

**DEVELOPING A HERITAGE STRATEGY
FOR THE CHAMPLAIN-RICHELIEU-
UPPER HUDSON REGION**

FINAL REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the fall of 2001, the Quebec-Labrador Foundation (QLF) conducted a project on the development of a heritage strategy for the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson¹ region encompassing parts of New York, Vermont, and Quebec. The project was requested through an RFP from the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), in response to a directive from the U.S. Congress in the 2001 Interior Appropriations bill. The Basin Program provided project oversight.

The purposes of the project were to identify interested parties and stakeholders from all sectors of the region, to gather new information and public input on the potential development of some new form of heritage tourism and resource enhancement program in the region, and to incorporate an assessment of the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) 1999 *Special Resource Study* and the public comments it generated.

The main focus of QLF's work for this project was the organization, facilitation and reporting on six public meetings and a series of individual and small group meetings. The meetings were located strategically around the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region to facilitate broad participation from as many stakeholders as possible. QLF worked in close collaboration with the LCBP and its Cultural Heritage and Recreation Advisory Committee (CHRAC) in developing guidelines and options for the development and implementation of a new heritage program that meets the needs and interests articulated by residents from all parts of the region.

Heritage Opportunities and Needs

The NPS Study classified the resources of the region into three interpretive themes: making of nations, corridor of commerce and magnet for tourism. In the public comments to the NPS Study, a majority of the respondents confirmed the findings by NPS of the significance of the resources, primarily in relation to the theme of making of nations.

During the course of discussions conducted during this project, no one contested that the region has a wealth of significant resources. There was clear, although not universal, support for further financial and technical assistance, and recognition to enhance these resources. In addition, public comment emphasized the links among the cultural heritage resources that are found throughout the region in New York, Vermont, and Quebec. Heritage interpretation and appreciation would be served best by a program designed to facilitate the creation of linkages among the different sites and develop unifying themes.

Our discussions with stakeholders included identification of some of the principle needs in the region which a heritage program could help to address. Needs can be pulled together in three general categories: marketing and interpretation, physical infrastructure, and coordination.

¹ For the purposes of this report, the Upper Hudson is identified as the stretch of the river from the area of the Champlain Canal to its confluence with the Mohawk River.

Guiding Principles

LCBP requested that QLF develop a set of guiding principles for a heritage strategy that could frame any decisions or recommendations made by the LCBP as to how to proceed. The guiding principles provide overall direction to be mindful of when formulating and adopting the elements of a program. The guiding principles are:

- Address needs and priorities identified by communities,
- Build upon strengths of existing regional and local initiatives,
- Support and enhance stewardship of heritage resources,
- Bring new money and resources to support local and regional heritage projects,
- Respect local decision-making,
- Provide enhanced coordination without adding another layer of governance and regulation,
- Develop cohesive themes that unify the region,
- Foster collaboration across borders and with Native Americans/First Nations.

Key Elements

The key elements of a heritage strategy may also be considered as specific implementation mechanisms that together would create a coordinated heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region. These elements were developed and discussed during the public and small group meetings. QLF was asked to present options for each of these elements – it is the role of the Lake Champlain Basin Program and its committees to review these options and from among them articulate a preferred approach for consideration by the New York and Vermont Congressional delegation and by decision-makers in Quebec.

QLF identified six key elements, within which a number of options are suggested. The report discusses each of the options in detail and examples are offered of language and approaches adopted by other heritage initiatives. The elements are:

- Purposes of a heritage program,
- Definition of the region,
- Funding and other support – the origins and use of these resources
- Local decision-making and empowerment,
- Organization and coordination – how the program would be structured and relate to existing initiatives,
- Name of the initiative.

Theme or Boundary

The key heritage element ‘Defining the Region’ generated a great deal of discussion. During the meetings in New York State, many individuals voiced strong opposition to

drawing lines on a map and designating a heritage region by these lines. The notion of creating a program that related to heritage *themes* drew considerable interest because this approach could avoid the necessity of delineating a region through a strict geographic boundary. A thematic approach may only require a northern and a southern terminus within which the heritage theme(s) would apply. Such an approach should be flexible in view of the large geographic region and the diverse stakeholders, and should be adaptable to respond to needs and priorities as they change over time. This approach appears consistent with a bottom-up style of program development and implementation.

Partnerships and Empowerment

With a region so rich in heritage sites and values, it is not surprising to find so many committed organizations and individuals involved in heritage activities. An important challenge for proponents of a new program, therefore, is to design the program so that it effectively and efficiently reinforces these existing efforts and does so in a coordinated fashion. The strategy must forge partnerships and linkages with other organizations and be organized in such a way as to underscore its respect for local initiative. Indeed, public comment strongly endorsed consideration of a program that would seek to empower communities in both its design and implementation. Such a coordinated community approach to a heritage program should significantly strengthen the national and international reputation of the region as a heritage area. The report goes into some depth in its discussion of this key element of organization and coordination.

International Collaboration

Both in the public comments following the release of the *Special Resource Study* and in QLF's recent series of meetings, there appears to be clear and overwhelming support for a program that emphasizes collaboration across the international border. To date, however, few international heritage initiatives exist in North America, and there is no set formula for the establishment of such programs. This report considers four alternative approaches and includes a discussion on their respective strengths and weaknesses.

The four examples of international heritage initiatives that are presented include: (1) the St.Croix International Waterway and Historic Site; (2) Los Caminos del Rio; (3) the Kennebec-Chaudière International Corridor and (4) the Detroit River. Analysis of each of these models includes brief descriptions of the geography and history of the region in question, the process followed for achieving international recognition and establishment of the initiative, the management structure, its mandate, and funding sources.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary of RFP

In March 2001, the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) issued a RFP for assistance in developing a framework for possible implementation of one or more of the management options identified in the *Special Resource Study Report* of the *Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Project* (U.S. National Park Service, 1999). In a directive from the U.S. Congress in the 2001 Interior Appropriations bill, the LCBP was charged to consider appropriate combinations of the options presented in the *Special Resource Study* and other creative approaches. One of the main criteria for the heritage framework is that it must be broadly acceptable at both local and regional levels throughout the Basin.

The purposes of the project as specified in the RFP were to identify interested parties and stakeholders from all sectors of the Basin, to gather information and public input on the potential development of some new form of heritage tourism and resource enhancement program in the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region², and to incorporate an assessment of the *Special Resource Study* and the public comments it generated. Stakeholders are broadly defined to include municipalities, chambers of commerce, non-governmental organizations, landowners, government agencies, and others interested in this topic.

Throughout the conduct of work proposed, consideration was to be given to Native American and First Nations perspectives, as well as to cross-boundary collaboration with interested parties in the Richelieu Valley area of Quebec to the north and the Champlain Canal, Bennington County, and Upper Hudson regions to the south of the Basin.

In addition to the requirements for work as defined in the RFP, LCBP committee members requested that five principles be respected in this project:

1. Work on the contract should build upon successes already achieved by organizations and individuals in the area.
2. Input should be obtained through many meetings around the region open to the public, and one-on-one contact with stakeholders where needed.
3. Information technology should be used to reach a wide audience and garner input from all stakeholders. While a new web site should not be required, expansion of the existing LCBP web site may be appropriate.
4. There should be language to ensure that the project specifically addresses the concerns of New York stakeholders (including the type of concerns that emerged in comments on the *Special Resource Study*).
5. The importance of bilingual dissemination of information should be emphasized.

² For the purposes of this report, we refer to the Upper Hudson as the stretch of the river from the area of the Champlain Canal to its confluence with the Mohawk River.

On April 20, 2001, the Quebec Labrador Foundation (QLF) submitted a proposal and subsequently was selected to work with the LCBP on this project. Throughout, QLF has worked in close collaboration with LCBP staff and the CHRAC to identify guidelines and options for the development and implementation of a new heritage program that meets the needs and interests of all parts of the region.

1.2 Description and Scope of Work

Pursuant to the workplan agreed to by QLF and LCBP in June 2001 for this project, QLF addressed the following tasks:

- Compiling a list of New York, Vermont and Quebec stakeholders
- Drafting a cover letter and printing notices of meetings for distribution to stakeholders
- Conducting a socioeconomic impact analysis for Quebec on management options and a Richelieu Valley heritage resource study
- Organizing, facilitating and reporting on a series of public workshops and meetings (6 in total) and individual / small group meetings
- Providing LCBP with summaries of meetings (in French and English) to be placed on its web-site
- Preparing a draft and a final report
- Preparing a Fact Sheet that may be sent by LCBP to stakeholders to provide update on status of project (Executive Summary of the final report).

