

**Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor
 August 4, 2010, 7 PM, Lemont Village Hall, Lemont, IL
 August 5, 2010, 7 PM, Ottawa City Hall, Ottawa, IL
 Public Workshops**

In August 2010, two public workshops were held within the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor at Lemont Village Hall and Ottawa City Hall on consecutive evenings. Fifty-six people attended the public workshop in Lemont on August 4th and thirty people attended the public workshop in Ottawa on August 5th. The participants were asked a series of questions meant to ascertain what direction the IMCNHC Steering Committee should take in developing the projects and goals for the I&M National Heritage Corridor Management Plan. The summary data collected at those meetings is listed below. All the raw data is available by contacting the Canal Corridor Association.

QUESTION 1: If you were the leader of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor with \$100,000 to spend, how would you divide the money between the different activities of the heritage corridor?

The results are tabulated in the columns below. They indicate the average for all the responses given at each meeting (Lemont and Ottawa) and also the total of all respondents (Total) from both meetings.

	Total	Lemont	Ottawa
Conservation	\$ 17,300	\$ 16,400	\$ 19,700
Education and Interpretation	\$ 16,800	\$ 17,000	\$ 16,700
Heritage Development	\$ 24,800	\$ 27,000	\$ 18,100
Recreation	\$ 20,300	\$ 17,600	\$ 26,600
Tourism & Marketing	\$ 20,900	\$ 21,700	\$ 18,900

QUESTION 2: In your opinion, are the following proposed core activities of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor: very important (3), somewhat important (2), not very important (1), or definitely not important (0)

The results were tabulated by assigning the number scores in parenthesis after each choice above to all responses and then deriving an arithmetical average. They are shown below in the order given to the public. The results from the two meetings were statistically the same. Five of the six core activities identified in earlier meetings ranked important to the public. Only the internship program had varied results as to its importance to the public.

Public Involvement (2.43)

Allow the general public and stakeholders to participate in the decision making process through a multi-level program. This process will facilitate communication throughout the development and implementation of the management plan and disseminate information to the public through print and multi-media to reach the broadest possible audience.

Partner Coordination (2.72)

Build/promote partner coordination within the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. Facilitate the networking of partner organizations around several different interest areas including but not limited to education, interpretation, and tourism. Work with IDNR and local governments to facilitate agreements which promote outstanding stewardship of the I&M Canal and other state resources in the Corridor.

Volunteer Program (2.57)

Develop/maintain a diverse volunteer program for the Corridor with a variety of volunteer opportunities for all partners including but not limited to tour guides, trail stewards, native habitat stewards, and volunteer educators.

Internship Program (1.85)

Develop/maintain a student based internship program for college students within the Corridor. The program would match partner organizations with college students to complete projects throughout the Corridor.

IMCNHC Website (2.52)

Develop/maintain an Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor website. The website will supply large amounts of information about the I&M Canal NHC while encouraging tourists to visit the and enjoy the Corridor’s many resources.

Marketing Plan/Program (2.56)

Develop/maintain a marketing plan/program for the I&M Canal NHC to increase the public awareness of the Corridor, its many resources, and special events within the Corridor.

Maintain the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Infrastructure (2.60)

Develop/maintain the infrastructure of the Heritage Corridor through a diverse range of activities including by not limited to maintaining interpretive and wayfinding signage and promoting historic preservation.

QUESTION 3: The committees have established 26 goals/projects. In your opinion, when should the following 26 goals/projects be started: as soon as possible (ASAP), 3-5 years (3-5), 6-10 years (6-10), sometime in the future (SF), never do this project (NP). Fill in the blanks below with the appropriate timetable. (Please fill this section on this handout. It will be collected at the end of our public workshop.)

The number of responses for each possible answer is given after each question below in the order the projects were presented at the workshops.

