathered into a network or series of simultaneous gatherings. This might have the results of diversifying the venues and meeting the needs of different types of audiences and at the same time enhancing the scope and scale of the festival, by combining anchor and satellite venues.

Celebrating founding peoples (CE, PHT, NHT, GE, AE,)

Cultural Explorers and Personal History Travelers are drawn to opportunities to connect with and/or experience the heritage lifestyles of the array of founding peoples. Celebrations of millers and their achievements, navigators and boat builders, canal builders and operators, founding community families or landowners might be unique events – the themes of which could vary from year to year.

Rideau stories and storytellers (NHT, GE, PHT, AE, CE, R,)

Considerable interest and support was expressed in strengthening and diversifying the storytelling capacities available in Kingston and by extension those available to augment presentations at more remote portions of the Reach, i.e. Kingston Mills.

It was further suggested that people who have been long-time residents of Kingston and the Cataraqui between Brewers and Kingston Mills may be interested in forming a network of storytellers and personal

guides for guests. The professional staff of the universities and the network of museums and historic places; and those experienced in the waterfront stories of Lake Ontario could augment this capacity either by sharing information and insights or by being participants themselves.

The concept of a human library or speaker bureau was advanced in another Reach and could have applicability in this Reach as well.

An accredited list of historians or lockmasters could offer contracted guiding services.

Symphony in heritage places (CE, NHT, GE, PHT – AE, B, R, FS,)

Fort Henry has set a standard and is a compelling attraction in this regard. Perhaps by calling upon the musical talents of Kingston, it would be feasible to bring another dimension to special places within the Reach. Perhaps the acoustical properties of the Kingston Mills locks might provide unique opportunities for small symphony experiences.

Kingston Mills alerts (All)

It was suggested that a system could be put in place to alert guests to arriving trains passing over head, to incoming boats crossing Colonel By Lake and when the swing bridge will be in operation.

Enhancement and Innovations of Recreation / Relaxation Opportunities

Water is at the core of the Canal's history and the heritage lifestyles of its peoples and communities and it is the anchor attractions for the largest percentage of Corridor guests. With this in mind, participants suggested a number of enhancements and innovations designed to "get guests onto the water".

Reach specific water tours (NHT, GE, PHT, AE, CE,)

It is anticipated that within this Reach, like most reaches of the Corridor, a compelling water tour could be designed to take land based travellers to water only accessible experience opportunities above Kingston Mills.

Dining on the water (FS, NHT, GE, AE, CE, PHT,)

These outfitted opportunities would offer Free Spirits, Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers unique opportunities to connect with the natural and cultural heritage of the Reach. Initially a boating experience, the idea expanded to include a dining experience on stilts, at which guests might catch their own fish for preparation by a chef; or simply rely upon the culinary experience to be full facilitated.

Outfitted Charters and Day Adventures (FS, NHT, AE,)

Residents and guests may make increasing demands upon opportunities to explore the waters of this Reach with the support of captain and crew to navigate them through the locks to the most attractive components of the Reach and facilitate their exploration and dining experiences.

Guided Outings (NHT, GE, PHT, CE, AE,)

The growth in use of small non-powered boats will have the potential to bring a growing market of experience seekers to this most spectacular Reach. No Hassle Travellers and to a lesser extent Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers will look to guided tours of waters in the inner harbour and above Kingston Mills. The guidance is more for understanding the habitats being traversed rather than for security, yet some will rely upon the leader for orientation and direction.

“Geo-caching” (NHT, FS)

In selected lock areas and perhaps park lands such as those adjacent to the inner harbour, the historic fortifications and above Kingston Mills locks could develop geocaching routes and free roaming based geo-cache programs with support guidance and facilities. These activities could be linked to resource and Reach exploration and discovery programs

Enhancement and Innovation of Accommodation & Experience Opportunities

Overnight in historic setting (CE, AE, B, and NHT,)

Initially the suggestion of facilitating guest opportunities to overnight in a canal related historic building or natural setting was focused upon a lock station location; perhaps using the lockmasters house or related structures or the surrounding park-like settings of some locks. The idea then expanded to the use of other built heritage settings and structures in communities, such as the network of historic military towers along the Lake Ontario waterfront and the blockhouses along the Corridor.

Networks of inns (All)

For those exploring the Corridor and Reach, as a part of multi-day trips, being presented with the services of booking multiple nights of accommodations through a network of quality heritage inns and bed and breakfast would be of assistance. If these bookings were linked to a Corridor – long shuttle service of goods, boats, bicycles and people, multi-day adventures would be even easier to plan.

Wilderness or primitive camping in remote places (AE, CE, NHT, and FS,)

Participants suggested that paddle up camping opportunities for single parties might be provided at strategically selected remote locations along the Canal and on islands in the River and in Lake Ontario, i.e. Cedar Island.