1.3 Summary of Meetings

QLF's main focus of activity for this project was the organization, facilitation and reporting on six public workshops and meetings and a series of individual and small group meetings. The meetings were located strategically around the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region to facilitate broad participation from as many stakeholders as possible.

The primary objectives of the meetings were to provide information, identify the resources that are needed for the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region, discuss the application and use of these resources that would meet the needs of the region, address the concerns raised in public comments on the *NPS Special Resource Study*, and identify opportunities to develop strong partnerships among diverse stakeholders in New York, Vermont and Quebec.

Brief summaries of the public workshops and meetings follow. Full summaries are provided in Appendix B of this report.

Whitehall, New York, September 19, 2001

Subject: Economic Enhancement through the Development of a Coordinated Heritage Tourism Strategy

Approximately fifty participants from New York, Vermont and Quebec attended the workshop hosted by the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce.

Nick Westbrook, Director of Fort Ticonderoga, acted as panel moderator. Ron Ofner, Director of Tourism for Essex County, New York, Deborah Doyle Schectmann, Cultural Heritage Tourism Coordinator for the State of Vermont, and Alain Houde, General Director of the Regional Tourism Association for the Montérégie, Quebec (ATR Montérégie), acted as panelists and described the importance of cultural tourism and planning and marketing strategies for their respective regions.

Several participants representing landowners and property rights interest groups in the State of New York raised concerns about potential regulation of private property through a heritage program. These participants stressed the need for local control and the protection of the rights of landowners, and were suspicious of a program that could involve federal or state designation.

Another main concern identified was the need to assist citizens and local businesses in using effective marketing tools and promoting their community assets. There is a need for additional advertising expertise and capacity, and funds to support such efforts should come from all government levels. The need for better coordination within the large region was also emphasized. Many groups are pursuing the same broad goal of promoting cultural heritage. There is a need for these groups to sit down together more frequently and to collaborate more effectively.

Chambly, Quebec, October 11, 2001

Subject: International Collaboration: Challenges and Opportunities for Heritage Programs

Approximately forty participants attended the workshop from New York, Vermont and Quebec. The Quebec Government sponsored the event and hosted a reception following the meeting.

Three international collaboration models were presented:

1. Marie-Noelle Sylvain, Kennebec – Chaudière International Corridor (Maine-Quebec)
2. Garry Douglas, New York – Quebec Trade Corridor
3. Ken Schmidt, Detroit River – US and Canadian Heritage River (Michigan-Ontario)

These models are discussed in detail in section 5 of this report.

The question and comment period following the presentations included discussions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of state-provincial collaboration (as in the case of the Kennebec-Chaudière) and a program that also includes federal government stakeholders (as in the case of the Detroit River). The benefits of including state/provincial and federal partners in an international heritage program include the broadening of financial and technical resources available to such a program, and where federal sites are present in the region, the inclusion of all the stakeholders. The advantages of proceeding at a state/provincial model include the facilitation of negotiations where fewer stakeholders are involved and faster decision-making.

Ken Schmidt of the Detroit River presented a recipe for success in implementing an international heritage program. His five keys for success are to:

- find champions and leaders to promote the project,
- build confidence among all stakeholders,
- overcome and address concerns raised in the community,
- mobilize community support and involvement,
- recognize and celebrate actions.

Middlebury, Vermont, October 24, 2001

Subject: Key Elements of a Heritage Strategy

Approximately 50 participants from Vermont, New York and Quebec attended the Middlebury workshop, including representatives from Bennington County, Vermont and the Abenaki Nation.

The workshop focused on identifying and refining preliminary guiding principles and key elements for a coordinated heritage strategy. The preliminary guiding principles presented for discussion at the workshop were the following:

1. Bring new money and resources into the region for heritage projects
2. Address needs and priorities of communities
3. Respect local decision-making
4. Build upon strengths of existing regional and local initiatives
5. Provide better coordination without adding another layer of governance and regulation
6. Funding not to be used for land acquisition
7. Foster collaboration across borders (New York, Vermont, Quebec)

The key elements presented for discussion at the workshop were the following:

1. Clearly Defined Purposes/Vision
2. Defining the Region
3. Funding and Technical Resources
4. Grant Programs
5. Local Decision-Making and Empowering Communities

6. Organization and Coordination

The participants were divided into four working groups to discuss the preliminary guiding principles and key elements. (A summary of the output from each of these groups is provided in Appendix B.) Certain modifications were made to the preliminary guidelines and key elements following the meeting to reflect the discussions.

Public Forum in Plattsburgh, New York on November 19, 2001

Approximately forty participants, primarily from New York, attended the public forum.

A revised presentation of the preliminary guidelines and key elements was presented followed by a question and comment period. A copy of the presentation is provided in Appendix C.

The majority of questions and comments concerned property rights issues. Many of the participants opposed any federal designation in the region, as they believed that federal legislation would open the door to regulations and restrictions of property rights. Given their experience with the designation of the Adirondack Park, many individuals opposed any drawing of lines on a map. However, there was some recognition on the part of these individuals that certain sites could benefit from funding and that acceptable legislation could be drafted that would include an “opt-in and opt-out” clause. Such a clause would require positive action on the part of local governments to be included in any part of a new heritage program.

Participants favoring economic development and heritage tourism at the meeting supported further action in the region and recognized the need for a coordinated approach to promoting and interpreting the important natural and cultural resources.

Public Forum in Burlington, Vermont on November 20, 2001

A small group of individuals primarily from Vermont attended the public forum.

The presentation given during the meeting at Plattsburgh was repeated, followed by a question and comment period.

The discussion focussed on several themes, including the importance of reinforcing the potential for economic opportunities in the region through the implementation of a coordinated heritage program. Boundary issues, primarily related to concerns raised in New York, were discussed. Avoiding drawing a line on the map and adopting a theme-based approach instead was seen as an interesting option. However, it did raise some issues – for instance, how would funding be allocated? How would the themes be expressed and who would develop them? Would a clause allowing communities to “opt-in” or “opt-out” of the program be necessary if there are no boundaries? Also, in identifying themes or objectives of a new heritage program, the importance of inviting Native Americans and First Nations representatives into the process to provide their

history and interpret it in their own manner was emphasized. In addition, participants stressed the importance of international collaboration with Quebec, Canada, and the need to work with and through existing organizations rather than creating a new entity.

Public Forum in Saint-Jean, Quebec on November 27, 2001

Approximately forty participants, primarily from Quebec, attended the meeting. A French version of the presentation, similar to that shown in Plattsburgh and Burlington, was given followed by a questions and comment period.

The main focus of the discussion was on developing an organizational framework in Quebec. A non-profit organization with a mandate to implement and organize a heritage corridor in the region and celebration activities for the 400th anniversary of the arrival and return of Samuel de Champlain (2003-2010) has been created in the Municipal Regional County (MRC) of Haut-Richelieu. An interim committee has been formed in the MRC of the Vallée de Richelieu and Rouville, and preliminary discussions are taking place for a similar entity to be created in the MRC of Bas-Richelieu. A representative from the *Comité de concertation et de valorisation du bassin de la rivière Richelieu* (COVABAR) indicated that COVABAR was preparing to help facilitate the coordination of a new heritage initiative and the celebration activities in the region.

Individual and Small Group Meetings

Several small meetings were conducted to provide further input on this project. The individuals included representatives from Native Americans/First Nations, regional planning offices, chambers of commerce, tourism, heritage and cultural resource professionals, community organizations and government agencies.

2.0 HERITAGE OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS IN THE REGION

2.1 Resource Significance

“The Champlain Valley has a rich heritage, perhaps unparalleled in the Western Hemisphere.” (Senator James Jeffords, cited in *Connections*, a newsletter prepared by NPS on the Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Project, 1999)

Many consider the great water system of the Hudson River, Lake George, Lake Champlain, the Richelieu River and the St. Lawrence River as North America’s most significant and strategic historic waterway. The cultural resources in this region, both on land and underwater, provide a tangible link to a rich and diverse past. They include important sacred aboriginal sites dating from as early as 10,000 B.C. Lake Champlain and its rocks are integral to the Abenaki traditions and are central to their creation stories. The Lake and its tributaries have long served as important transportation routes for Abenakis and Mohawks.

Samuel de Champlain entered Lake Champlain in 1609. This marked the beginning of European exploration and settlement that intensified over the next two centuries. Forts, shipwrecks and historic landscapes throughout this region recount the history of French, English, and American commerce and conflict in North America. Infrastructure, such as mills, bridges, railway stations, shipyards and commercial vessels lying at the bottom of the lake represent early development of industry, transportation and recreation.

Extensive research on the heritage resources in the region and their significance was conducted by the NPS in the context of the *Special Resource Study*. The NPS classified the resources into three interpretive themes: making of nations, corridor of commerce and magnet for tourism. In the public comments to the NPS Study, a majority of the respondents confirmed the findings by NPS of the significance of the resources, primarily in relation to the theme making of nations.