1. Establish visitor centers for the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor (IMCNHC) in the major cities of the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 23 3-5: 25 6-10: 13 SF: 5 NP:0

2. Promote I&M Canal themed festivals throughout the Corridor and establish content standards for festival recreation, entertainment, food, music, educational opportunities, etc.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 17 3-5: 27 6-10: 10 SF: 11 NP: 1

3. Encourage/ develop books about the IMCNHC to include, but not be limited to, a travel guide, a definitive history of the I&M Canal, and a scrapbook style journal.

Total Responses: 65 ASAP: 15 3-5: 19 6-10: 15 SF: 16 NP: 0

4. Develop a passport book program for the IMCNHC with cancellation stamps located at a variety of locations throughout the Corridor.

Total Responses: 65 ASAP: 14 3-5: 15 6-10: 11 SF: 16 NP: 9

5. Develop audio tours, podcasts, phone apps, and other media for use along the IMCNHC.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 17 3-5: 24 6-10: 9 SF: 16 NP: 0

6. Use the IMCNHC website to distribute lessons plans, guides, materials and programs about the I&M Canal generated by educators inside or outside the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 26 3-5: 28 6-10: 8 SF: 4 NP: 0

7. Reinstate the 530 AM broadcasting service for information about the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 23 3-5: 11 6-10: 7 SF: 18 NP: 7

8. Locate, organize, and support a bank of resource experts [I&M Canal Educators and Interpreters] across and within the five counties of the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 22 3-5: 30 6-10: 7 SF: 7 NP: 0

9. Create learning experiences for use by the schools along the Corridor that expand the canal story to include the local communities.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 25 3-5: 29 6-10: 5 SF: 7 NP: 0

10. Generate and disseminate I&M Canal materials to special interest groups such as: young children, naturalists, non-US citizens, history buffs, and special needs.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 21 3-5: 19 6-10: 13 SF: 11 NP: 2

11. Develop a guide and/or include on the IMCNHC website as an informational resource of recreational activities within the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 46 3-5: 17 6-10: 1 SF: 2 NP: 0

12. Develop a guide and/or include on the IMCNHC website as an informational resource of tourism activities within the Corridor.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 37 3-5: 22 6-10: 2 SF: 5 NP: 0

13. Include conservation activities in the Corridor on the IMCNHC website.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 33 3-5: 24 6-10: 7 SF: 2 NP: 0

14. Create a Corridor bicycling plan, which will build on existing resources and use partnerships to expand bicycling opportunities.

Total Responses: 67 ASAP: 47 3-5: 16 6-10: 2 SF: 2 NP: 0

15. Develop a plan to: (a) link disconnected portions of the I&M Canal Trail from LaSalle/Peru to the Chicago Portage site and (b) connect the I&M Canal Trail to other existing/planned regional trails.

Total Responses: 67 ASAP: 31 3-5: 22 6-10: 10 SF: 3 NP: 1

16. Improve maintenance of the I&M Canal Trail by developing a program designed to improve trail conditions and locate funding sources for trail maintenance.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 42 3-5: 17 6-10: 5 SF: 2 NP: 0

17. Design, construct, install and maintain directional signage along the I&M Canal Trail.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 35 3-5: 26 6-10: 3 SF: 2 NP: 0

18. Inventory camping facilities within the Corridor with the purpose of developing a Corridor concept plan for additional campgrounds and/or improvement/expansion of existing facilities.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 13 3-5: 26 6-10: 17 SF: 9 NP: 1

19. Institute an annual state "Canal Day" to raise awareness of the Canal Corridor and to discuss its management issues with state officials and agencies. The CCA will use success stories, from the Corridor; to demonstrate IMCNHC's positive effect on the communities within it's boundaries.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 32 3-5: 18 6-10: 7 SF: 7 NP: 2

20. Support efforts to secure increased and improved rail service to the Heritage Corridor, i.e. additional commuter passenger train service and high-speed rail between Chicago and St. Louis.