Network of floating yurts and stilt huts (AE, CE, NHT, FS)

A network of floating yurts or huts on stilts was discussed in supporting marshes and wetland explorations and to support exploration along the upper waterways within this Reach. These opportunities might be connected to a larger Corridor-long network of similar overnight accommodation opportunities.

Enhancement and Innovations of Transportation Services

Expanded shuttle support services (AE, CE, FS, NHT, R,)

Kingston currently has a city focused shuttle service for travelers, and some private sector support i.e. Ahoj currently provide drop off and pick up support for paddlers. It was suggested that this is a basis for a much more supportive set of services throughout the Reach. The future services will support all types of travelers without motorized transportation – hikers, bikers, paddlers, sailors and winter equivalents.

The Reach services would convey guests to an array of experience opportunities with a hop on hop off type of circulating transportation extending beyond the traditional city focus to include other attractions such as Kingston Mills.

This service would be interconnected with a larger Corridor set of shuttle services, which in turn would be partnered with and support of equipment rental services such as bicycles, kayaks and canoes.

Water Taxi (All)

Complementing the land based services, it was suggested that a water taxi service on the inner harbour and perhaps extending up the Canal might provide an interesting means to get to water only accessed experience opportunities.

Kawartha Voyageur Support (All)

This cruise service is looking at providing a following land transportation support service (tram) for guests who wish to explore a wider area than is readily visible or accessible from the ship, or who wish to customize their experience opportunities.

This type of tangent land exploration service might be an idea worth investigating to support land based explorations by private boaters, particularly those transiting the full Corridor in a single trip. It might also support other Corridor water touring services in other Reaches.

Informed shuttle drivers and guides (All)

Augmenting the transportation service, the drivers and perhaps accompanying guides should be capable of enhancing the touring experiences along with the shuttle service. Alternatively, the vehicles could be equipped with technology to relay information and support trip planning and explorations.

Water access and support services (All)

It was suggested that the Reach, in the inner harbour and Colonel By Lake and above, it would be beneficial to provide more water access points for self-propelled boaters, and in conjunction with this more water exploration equipment rental.

Short Term and Medium Term “Doables”

During the Reach discussions, participants were asked to identify actions which they felt might be undertaken to realize the enhancements and innovations they had put forward. The following highlights those “doables” related to Reach-specific doables”

Top Priority EQ Types

Current Guests

The participants were asked to speculate in EQ type terms, who were their current guests and who in the foreseeable future were their desired guests. This was intended to provide a part of the foundation for moving forward.

It was speculated, for example, that those most often visiting the following areas or types of attractions may be:

- Lock Stations AE, CE, GE, NHT
- Kawartha Voyageur GE, FS, HB, NHT
- Reach Trails – AE, NHT, GE,
- Kayak Tours – CE, AE, NHT, FS,
- Campground - CE, NHT, GE, HB
- Fort Henry – AE, CE, NHT, GE, FS

In sum, the current guests may be best hosted by responding to the values and traits of Gentle Explorers, No Hassle Travelers, Authentic Experiencers and Cultural Explorers.

Future Guests

The participants believe that this Reach has a rich array of cultural heritage experiences which are capable of attracting guests from afar. They also believe that the waters and landscape beyond the urban core Kingston Mills to Lower Brewers and Kingston’s inner harbour lands and waters are capable of affording safe and accessible escapes for local urban dwellers and leisure travelers.

With this in mind, the participants indicated an interest in growing the number of guests from both near and far, who are their current speculated guest base: Authentic Experiencers (nature experience biased), Cultural Explorers (culture experience biased) and No Hassle Travelers and Gentle Explorers. They also seek to add more Free Spirits and Rejuvenators.

The focus of enhancements and innovations relating to exploring and discovering the Canal’s and waterway’s cultural and natural heritage resources are prominently a response to Authentic Experiencer, Cultural Explorer, No Hassle Traveler and Gentle Explorer values and interests.

SHORT TERM ENHANCEMENTS

What participants indicated can be done within one year

- Parks Canada feels Kingston Mills and other lock stations can be enhanced gathering places This can be achieved by bringing back services and activities to lock stations, with the assistance of third parties. The Agency will do an assessment of buildings to see if they are viable for commercial uses. They will also take action as follows:
 - Staff training, revisit level of training, quality of visitor experience training
 - Shifting corporate culture to be more open minded, more opportunistic, say yes more often, be open to new ideas in the market
 - Being open to working with new partnerships at lock stations
- Kawartha Voyageur will continue to contribute as a viable business to the positive business environment that is growing along the Corridor and its spirit of cooperation. Contribute as well to a calming of current distress respecting canal operations and finally contribute to establishing a new path forward with innovative leadership, management and marketing arrangements. Support the VEOC process and its application as a foundation for future growth and direction setting.
- Contribute to the linking and upgrading of the existing trail system and adding new trails within the Reach and beyond, so that there is more infrastructure, better signage and access to the water and points of interest, more docks and washrooms. Contribute to the marketing of land and water based trail system use by supporting enhancement of the web information, imagery and a strategic communication plan with online booking capacity.
- FABR will continue to advance awareness and support for sustainable tourism practices and the positioning of this destination as a model of sustainable tourism. Advance working relationships with local food producers and culinary establishments and taste opportunities. Increase guest appreciation and enjoyment of Reach's culinary opportunities.
- Kingston Tourism will advance application of EQ thinking and segmentation to better understand who the Reach's current guests are and create marketing and information services and tools which respond to the needs and expectations of priority explorer types and leisure travelers. Improve the hosting skills of information services staff.
- Rideau Heritage Route will continue to spread the word respecting the VEOC and EQ as a basis for understanding, motivating and supporting guests with responsive experience opportunities, for which RHR supports operators through grant applications. Adjust RHR communications and information for guests and tourism information services to reflect the experiential tourism focus and EQ information base. Get more information into the hands of gateway travel influencers.
- Rideau Acres Campground will improve staff familiarity with Reach attractions and experience opportunities through supporting staff visits. Support communication of the VEOC and its thinking with other travel service operators, motivating the adoption of host thinking and informed staff.