During the course of discussions conducted during this project, no one contested that the region has a wealth of significant resources and there was clear support for further financial and technical assistance to enhance these resources. In addition, emphasis was placed on the links among the cultural heritage resources that are found throughout the region in New York, Vermont and Quebec. Heritage interpretation and appreciation would be best served if a program is designed to facilitate the creation of linkages among the different sites and the development of unifying themes.

2.2 International Collaboration

The geographic and historic links among sites in New York, Vermont and Quebec provide compelling reasons to work together across the international border to better appreciate, protect and promote this region. Enhanced and expanded collaborative activities that transcend the border would provide significant benefits and assist both residents and visitors in appreciating and understanding our heritage. The successful and sustainable implementation of a new heritage program will require collaboration among

the many diverse organizations in the region and the support and involvement of local populations.

The NPS Study addressed potential opportunities for international collaboration. Both in the public comments following the public release of the Study and in this recent series of meetings, there appears to be clear and overwhelming support for a program that included collaboration across in the international border.

Several models of international collaboration for heritage programs exist. One of the public workshops was dedicated to exploring models for international collaboration. Section 5 of this report sets out four potential models: the St. Croix International Waterway Commission between Maine and New Brunswick, Los Caminos del Rio in Mexico and Texas, the Kennebec-Chaudiere International Corridor between Maine and Quebec, and the Detroit River between Ontario and Michigan.

If a program is developed that includes a component of international collaboration, these models may provide some mechanisms that could be adapted to the particular context of the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region.

2.3 Economic Opportunities

2.3.1 Background

In 1999, the Office of Thomas J. Martin, in association with Heritage Partners, Inc., prepared a socio-economic impact analysis of the Champlain Valley heritage preservation options identified by the U.S. National Park Service in its *Special Resource Study*.

The analysis identified selected heritage attractions and the estimated current annual attendance. For example, Saratoga Battlefield and Visitor Centre receive approximately 325,000 visitors per year. Fort Ticonderoga and the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum attract approximately 100,000 and 25,000 visitors respectively during the summer and fall seasons.

A diversity of accommodation throughout the region is available ranging from bed-and-breakfasts to small inns to “upscale” hotels. Due to the fact that tourism has been an important industry in the region since the early 1900s, there is a relatively well-developed infrastructure in terms of diverse accommodation and access from major centres including Boston, New York and Montreal. Yet despite the wealth of heritage attractions and a relatively well-developed tourism infrastructure (accommodations, transport), the report highlighted the need for enhanced advertising and marketing efforts. This enhanced advertising and promotion could result from the heritage options identified in the NPS Study.

The framework for evaluation of the economic impact of each of the heritage options presented in the NPS study (State Heritage Corridor, National Heritage Corridor, Quadricentennial Commemoration) focused on potential increases in visitor volume, trip expenditures and length of stay. According to the Thomas Martin study, the National

Heritage Corridor option would have the greatest impact of these three options, resulting in additional annual revenues of approximately \$50 million (US) to the region compared to approximately \$35 million (US) from the State Heritage Corridor option and \$32 million (US) from a Quadricentennial Commemoration.

2.3.2 New Economic Estimates for Quebec

Using the Thomas Martin study as a basis, QLF conducted an economic study of the Richelieu region of Quebec. Two tools were used to calculate the economic impact of a heritage corridor in the Montérégie area:

- Impact based on the hypotheses of the Thomas Martin study;
- Intersectorial model developed by the Statistics Institute of Québec (a governmental agency).

Results from each model are summarized below.

Projection of economic impacts over ten years (2003-2012) in \$Millions (US), based on the hypotheses of the Thomas Martin study.

	Provincial/State Heritage Corridor	National Heritage Corridor	Quadricentennial Celebration
Champlain Valley	390.2	557.1	265.2
Richelieu Valley	69.8	103.9	74.8
Total	460	661	340

Criticisms of the Thomas Martin Study and the adaptation or transposition of this study in a Quebec context included the assumption that the positive impacts generated from the activities surrounding the Quadricentennial Celebration would drop off after 2009 (the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's arrival into Lake Champlain). Initial organization of the Celebration program foresees long-term, ongoing impacts following 2009.

Intersectorial model

This model was developed for the Richelieu Valley region in Quebec and provides estimated *annual* impacts on employment, salary and taxes from increased tourism resulting from a new international heritage program, as well as a break-down of the projected allocation of tourist expenditures. The figures below may be used to provide an idea of the economic impacts of a heritage corridor and quadricentennial celebration in New York and Vermont taking into account the increased expected annual income, the tax structure and the exchange rate in the United States.

Total impact of \$10.4 Million (CAN) in new spending annually from visitors, resulting in:

- Creation of 175 jobs

- \$3.5 M (CAN) in salary
- \$1.6 M (CAN) in provincial tax
- \$1.2 M (CAN) in federal tax

Allocation of spending:

- 27%, transportation
- 23%, lodging
- 23%, goods and services
- 20%, food and beverage
- 7%, leisure

2.4 Identification of Needs

Although this project was focused on crafting guidelines and key elements for a coordinated heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region, our discussions with stakeholders included identification of some of the principle needs in the region that a new heritage program could help to address. Needs can be pulled together in three general categories: marketing and interpretation, physical infrastructure, and coordination.

Marketing

- Funding for marketing/interpretation – telling big, integrated, regional heritage stories to as wide an audience as possible.
- Funding and technical support to assist communities in planning interpretive kiosks and signage – much more history could be told if additional funding and interpretive expertise were available.
- Local and/or regional promoters – to broaden awareness of what the local communities and region as a whole have to offer, and to strengthen the interpretation of local heritage resources within a regional context.

Infrastructure

- Funding for physical/infrastructure needs – e.g., maintaining buildings at recognized historic sites.
- Additional funding for a variety of heritage-related projects – such as those identified through grassroots processes like the Lake Champlain/Champlain Canal Byways planning effort.
- Funding to support towns in caring for local resources – e.g., maintenance of the new park in Whitehall along the Champlain Canal.
- Expanding heritage tourism opportunities – a critical component in local and regional economic revitalization.
- Expanding local and regional capacity to accommodate tourists (e.g., restaurants, hotels/B&Bs) – a critical component in realizing the region’s full potential as a heritage tourism destination.

Coordination

- Better coordination among existing initiatives – many players, especially key decision-makers such as agency heads, don't have enough understanding of who's doing what related to heritage resources and initiatives, and as a result funding is not necessarily being applied in the most effective/efficient way.
- Centralized management/coordination to initiate efforts to bring key players together – e.g., through “summit conference(s)”, development of an evolving master matrix of who's doing what related to heritage resources.
- Encouraging the linkage and integration of natural, cultural, historical, and recreational initiatives within the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson landscape.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A HERITAGE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Background

At the outset of this project, QLF was requested by LCBP to develop guiding principles for a heritage strategy that could frame any decisions or recommendations made by the LCBP as to how to proceed. These guiding principles would provide overall direction to be mindful of when formulating and adopting the elements of a new heritage program.

QLF identified the eight guiding principles presented below through input received at the public and individual meetings, through research on similar heritage programs, and through discussions with LCBP staff.

Although the principles are not necessarily listed in order of priority, some attention has been given to the numbering. The intention remains that, ideally, any program adopted should strive to respect the eight principles.

3.2 Guiding Principles

3.2.1 Address needs and priorities identified by communities

This first principle has several elements. A heritage program should be tailored to permit communities to identify their own needs and priorities, and then indicate these needs and priorities to a coordinating entity that will be able to assist accordingly.

The needs and priorities, however, will be limited to what is defined as the objectives and scope of the heritage program. If, for example, a program is developed to provide funding to enhance interpretation of the region's heritage, the needs and the priorities of a community would be expressed in this context.

The term "communities" is used to allow for some flexibility in determining at what level support should be provided (e.g., county governments, towns, school boards, organizations).

3.2.2 Build upon strengths of existing regional and local initiatives

This principle is of critical importance. As indicated in the NPS Study, well over 150 organizations are working on heritage-related activities in this region and many local, regional, and State-based initiatives are operating with success. Given this bounty of good programs and people in the region, one may well question whether another program is needed. The majority of people in New York, Vermont and Quebec who have addressed this question have responded by noting that current initiatives in the region could well benefit from enhanced coordination and further support.

In implementing a new heritage program, it should be made very clear that this program is to complement ongoing initiatives and not duplicate or replace them. We did receive some comments regarding concerns about competition for limited resources. The goal of a new program should be to provide further resources to the region so that ongoing

activities and programs can be continued, new ones can be developed, and new links can be made among people and programs. In other words, any new program should “enlarge the pie” rather than “cutting another slice out of the same pie.”