Total Responses: 65 ASAP: 16 3-5: 20 6-10: 11 SF: 14 NP: 4

21. Map the Corridor using the geographic information system (GIS) technology.

Total Responses: 66 ASAP: 28 3-5: 25 6-10: 7 SF: 6 NP: 0

22. Compile a photographic and text inventory of all public and private resources of the IMCNHC.

Total Responses: 67 ASAP: 21 3-5: 30 6-10: 9 SF: 11 NP: 1

23. Institute "CANAL-CAT," a program modeled after IDNR's "ECO-CAT." This system would enable people to ask questions or raise issues with IDNR concerning the I&M Canal. This system would provide a direct and timely form of communication with IDNR, and enable IDNR to direct the issue to the proper office or person.

Total Responses: 67 ASAP: 28 3-5: 20 6-10: 8 SF: 6 NP: 5

24. Identify, review, and recommend best management practices for all storm water discharge into the IMCNHC.

Total Responses: 65 ASAP: 26 3-5: 25 6-10: 9 SF: 5 NP: 0

25. Removal of invasive tree and shrub species along the canal to: improve ground cover, reduce erosion, and enhance the viewscape along the Corridor.

Total Responses: 65 ASAP: 29 3-5: 19 6-10: 14 SF: 3 NP: 0

26. Develop intergovernmental and land-use agreements, as well as, private property conservation easements to protect and preserve existing open space along the Corridor.

Total Responses: 63 ASAP: 33 3-5: 23 6-10: 5 SF: 2 NP: 0

QUESTION 4: Add a Project: Are there any goals/projects missing from our list? Please include the title, goal, and description of the project and contact info to obtain more information about the proposed project.

The data below lists all the responses from the public. Any of the responses, which were represented in the core activities or in the list of projects developed by the committees, were eliminated from the list below. For ease of understanding, the information is grouped into the following categories of projects, comments, questions and concerns.

Tourism Projects

- Conduct a regional evaluation of tourism attractions.
- Enhance website to give more current information, maps, GPS and trail maps.
- Update and reprint driving tour map to generate tourist traffic.
- Ecotourism and/or local food tours-local organic farms, wineries, restaurants combined or separate with local natural sites.

Heritage Development Projects

- Generate a plan to develop retail opportunities for private enterprise throughout.
- Retailers-profit motive as a subset for tourism development.
- Towns of LaSalle, Utica, and Ottawa coordinate effort to take canal the canal property private from IDNR from Ottawa to LaSalle.

Capital Projects

- Lemont Visitor Center (at the former police station next to village hall)
- Flagg Creek Heritage Center
- Operational Lock along the I&M Canal (# 6 and #14 suggested)
- I&M Heritage Canal Legacy Park-Joliet. (2)
- I&M Canal Museum: Freestanding museum to house and showcase canal historic artifacts of Lewis University and Will County Historical Society. (2)
- Relocate Will County Historical Society Heritage Village in Lockport along the Canal.
- Develop a campsite for bikes at Locktender's house at Aux Sable
- Restore, develop and maintain the I&M Canal Commissioners office. (2)

Recreation Projects

- White water training on the canal (2)
- Sculls competition
- Make the canal usable for kayak and canoes to attract Starved Rock visitors (2)
- More public use and exposure of the I&M Canal with a bicycle rally and/or a marathon or 5k.
- Trails:
 - ◆ Centennial Trail: connect I&M Canal Trail to confluence
 - ◆ Develop physical trails and establish trail standards for signage, and trail design
 - ◆ Mapping (canal trail?) for users. Create connections to other trails, businesses, ect. Identify all details of trail access points
 - ◆ Develop a complete map of the corridor with trails, tributaries, pedestrian, bike, and public transit access (especially Metra) connections to other trails, local access to businesses
 - ◆ Develop a consistent set of standards for signage; trail design and maintenance access points, amenities, etc.
 - ◆ Kaskaskia Alliance Trail: Lock 15 Bridge add connection of I&M Canal Trail and Hennepin Canal Trail.
 - ◆ Extend I&M Canal Trail to include proposed CalSag Trail
 - ◆ Pave bike path in Lemont Area
 - ◆ Enhance I&M Canal Trail Parking at Lemont creating easy access for biking and rollerblading