- Marriott Hotel will support the marketing efforts of experience opportunity facilitators and inform staff of this initiative and its potential implications on understanding hotel guests and their experience desires.
- Voyageur canoeing will expand the array of experience opportunities afforded through use of the canoes and correspondingly adjust the marketing of these opportunities to better inform and motivate priority explorer types. Make voyageur canoeing a signature experience of the Corridor.
- Dr. Osborne will contribute to the sustainability of the UNESCO designation by motivating respectful and sustainable enjoyment and appreciation of the Canal and fortifications and support the growth of stories and information shared about Kingston's inner harbour heritage and resources.
- Ahoy Rentals will focus more attention on providing boating and shuttle support services to those exploring the Rideau and Cataraqui Rivers and recommend to more guests the opportunities for natural and cultural heritage experiences available at Kingston Mills. Acquire more information about the inner harbour for staff guiding kayak tours and about the Fortifications. Finally redevelop the company web site in light of the new information received re EQ and experiential tourism.

Actions by 2017

- Parks Canada will seek to increase public private partnerships pertaining to the use of Parks Canada land and enhanced services at locks. The diversification of services and opportunities at the lock station, in conjunction with private and non-profit involvement will contribute to the Canal and Corridor becoming an increasingly world class destination.
 - Adding transportation shuttle and increased capacity of current infrastructure associated with Canal and Corridor exploration and enjoyment will enhance the draw of this unique WHS destination.
- Kawartha Voyageur – Within three years, it is likely a second ship will join the Kawartha Voyageur, doubling the capacity of the river cruising offer. This growth trend reflects cruising growth of rivers and canal on a world scale and heightens the position of this WHS. The focus will continue on existing Gentle Explorers market with possible growth in the realm of Rejuvenators.
- Corridor Leadership Model – It is reasonable to expect with collaborative and concerted effort that an evolved arrangement for setting direction and realizing the international tourism potential of the Canal and Corridor can be put in place. This will require engagement of all three levels of government to support a cooperative approach to ensuring appropriate infrastructure and guest services capacities are in place within both the private and public sectors. New legislation and funding arrangements may be called for to support this direction.
- Paddling – It was suggested that it should be expected that within three years, the following can be in place:
 - More connected trail systems, paddling and cycling and hiking
 - Shuttle service in place – supported by many levels of government
 - Being an industry leader in use of technology for exploring
 - Wilderness campsites will be established along the Rideau,

- More diverse accommodations opportunities
 - Travel media communications strategy in place and successful
- FABR – Perhaps a closer integration of the WHS and Biosphere initiatives and a mechanism established to support collaborative sustainable tourism experience growth and strategic marketing of experience opportunities throughout the Corridor.
- Kingston Tourism – Current guest services and information outlets within the Reach will be evolved to being more of an exploration launch complex and orientation to the array of opportunities for exploration, in comparison to the more passive information function
- RHR – An RQA communication tool could strategically position the Corridor’s leading hosts and experience opportunities. This can provide a basis for a complementary ‘mentoring’ program designed to raise the bar of all hosts and leisure travel services.
- Rideau Acres Campground – A federally balanced budget should mean there are new methods to finance tourism product enhancement and innovation and complementary marketing. It was envisioned that, perhaps as a Corridor pilot project and model for the future, taxes collected from tourism operators could be redirected into support for the tourism industry.
- Marriott – the Kingston downtown shuttle should look to expand its connection of guests to more than the current route; being a means to convey guests to new experience opportunities.
- Voyageur canoes – This program service and experience opportunity will have diversified its infrastructure – more canoes and guides – and will be offering a wider array of skill development and experience opportunities at a greater number of locations.
- Dr. Osborne – Contribute to the respectful and sustainable enjoyment and appreciation of the WHS experience opportunities and assist it in growing to being a model of WHS experiential tourism.
- Ahoy Rentals – Pursuit of increased shuttle and water based touring experiences and services will call upon greater partnership activities.