This principle was expressed in many of the letters received by NPS during the public comment period in Spring 2000.

3.2.3 Support and enhance stewardship of heritage resources

There was some initial hesitation to include supporting the stewardship of heritage resources as a guiding principle, as it may be construed by certain individuals or groups as an invitation for regulation of property rights. However, having acknowledged and addressed this concern in principles 3.2.5 and 3.2.6 (below) and in the key element concerning local decision-making and empowerment (see Section 4.2.4), participants generally agreed that it is important that a coordinated heritage program contributes to the protection and enhancement of the heritage resources that are at the very heart of and the reason for a program.

Another suggested formulation of this principle is to “support communities in protecting and enhancing their heritage”. This formulation of the principle captures some aspects of the first principle to the extent that the needs and priorities of a community and the purpose of a heritage program are to protect and enhance heritage resources.

Along with developing educational opportunities and local economies, the protection of heritage resources was cited in the public comments on the NPS Study as a primary reason for implementing a new heritage program in the Champlain Valley.

3.2.4. Bring new money and other resources to support local and regional heritage projects

This principle goes hand-in-hand with the principle of building upon the strengths of local and regional initiatives and directly addresses the need for additional funding for marketing and interpretation, for physical infrastructure needs, to support towns in caring for local resources, and to help existing programs continue their good work.

3.2.5 Respect local decision-making

Respecting local decision-making is a key principle for mobilizing community support for the program and building a partnership among local, regional, state and federal levels of government. To date, there has been some criticism that the proposed heritage program would be too “top-down.” It is important that local decision-makers are encouraged to participate in the process and, moreover, that their participation is meaningful.

Some of the mechanisms to institutionalize respect for local decision-making are described in the next chapter on key elements. These include opt-in/opt-out provisions,

local representation on the coordinating entity and grant review boards, and encouraging local communities to define their needs and priorities.

3.2.6 Provide enhanced coordination without adding another layer of governance and regulation

In all three jurisdictions where public meetings were held (New York, Vermont and Quebec) there was a general consensus that the number of administrative agencies and regulations is currently more than sufficient; another layer of governance and regulation is not welcome or needed. However, the need for enhanced coordination among this administrative and programmatic web was acknowledged by the majority of participants.

Therefore, a preferred approach in adopting a new heritage program is to look to existing organizational entities to manage the program and focus on coordination functions. Clear language in any constituting legislation or policy for a heritage program should be included to ensure that new regulatory powers are not introduced.

3.2.7 Develop cohesive themes that unify the region

The development of themes that link the region together speaks also to the issue of providing enhanced coordination. The NPS suggested three themes in the *Special Resource Study*: making of nations, corridor of commerce, and magnet for tourism. The NPS indicated that the first theme, making of nations, has national significance.

In the recent series of public and small group meetings, the identification of unifying themes was discussed. One suggestion was that the thematic approach must be flexible to allow the expansion, contraction and prioritization of themes to occur over time. For example, the theme of the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's arrival in the region may be regarded as a priority from 2003-2009, while the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 may receive increasing attention as 2012 approaches. Or, each of these could be treated as acceptable sub-topics within the broader theme of "The Making of Nations". In addition to the themes identified by NPS, other suggestions included European exploration, military history, the history of Native Americans/First Nations in the region, and natural and cultural landscapes.

Certainly, if a thematic approach is adopted, further discussion is required to develop the themes. The development of the themes should be a public process and involve the key stakeholders. For example, Native American/First Nations representatives noted that their primary purpose for participating in a coordinated heritage program is to have an opportunity to tell their own history and to describe the ongoing importance of the region to their way of life and values in their own way.. They were sharply critical that they have too often been marginalized and their history has been told from other perspectives.

3.2.8 Foster collaboration across borders and with Native Americans/First Nations

There is great enthusiasm and support for cross boundary collaboration and, as mentioned above, the active involvement of Native Americans / First Nations in a coordinated heritage program.

Participants in meetings for this project suggested that the full potential of any new heritage framework will be realized only if effective cross-boundary collaboration is achieved at all levels: across local borders between towns; across the state border between New York and Vermont; across the international border between the U.S. and Canada; and across non-geographic “borders” between different communities, such as those that sometimes separate individuals of European descent and Native Americans/First Nations. Certainly, the scope, vision, and creativity of the entity that is given responsibility to manage any new heritage framework for the region will play a large role in determining the extent to which the opportunities for such collaboration are realized.

4.0 KEY ELEMENTS OF A HERITAGE FRAMEWORK

4.1 Mechanisms for Implementation

The key elements of a heritage strategy may also be considered as implementation mechanisms to frame a heritage program. These provide the main ingredients that together would create a coordinated heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region. These elements were developed and discussed during the public meetings. QLF was asked to present possible options for addressing these elements – it is the role of the Lake Champlain Basin Program and its committees to review these options and among them articulate a preferred approach for consideration by the New York and Vermont Congressional delegation and decision-makers in Quebec. Examples of how these elements have been addressed in other programs are provided to serve as workable solutions and precedents.

If legislation is proposed to create and appropriate funding for a heritage program in the region, aspects of the key elements described in some detail below could be incorporated into the legislation to address the needs and concerns of the region's stakeholders.

QLF identified six key elements, within which a number of options are suggested. The elements are: (1) purposes of a heritage program; (2) a definition of the region; (3) funding and other support – the origins and use of these resources; (4) local decision-making and empowerment; and (5) organization and coordination – how the program would be structured and relate to existing initiatives, and (6) name of the initiative.

4.2 Key Elements

4.2.1 *Purposes/Vision*

Two possibilities were raised during the meetings regarding the purpose of a new heritage program. One option was to be very specific and focus on heritage tourism and economic development. The concern was that the broader the objectives and the scope of a program, the less chance there is of implementing it successfully.

The majority of stakeholders, however, preferred that the purposes be drafted in broader terms and include the following goals:

- (1) Revitalize local economies throughout the region*
- (2) Help communities protect their heritage resources*
- (3) Enhance public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the region's heritage*
- (4) Provide funding through grant/loan programs and technical support*
- (5) Foster partnerships*

The advantages of broadening the purposes beyond economic development are to provide broader assistance to the region and encompass the multi-faceted aspects and full potential of a new heritage program.

An example of a heritage program that focuses solely on economic development through heritage tourism is the Kennebec-Chaudière International Corridor. The purpose statement is as follows:

“Increase the number of visitors in the Kennebec-Chaudière International Corridor in order to stimulate the economy and to contribute to the development of the tourism industry.” (Presentation Document, Maine-Québec Bilateral Committee, p.9)

Examples of programs that include broader purpose statements include the following:

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Purposes:

- (1) to recognize the importance of the history and the resources of the Hudson River Valley to the Nation.*
 - (2) to assist the State of New York and the communities of the Hudson River valley in preserving, protecting and interpreting these resources for the benefit of the Nation.*
 - (3) to authorize Federal financial and technical assistance to serve these purposes.*
- (1996, 16 USC 461, Sec. 903)

America’s Agricultural Heritage Partnership

Purposes:

- (1) to interpret, retain, enhance, and promote the unique and significant contributions to national and international agriculture of certain natural, historic, cultural resources within Waterloo, Iowa, and northeast Iowa;*
- (2) to provide a partnership management framework to assist volunteer associations, private businesses, political subdivisions of the State, and the State of Iowa in developing and implementing Management Plan policies and programs that will assist in the interpretation, retention, enhancement, and promotion of the cultural, natural, and recreational resources of northeast Iowa;*
- (3) to allow for local, State, and Federal contributions through limited grants and technical assistance to create America’s Agricultural Heritage Partnership through cooperative agreements among volunteer associations, private businesses, political subdivisions of the State, the State of Iowa, and residents of the area; and*
- (4) to provide for an economically self-sustaining Partnership for the educational and inspirational benefit of current and future generations concerning the story of American agriculture.*

(1996, 16 USC 461, Title VII, Sec. 701(b))

The five primary purposes identified and discussed during the public and small group individual meetings were largely inspired from draft legislation proposed by Essex County, New York in 2000.

Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Economic Revitalization Act

Purposes:

- (1) to recognize the importance of the historic, natural, cultural and recreational resources of the Champlain Valley to the nation.*
- (2) to assist the states of New York and Vermont, and the communities of the Champlain Valley in preserving, protecting and interpreting these resources for the benefit of the Nation.*
- (3) to assist the economically distressed communities of the Champlain Valley to effect economic revitalization utilizing these resources as part of a comprehensive program to re-create the communities' economic base.*
- (4) to authorize Federal financial and technical assistance to serve these purposes.*
- (5) to foster the amicable and cooperative close working relationships with all levels of government, the private sector and local communities, in accomplishment of the foregoing purposes.*

(Draft Legislation endorsed by the Essex County Board of Supervisors in Resolution No. 100 on May 1, 2000, and also supported by the Clinton County Board of Supervisors in July 2000 by Resolution No. 623)

A complete copy of the legislation and draft legislation of the above-mentioned programs and other relevant programs is provided in Appendix D.