- ◆ Confluence Trail Extension-create a one mile paved extension from the I&M Canal bike trail at Willow Springs to SEPA station at confluence of Sanitary Ship Canal and CalSag (Plan already developed)
- ◆ Reopen the Canal Trail between Marseilles and Ottawa. Re-dredge and add in both locations
- ◆ Seniors/ADA-allow use of golf carts and scooters on the trail/towpath

Canal Maintenance Projects

- Clean and fix towpath near Buffalo Road and remove the sledge. (IDNR)
- Re-water the canal, research ways to keep the water in the canal fresh and aesthetically pleasing.
- Repair and restore rotating train bridge in Marseilles.
- Water entire canal in 10-15 years.
- Dredge existing waterway from LaSalle to Utica for use by Canal Boat from LaSalle to Utica.
- Restore and rejuvenate the I&M Canal through dredging and cleansing of canal for better water quality.
- Improve open space and water quality along the I&M Canal.
- Dredge LaSalle to Utica for use by canal boat and kayak/canoes.
- Make the entire canal and trail usable for canoes/bikes.
- Canal Cleanup Day one weekend a year. Promote in towns/cities along the canal.

Comments

- Legal protection of Heritage Canal Corridor from commercial interests
- Legal protection of Canal Corridor vs. commerce, pollution, and improper sale.
- GIS should be a top priority for planning and outreach
- I feel like there should be a dedicated project for the preservation of the canal itself, particularly the preservation of the canal walls where they are still intact.
- Also, maybe a goal to position the CCA to help guide major tourism improvements along the Corridor (in addition to visitor centers).
- I believe the Canal itself needs serious maintenance in several areas to clean it and improve flow. This is not mentioned as a project.

- Tourism and marketing efforts neglect the Lockport areas east. Efforts all seem to be focused on LaSalle, Ottawa, and somewhat on the portage.
- I think all projects are important. However I do not see any mention given to cleaning up the canal. Is that a given for each town? There are areas (Lemont) among others that need help in that area. There is hardly a need for help in that area. There is hardly a need for tourism when areas are not attractive. Would like to see Lemont promoted more in visitor's guide
- Any sort of bicycle plan should include an option for bike/equipment rental.
- Engineering (plan?) of I&M Canal needs to be written-what tributaries? Condition of locks- How did the Canal work and funding--For those die-hard canal addicts who live around the world. Masters/PHD thesis? Contracted in one-mile increments.
- I think it is important to network with each other- it seems emphasis is often placed on certain areas.
- Most important project is the cleaning of the Lemont portion of the canal. All money, time, volunteers, resources, should be put into the cleaning first and the corridor will follow.
- Make it easy for people to volunteer and get involved.
- More entry points for canoeing

Question

- Is there an archaeological survey of the Corridor? The Illinois Archeological survey (IAS) could be helpful.

Concern

- Increased rail traffic and pedestrian recreational use is a recipe for disaster (or cost prohibitive-infrastructure to separate the two). Pick only one. Both rail traffic and pedestrian recreational use in close proximity is a bad plan

QUESTION 5: Do you know of any resources, sites, organizations, or other entities that should be included or involved in the heritage area that you don't think we know about. Please include contact information so our committee can follow-up.

The list below is the organizations that have not been solicited to join the management planning effort. Organizations that were previously included in any Management Plan mailing are not shown below.

Access ARRA Federal Recovery & Revitalization dollars
Active Transportation Alliance
Bicyclists Clubs (various, local)
Canal Museum in Delphi, Indiana
Chicago Regional Tourism District Office
Chicago Wilderness
Community Colleges around the Corridor
Equestrian Groups (Illinois Trail Riders, Trail Riders of DuPage)
Illinois Audubon Society
Illinois River Road-Scenic Byway
Illinois Valley Cycling Association
Joliet Project Pride & Canallers History Interpreters
League of Illinois Bicyclists
Lemont Public Library
Northern IL Regional Tourism Office
Ottawa Canal Association
Ottawa River Rescue
Public Libraries around the Corridor
Starved Rock Cycling Association
Will County Land Use Department - Rural Structure Survey