4.2.2 Defining the Region

This particular element of the heritage strategy generated a great deal of discussion. During the meetings in New York State, many individuals voiced strong opposition to drawing lines on a map and designating a region. The notion of creating a program that related to themes drew considerable interest because this approach may avoid the necessity of designating a region. Certain questions remain in adopting a theme-based approach – for instance, how will the themes be defined? Who will define them? And what should be done to ensure that financial and technical resources will be directed only to the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region (if, for example, an approved theme is far-reaching, such as the American Revolution).

The majority of participants in the meetings agreed that the spine of the geographic region is the linked waterway consisting of Lake Champlain, the Richelieu River, Lake George, the Champlain Canal, and part of the Upper Hudson River to include Saratoga Battlefield. The unique history of the region is integrally connected to this waterway. In addition, they felt that the inland boundaries should be as broadly defined as possible to best tell the story of the region, and to assist as many communities as possible. A combination of a theme-based approach and a broad definition of the region was suggested.

In Quebec, it appears that the majority of participants support a watershed approach. Increasingly, the Government of Quebec is recognizing watersheds as the basis for planning and management of land. A watershed approach integrates natural and cultural heritage.

Therefore, the issue remains as to how to define the extent the program will cover territory inland. Possible approaches include:

Geographic boundaries based on:

- *Towns* – as in the case of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Area and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
- *Counties* – as in the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and as proposed in the Essex County (NY) draft legislation
- The watersheds of Lake Champlain, the Richelieu River and part of the Upper Hudson Valley (with the potential addition of Bennington County) – as in the Detroit River Project
- No lines drawn – focus on themes and shared history

In the event that the proposed approach includes a geographic boundary line, it will be important to consider mechanisms such as an “opt-in opt-out” option at a local level to respect local decision-making and empowerment. These mechanisms are set out in section 4.2.4. below.

4.2.3 *Funding and Other Support*

The predominant opinion among stakeholders in the recent series of discussions and from experience in other heritage programs is that any successful program requires a partnership of support from various levels and sectors, including federal, state/provincial, and local governments; private organizations (corporate, foundation, non-profit); and citizens. This support can take many forms, and can come from outside the region as well as from within. Examples include financial and technical assistance, in-kind contributions, recognition, volunteerism, and partnerships.

It is interesting to note that in the federal legislation creating several heritage programs (cited above in the purpose section), one of the specified objectives is to authorize federal funding and technical assistance. Clearly, that is one of the reasons to have federal designation. But funding should not be the sole responsibility of the federal level of government. It is for this reason that most federal heritage area legislation in the U.S. has 1) a requirement that federal funds be matched by contributions from other participants (this may include in-kind, volunteer, and other forms of support as well as direct financial contributions); and 2) a ten-year sunset clause, under which federal funding and other assistance is available to assist the program in the early stages and then it is expected to become self-sustaining.

This key element ties in closely with the guiding principle of bringing new money and resources to support local and regional heritage projects. That new money should come from sources other than just federal. An opportunity with great potential in this respect is private-public partnerships. Many private companies working in the region may have a great interest in participating in a program. The Detroit River Project described in Section 5.1 has attempted to involve the private sector in many of its initiatives and has chosen individuals from companies situated along the river as members of the Board of Directors.

4.2.4 Local Decision-Making and Empowering Communities

Six mechanisms were identified to address concerns raised about top-down decision making, to mobilize public support for the program and to develop a successful program that is “owned” and implemented by the community. These mechanisms are the following:

- i. Invite communities to opt-in and opt-out;
- ii. Confirm that no powers of land use regulation or property acquisition will be accorded to the coordinating entity in relation to this initiative;
- iii. Ensure community representation on the coordinating entity and grant/loan review boards;
- iv. Encourage communities to define their needs and priorities;
- v. Support communities to tell the region’s story in their own way;
- vi. Adopt flexible match requirements for grants and low-interest or no-interest loans for certain projects.

Each of these is discussed below in more detail.

i. Opt-in /opt-out

The concept of inviting communities to opt-in or opt-out of the program was inspired from the Hudson River Valley experience. The Hudson legislation provided for this option to participate or not in the following terms:

In the initial constituting bill, the boundaries were described as:

“The Heritage Area shall be comprised of the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Columbia, Greene, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putman, Westchester, and Rockland, New York, and the Village of Waterford in Saratoga County, New York. The Heritage Area shall not include any of the following: (A) the counties of Greene and Columbia. (B) those portions of the counties of Rensselaer and Dutchess located entirely within the 22d Congressional District of New York.”

(1996, 16 USC 461, Title IX, Sec. 904)

In subsequent legislation amending this Bill, the opt-in/opt-out clause was added:

“Notwithstanding section 904(b) [the boundaries of the Heritage Area] shall include any portion of a city, town or village within the area specified in section 904(b)(2) of that Act only to the extent that the government of the city, town, or village, in a resolution of the governing board or council, agrees to be included and submits the resolution to the Secretary of Interior and the management entities for the Heritage Area and to the extent such resolution is not subsequently revoked in the same manner.”

(Pub. L. 105-83, 105th Congress. Sec 324)

This type of mechanism received favorable comments from stakeholders in New York and Vermont. It clearly presents the heritage program as an opportunity and not an obligation. In the event that the program requires a definition of a geographic boundary line, then such an option at the level of cities, towns, and villages, as provided in the example of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, likely would be an effective way of addressing local concerns. The local level of government is closest to the residents and property owners and, therefore, can best represent the wishes of the local community to participate or not.

ii. No powers of land use regulation or property acquisition

In the event that a new heritage initiative is implemented and is authorized pursuant to legislation, specific and clear language to the effect that no new powers of land use regulation or property acquisition are accorded to the coordinating entity may be provided. This language will address many concerns raised primarily by landowners in New York State that heritage designation will bring new regulations either directly or indirectly.

Examples of legislative provisions related to this issue appear in many of the Acts creating heritage areas and corridors, including the following examples:

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor:

- (a) Nothing in this title shall be construed to modify, enlarge, or diminish any authority of the Federal, State, or local governments to regulate any use of land as provided by law or regulation.*
- (b) Nothing in this title shall be construed to grant powers of zoning or land use to the Commission.*
- (c) Nothing in this title shall be construed to affect or to authorize the Commission to interfere with*
 - (1) the rights of any person with respect to private property;*
 - (2) any local zoning ordinance or land use plan of the State of New York or political subdivision thereof; or*
 - (3) any State or local canal-related development plans including but not limited to the Canal Recreationway Plan and the Canal Revitalization Program.*

(Pub. L. 106-554, 106th Congress. Title VIII, Sec 809)

iii. Community representation on coordinating entity and grant/loan review boards

In order to ensure the respect, support, and active involvement of local government and individual property owners, these stakeholders should be represented on the coordinating entity and grant/loan review boards. The word “community” provides flexibility in determining the best representatives for local interests.

An example of providing local representations on the coordinating entity is found in the recently designated Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. Of the 27-

member Commission, 19 members must reside within the Corridor, be geographically dispersed throughout the Corridor, and be from local governments and the private sector with knowledge of tourism, economic and community development, regional planning, historic preservation, cultural or natural resource management, conservation, recreation, and education or museum.

(Ibid. – Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, Title VIII, Sec. 804(b)).

(Note that the topic of stakeholder representation will be discussed in greater detail in Section 4.2.5.)

iv. Encourage communities to define their needs and priorities

In light of the large geographic region involved and the diversity of local stakeholders, the program should be flexible and adaptable to respond to local needs and priorities as they change over time rather than having rigid criteria for support and determining specific needs and priorities that will be addressed at the outset. This approach is consistent with a bottom-up style to program development and implementation.

v. Support communities to tell the region's story in their own way

This element is linked to the development of themes and the purpose of a program to enhance interpretation and education. Overall cohesive and unifying themes may be developed, with community input, and several sub-themes may be pursued by communities. Each area has a unique story and heritage that fits in with the regional story.

vi. Adopt flexible match requirements for grants and examine the possibility of low-interest / no-interest loans for certain projects

Many of the heritage area and corridor programs that have been created require a 50% match for federal grants. This match requirement is generally viewed as too high and would leave many worthy projects without support.

Although it was recognized that the financial and technical resources should come from a diversity of sources, many of the participants in the meetings suggested that a flexible grant program be adopted that included much lower match requirements (0% - 20%).

The Essex County (NY) Draft Legislation provided for an 80%-20% match ratio. In addition, no match requirement would be required for “hardship communities,” which would be defined according to criteria established by the management entity.

In addition to a flexible grant program, it was also suggested that the program provide low-interest or no-interest loans for physical heritage infrastructure and capacity projects to enhance tourism services. Such a loan program could extend

the longevity of a heritage funding program by sustaining financial resources over time.

4.2.5 Organization and Coordination

There are several sub-elements under the broad category of organization and coordination that deserve attention in the development of any new heritage framework. These include the following:

- i. Identifying a coordinating entity through which the framework would be implemented.
- ii. Ensuring stakeholder representation in the coordinating entity and any critical subsets or committees of that entity (e.g., grant review committee).
- iii. Developing effective partnerships with existing organizations and initiatives.

Each of these topics is discussed below, with relevant examples from other locations and options for how they might be addressed in the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region.

i. Coordinating Entity

If a new heritage framework ultimately is pursued for the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region, an entity (or entities) will need to be identified to implement the program. (This is true regardless of how the program might be created, whether through federal legislation, state/provincial legislation or administrative action, international agreement, or some other mechanism.³) The identification of a qualified, effective, and broadly acceptable coordinating entity is a critical and complex element of any new heritage framework. Recognizing this, the National Park Service commissioned an analysis and report on possible coordinating entities for each of the management alternatives identified in its 1999 Special Resource Study of the Champlain Valley. In the interest of efficiency and brevity, the discussion that follows below is a summary of the basic options that were presented in that report. However, readers are encouraged to refer to the report itself, which is presented in Appendix E, for a detailed discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of various entities that could be chosen to coordinate the implementation of a new heritage program for this region.

There are two basic types of entities that could play such a role: 1) an existing organization; or 2) a new entity created specifically for this purpose. There are several options in each of these two categories.

³ If federal legislation and funding are pursued in creating a new heritage framework for the U.S. portion of the region, precedents from other areas suggest that the coordinating entity for the program would need to be legally qualified to do the following: 1) receive federal funds; 2) disburse federal funds to other organizations and units of government; 3) account for all federal funds received and disbursed; and 4) enter into agreements with the federal government.

Existing Organizations:

- 1) *State/provincial agency:* In some other places, state agencies have been identified as the management entity for heritage initiatives. The closest example geographically is the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, an agency created by the New York State Legislature that co-manages the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area in New York. In the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region, if New York, Vermont and/or Quebec choose to participate in a new heritage initiative and this option is chosen for the coordinating entity, one (or more) agency from each jurisdiction likely would need to be identified as co-managing entities to ensure balanced representation and participation in corridor implementation. Examples might include the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and the Quebec Ministere des Regions.

- 2) *Nonprofit organization:* Several existing heritage initiatives are managed by nonprofit organizations. Examples include Los Caminos Del Rio, Inc., a bi-national organization that manages a cross-boundary heritage corridor in Texas and Mexico, and the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc., a public benefit corporation that co-manages the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. (See Section V of this report for further discussion of Los Caminos.) The Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region includes a multitude of local, regional, and national nonprofits that are focused on various aspects of heritage resource conservation/preservation/interpretation, tourism promotion, and economic development. However, many of these existing organizations have fairly specific geographic and/or thematic niches, and therefore likely would not be appropriate as a coordinating entity for a broadly inclusive heritage initiative in the region. Examples of organizations that have comparatively broad scopes and have been mentioned for consideration as a possible coordinating entity include the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum and the Adirondack North Country Association.

- 3) *Regional Initiative:* Another possibility is to have an existing regional initiative assume responsibility as the management entity for a new heritage program. For models of successful regional initiatives working on heritage-related activities at varying geographic scales, one needs to look no further than the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region itself. Examples include the “Lakes to Locks Passage” partnership (which is the result of the recent merger of the Lake Champlain Byways and Champlain Canal Byways programs in New York and which includes “Celebration Champlain” among its programming activities), the Champlain Valley Heritage Network (a coalition of local organizations working in a nine-town area in Essex County, New York), and the Lake Champlain Basin Program. As with the other options among existing organizations (i.e., state agencies and nonprofit organizations), one of the considerations with any given existing regional initiative is whether it is

sufficiently broad to cover the full geographic and programmatic scope that may be desired in a new heritage initiative, or has the flexibility to become so.

Possible New Entities

- 1) *New Regional Nonprofit Organization:* In at least two national heritage corridor/area designations, new nonprofit organizations have been created specifically to serve as management entities: (1) the Quinebaug-Shetucket National Heritage Corridor in Connecticut, where the nonprofit Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc. arose from the original grassroots committee that pushed for state and national designation and was subsequently named by the Governor to manage implementation and receive federal funding; and (2) the Essex National Heritage Area in Massachusetts, where the Essex National Heritage Commission, Inc. has recently been established as the managing entity and successor to the original unincorporated organizing force in the region, the Essex Heritage Ad Hoc Commission.

Following on these models, a new nonprofit organization could be created specifically to implement a new heritage framework in this region. Such an organization likely would be most effective if it included a cross-section of relevant interests – including regional experts in heritage resource conservation, interpretation, and promotion, tourism, and economic development from government agencies, other nonprofits, and regional organizations (e.g., chambers of commerce) – directly in its management structure, i.e., as members of its board of directors/advisors. This would help to ensure that the activities of the new organization were well directed to avoid overlap or duplication with the wide range of ongoing initiatives in the region, and reduce the likelihood that it would become a competitor with existing organizations for scarce financial resources. As with Los Caminos Del Rio, Inc., such an organization could be constituted as an international entity in the U.S. and Canada, or it could be limited to one side of the border.

- 2) *New Regional Commission:* Many heritage initiatives are managed by regional commissions established through state, federal, and/or international action. Nearby examples exist in New York of commissions established through state and federal legislation, respectively: the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission; and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, which is responsible for implementing the recent federal designation of the entire New York State Canal System (including the Champlain Canal). At the international level, the St. Croix International Waterway Commission oversees a collaborative effort between the Province of New Brunswick and the State of Maine. (See Section V of this report for further discussion of the St. Croix International Waterway.) The composition of such commissions typically is specified in the legislative or administrative action by which they are created, facilitating the inclusion/representation of important stakeholders from the

region. Also, the legislative or administrative action often specifies the scope and limitations of the commission's authorities, as well as its responsibilities.

It is conceivable that a new commission or commissions could be established for this region at the state, federal, and/or international level. A federal commission would not be an entirely new concept in the region—in addition to the new example of the Erie Canalway Commission, there is a very close analogy in the Lake Champlain Management Conference, which was established by Congress in the 1990 Lake Champlain Special Designation Act to oversee the Basin Program. (The management conference has since evolved into the Basin Program's Steering Committee.)

During the discussions conducted for this project (in both public meetings and individual/small group meetings), there was a strong consensus that the coordinating entity for any new heritage program should be an *existing organization* rather than a new entity created solely for that purpose. Furthermore, the prevailing perspective was that although there may not be a perfect solution, the Lake Champlain Basin Program would be the best choice among existing organizations to play that role, at least on the U.S. side of the border and possibly in Quebec as well. Three main strengths of the Basin Program were identified to support this view:

- (1) it represents an effective, established partnership among New York, Vermont, and Quebec with a 10+ year record of success;
- (2) it has effectively administered grants programs on a broad regional scale;
- (3) it has the necessary legal and administrative capacity to receive funds from, and distribute them to, various levels of government.

Other possible coordinating entities that were endorsed by some meeting participants included the Champlain Valley Heritage Network and the "Lakes to Locks Passage" partnership. Those who advocated for these initiatives consider them to be more "grassroots" or "bottom-up" and have a stronger focus on heritage than the Basin Program.

ii. Stakeholder Representation

Another critical component under the broad heading of organization and coordination is stakeholder representation in the oversight of a new heritage framework. This includes representation both in the managing structure of whatever entity is ultimately chosen to manage the implementation of the new program, and in any critical subsets or committees of that entity such as a grant/loan review committee. In both cases, there is a very delicate balance that must be struck between ensuring sufficient representation of key interests, and maintaining a manageable size and structure so the program does not collapse under its own organizational weight.

One consideration that has important implications for representation and participation is the scope of the program itself, both in terms of geography, purposes and themes. With respect to geography, the larger the region that is potentially eligible to participate in the program, the larger the number of stakeholders who can reasonably claim they deserve a seat at the table or at least a representative who will promote their perspectives and interests. Similarly, a program with a more narrowly defined set of purposes (for instance, limited to economic development) may be successful with a more limited set of interests represented than a program that encompasses a broader vision (such as resource protection, heritage interpretation and education, and economic revitalization). Likewise, a program focused exclusively on one theme (such as military history) would require a narrower range of expertise and organizational representation than one that encompassed a broader range of the region's heritage and stories.

Depending on the purposes, thematic scope, and funding sources that may ultimately be incorporated in a new heritage program in this region, some of the key categories of stakeholders that should be considered for direct participation/representation in the oversight of the program include the following:

- Landowners
- Local elected officials
- Business interests (e.g., individual business owners and/or local/regional chambers of commerce)
- Historic sites and museums
- Regional planning interests
- Leaders of existing regional initiatives related to heritage resources
- Nonprofit organizations (e.g., those involved in interpretation, promotion and/or protection of historic, cultural, recreational and/or natural resources; tourism and marketing; and/or community/economic development)
- Native Americans/First Nations
- State/provincial elected officials
- State/provincial agencies (e.g., those with responsibilities for historic preservation, interpretation, parks and recreation, tourism and marketing, community/economic development, and/or transportation)
- Federal agencies (e.g., those with responsibilities for historic preservation, interpretation, recreation, community/economic development, and/or transportation)

Every existing regional heritage initiative has developed its own approach to ensuring sufficient representation of key stakeholders, based upon the unique circumstances in each case—this is not an issue where “one size fits all.” Nonetheless, it is informative to look at models that have been used elsewhere.

The example of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission was introduced earlier in Section 4.2.4.iii; that body, established in 2000 by federal legislation, includes clear weighting toward corridor residents among its 27

members. The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission in Massachusetts and Rhode Island provides a model of stakeholder representation in a bi-state collaborative effort involving 24 towns. The Blackstone Commission consists of 19 members, 8 of whom are representatives of local government and 6 of whom are specified state agency officials. Another useful example is provided by the draft legislation for a “Champlain Valley Heritage Corridor Economic Revitalization Act”, endorsed by the Essex County (NY) Board of Supervisors in 2000. That proposal called for the creation of a 36-member interim planning and management entity, with 18 members from each of the two states. For New York, 15 of these members would be local representatives from each of the 5 counties included, while the other 3 would be appointed by political leaders of the state. (Vermont representation would be determined by a method appropriate to its own circumstances.) These and other legislative models are presented in Appendix D. In addition, readers should refer to the summaries of several examples of international collaborative heritage programs in Section 5 of this report, which include further discussion of stakeholder involvement.

iii. Partnerships and Coordination with Existing Organizations and Initiatives

A frequent and clear message identified by meeting participants is the need for any new heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region to develop constructive partnerships and coordinate effectively with existing organizations and initiatives at all levels. This is necessary to ensure that a new program “adds value” and complements all the good work that is already going on in the region, and does not (1) duplicate existing activities, (2) take funding or other support away from existing programs, or (3) unproductively clutter an already crowded playing field among those working on heritage-related activities.

Given the likely scope of a new heritage program, the concept of partnerships is particularly important with respect to *other broad regional initiatives* that are focused on the area’s heritage and/or related opportunities for economic development through enhanced tourism. A number of such initiatives with varying geographic, thematic and programmatic breadth are currently underway in the region, including the “Lakes to Locks Passage” partnership in New York, the Underwater Preserve System in New York and Vermont, the New York Heritage Trails Program, the Quebec-New York Trade Corridor, the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, the Champlain Valley Heritage Network, and the cultural and recreational programs of the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

Given the unique nature of each of these initiatives and the unknown of what organization might ultimately be chosen as the management entity for a new heritage program, it is difficult to identify specific options for how partnerships between the management entity and some or all of these initiatives might be developed. Clearly, though, building effective partnerships with ongoing initiatives both in the short-term and the long-term will be critical to the success of a new heritage program. One important mechanism for doing so is establishing and

maintaining close communication with the leaders of other initiatives from the outset. In addition, inviting those leaders to participate in the oversight of key elements of a new program (e.g., grant and loan review) could build trust, open lines of communication, and increase the likelihood of complementarities rather than duplication or competition.

4.2.6 *Naming the Initiative*

Throughout the discussions for this project, issues were raised regarding the name of a new heritage program. Naming the initiative is certainly related to the definition of the region, but we felt that it merited a separate section because it is a sensitive subject and, potentially, can help to influence the successful acceptance of a program.

In this report we have referred to the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region. It has also been referred to as the Champlain-Richelieu Valley.

Many stakeholders felt that the title “national heritage corridor” had too much “baggage” associated with it or was “loaded” with negative connotations. On the other hand, in Quebec the term “corridor” is well received, indeed, it has the benefit of being a word that is used both in English and French.

With these considerations in mind, suggested alternative names for a new heritage initiative include:

- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Waterway,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Partnership,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Network,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Corridor.

Each alternative could incorporate the word “international” into its title, e.g., Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson International Heritage Waterway.

5.0 CONTINUED INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

5.1 Models of International Heritage Programs

To date, few international heritage initiatives exist in North America and there is no set formula for the establishment of such a program. Four alternative approaches are considered in this part of the report, including a discussion on their respective strengths and weakness.

The four examples of international initiatives that are presented below include: (1) the St. Croix International Waterway and Historic Site; (2) Los Caminos del Rio; (3) the Kennebec - Chaudière International Corridor and (4) the Detroit River. Analysis of each of these models includes brief descriptions of the geography and history of the region in question, the process followed for achieving international recognition and establishment of the initiative, the management structure, its powers, and funding sources.

5.1.1 *St. Croix International Waterway and Historic Site*

"By working together, Maine and New Brunswick neighbors can continue to enjoy the rich benefits of an internationally significant waterway and maintain a heritage that is a vital part of their future."

(St. Croix International Waterway Commission, Province of New Brunswick and State of Maine, "St. Croix International Waterway: A Heritage - A Future" Plan for Long-term Cooperative Management of the St. Croix International Waterway, October 1993, p.5.)

The St. Croix River forms 110 miles (180 km) of the Canadian-U.S. border between southwestern New Brunswick and northeastern Maine. Formal action to protect and recognize the historical significance of the St. Croix began in 1982. In that year, the river received special recognition and protection pursuant to an Order-in-Council of the New Brunswick government declaring the New Brunswick side of the river the "St. Croix Waterway Recreation Area". In the same year, the Department of Conservation in Maine and the U.S. National Park Service completed the Maine River Study, through which the St. Croix River was accorded special consideration.

In 1986, the Premier of New Brunswick and the Governor of Maine signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that recognized the St. Croix River as an International Waterway and provided for the establishment of a joint commission to oversee its management and protection. Legislation enacted in 1987 on both sides of the border translated the MOU into law. A copy of the MOU and the enabling legislation is provided in Appendix F.

The management entity for St. Croix River, the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, is composed of eight members. The Premier of New Brunswick and the Governor of Maine each appoint four members. In addition, the Commission has two liaison officers representing the provincial and state governments and two observers representing each of the federal governments.

Early on in the creation of the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, it was decided that only one entity would be created to represent the shared interests of New Brunswick

and Maine. There is one full-time employee with staff support running the day-to-day operations of the Commission. The office is located in New Brunswick and there is a postal box in Maine.

The Commission has no direct jurisdictional authority but works in an advisory capacity and as a partner with agencies and local interests to implement the St. Croix Management Plan. New Brunswick and Maine officially adopted the Management Plan for the St. Croix International Waterway in 1993.

In 1991, the New Brunswick side of the river was designated as a Canadian Heritage River. The Maine side of the river constitutes one of the State's twenty "Outstanding Rivers". In 1996, St. Croix Island became the first International Historic Site shared by the U.S. and Canada. The island is owned by the U.S. as part of the National Park System. Parks Canada assists in the management and interpretation of the park.

The legislation creating the Commission provides that funding may be obtained from the Province of New Brunswick, the State of Maine, and from other public and private sources in order to realize the objectives of the Commission. The Commission is a charitable non-profit organization registered in both countries. In general, the sources of the funding come from grants and contracts (60%); from New Brunswick and Maine appropriations (21% and 14%, respectively); and donations and other revenues (5%).

5.1.2 *Los Caminos del Rio*

"The project takes its cue from the historical and environmental context of the Lower Rio Grande; it approaches the region as a heritage corridor that transcends political boundaries and geographical divisions; it does not focus on the limitations set by county lines or international borders, but rather on the historic linkages of these communities. These ancestral linkages can be used in a contemporary regional approach to foster historic preservation, sustainable economic development, environmental restoration, bi-national cooperation, and community pride."

(Heritage Area Study Report for Los Caminos del Rio, Executive Summary, April 1994, p.5.)

A bi-national heritage corridor named *Los Caminos del Rio* (meaning the road along the rivers) was established in 1992 and extends 200 miles along the Lower Rio Grande River from Laredo to Brownsville, Texas and from Columbia to Matadors, Mexico. In Mexico the river is called the Rio Bravo.

This international heritage corridor was created to enhance the shared historical and natural heritage that exists between the U.S. and Mexico and help promote and develop local communities through heritage tourism.

In 1990, the Los Caminos del Rio Heritage Project (CRHP) was created to promote the development of this international corridor. CRHP is part of the Texas Historical Commission, the state agency for historic preservation, and works closely with the Secretaría de Turismo (SECTUR) and the Instituto Nacional de Antropología (INAH) in Mexico. Twin regional non-profit organizations with local inhabitants sitting on their

boards oversee the project under a management plan entitled “A Shared Experience”. In 1991, the Republic of Mexico endorsed the Los Caminos del Rio International Heritage Corridor project and assigned coordinators to tie the two sides together. In 1992, the corridor project was formalized under a bi-national Agreement to Collaborate signed by U.S. and State agencies, a private foundation and official representatives of Mexico. Copies of a 1991 Executive Order by the Governor of the State of Texas and the 1992 Bi-National Agreement between the Mexican Secretariat of Tourism and the Texas Historical Commission are provided in Appendix F.

Although Senator Hutchison of Texas introduced a National Heritage Area Bill for Los Caminos del Rio in 1996, the bill never passed and the region has not received national designation in the U.S. Therefore, the Los Caminos del Rio International Corridor is regionally designated and may be considered as a “grass-roots” heritage corridor.

The project receives funding from the State of Texas, Parks and Wildlife Department, and from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service. Private funding is also obtained. In Mexico, a majority of the funding is granted by SECTUR.

The successes and impacts of this initiative include improvements totaling more than \$11 million. In addition, restoration efforts are attracting visitors to once abandoned buildings, heritage education about the region has been provided to both residents and visitors, local residents continue to partake in local efforts to strengthen cultural identity, and several publications detailing the corridor have been made.

5.1.3 Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor

“The Chaudière-Kennebec Corridor development project, initiated in 1997, seeks to strengthen Maine/Quebec bilateral relations. Specifically, it is aimed at stimulating tourism activity on both sides of the international border through a focus in shared history and culture.”

(Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor promotional pamphlet, 1998)

This international corridor extends from Quebec City to Bath along Route 173 in Quebec and Route 201 in Maine, which run parallel, respectively, to the Chaudière and Kennebec Rivers.

On May 1, 1998, Premier Bouchard of Quebec and Maine’s Governor King announced the creation of the Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor. The primary purpose of the corridor is to strengthen Quebec-Maine relations and stimulate local economies through tourism development.

An interim committee was formed with public and private representatives from Quebec and Maine. This interim committee is composed, on the Quebec side, of provincial government officials in the Ministry of Culture and Communications, International Affairs and the Regional Tourism Association, and local representatives. Representatives from Maine

include State officials, representatives from educational and cultural institutions, heritage professionals and citizen volunteers.

Recognizing that the corridor initiative is a long-term project, both governments agreed to work together to support the international corridor by implementing the following goals:

- to collaborate in the promotion of tourism in the region and formally agree to use reciprocity as the governing principle;
- to define the geographic area in relation to the two major rivers and develop tourism themes that focus on shared history and culture within that region; and
- to create a bi-lateral committee composed of representatives from government, business, academic institutions and local communities that will obtain and manage the funds necessary to achieve the objectives of the international corridor and implement joint activities.

The Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor is still in its formative stages. An interim committee has been established and funding sources have yet to be guaranteed.

5.1.4 Detroit River

“We are filled with pride for our magnificent river and have a shared vision for its regeneration. Our vibrant international waterway inspires a community brimming with fun and excitement, rest and relaxation. A broad diversity of jobs, housing, historic interpretation, recreation and culture breathe life into a 24 hour a day waterfront. Industry, commerce, and tourism growing in harmony with the environment sustain fish, birds, animal, and plant habitats. The River has become the region's front door with access to all inland communities. Its beauty and integrity have been restored, and we thrive within its ecosystem.”

(Detroit American Heritage River Initiative Vision Statement.)

The Detroit River is the first river on the continent to receive both Canadian and American heritage river status, providing a unique opportunity to showcase international cooperation in managing, protecting and marketing the river's heritage values.

Situated in the heart of the Great Lakes Basin, the Detroit River connects Lake St. Clair and the City of Windsor with Lake Erie and the Town of Amherstburg. The 51-kilometre long river, with its waters in both Canada (Ontario) and the United States (Michigan), anchors a metropolitan region of over 5 million people. Being one of the world's busiest inland transportation routes, the river is truly a shared resource, bringing the people of two nations together.

The Detroit River was named an American Heritage River in 1998 by Presidential Proclamation. President Clinton created the American Heritage River Initiative in his State of the Union Address in 1997. Under the terms of this initiative 14 rivers throughout the U.S. were designated. A river navigator is named to each river to oversee

project management, fundraising and implementation. Funding for this staff person comes from the Department of Transportation.

The Greater Detroit American Heritage River Partnership is a multi-stakeholder process designed to achieve, sustain, and celebrate the communities, economies, histories, cultures and environments of the Detroit River watershed. Oversight of the Initiative on the U.S. side is provided by a four-person Executive Committee that includes Peter Stroh, a prominent businessman, Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, Wayne County Executive Edward McNamara and W. Curt Boller, Supervisor of Brownstown Township and member of the Downriver Community Conference. A multi-stakeholder Steering Committee is also in place to provide advice to the Executive Committee. Project management and administrative support is provided by a public-private partnership of business, labor, and governmental leaders called the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition.

In the first year of its creation, the Detroit American Heritage River Partnership leveraged over \$3 million for project implementation.

On the Canadian side of the border, the process of seeking Canadian Heritage River status for the Detroit River began in the Spring of 1997. A community based application team was formed by the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) and comprised of individuals representing the general public, local municipalities, agencies and organizations on both the Canadian and American sides of the river.

The Government of Ontario filed a submission with the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board in 1999 requesting that the Detroit River, and its watershed on the Canadian side, be nominated to Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS). In 2001, the River was designated as a Canadian Heritage River. ERCA acts as the managing entity and collaborates with a broad cross-section of stakeholder groups.

Funding on the Canadian side has come through the federal government's Canadian Heritage River Program for the production of documents. The staff of ERCA dedicated to this program are paid through ERCA. Each project requires fundraising by ERCA targeting local, provincial and federal government resources as well as the private sector.

5.2 Evaluation of Alternatives

In considering what may be an appropriate process and management structure for a possible new international heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson region, a great deal can be learned from other models. This part of the report provides a preliminary evaluation of the international heritage models presented in the previous sub-section and a consideration of their strengths and weaknesses.

The examples of international corridors described above illustrate that there exist several approaches to establishing such cooperative frameworks. International heritage initiatives range from the relatively formalistic, legislative model of the St. Croix International Waterway Commission to the loose partnership formed over the Chaudière-Kennebec,

which, in effect, was made official by a handshake between Premier Bouchard of Quebec and Governor King of Maine. Los Caminos may be characterized as a hybrid model with strong National involvement on the Mexican side of the border and a State supported “grass-roots” organization in Texas.

There are several advantages in having the relatively formalistic structure that characterizes the St. Croix International Waterway and Commission. First, this international corridor is supported by firm commitments on the part of both the governments of Maine and New Brunswick through the adoption of parallel legislation recognizing the importance of the International Waterway, creating the Commission and defining its mandate. It may be difficult for either government to back down on its commitments, as this may require legislative amendments.

Second, the formal nature of the St. Croix International Waterway Commission contributes to its forward-looking approach to resolving cross-boundary environmental and cultural issues. It is a formal structure that exudes confidence of longevity. This is important given that the main goals to be achieved through cross-boundary collaboration, such as the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural heritage, are not readily achievable in the short term. Thoughtful planning and the incremental implementation of goals through concrete actions that build upon past achievements are required. This is the approach taken by the St. Croix Commission through the adoption of its “Plan for Long-Term Cooperative Management.”

A further advantage to the St. Croix model is that management functions are centralized in one agency, the Commission. Not only does this avoid the replication of services and the need for ongoing and effective communication to reduce misunderstandings it also cuts down in costs. There is only one office, located in New Brunswick, one postal box in Maine and one operating budget. It was thought that the Commission would move its office across the border every other year, which may be a good solution to maintain a strong presence throughout a region. However, the Commission has settled in New Brunswick where it benefits from rent-free premises.

The main disadvantage to the St. Croix model is that it took a relatively long time to set up. Preliminary discussions between the governments of Maine and New Brunswick regarding recognition and collaboration over the St. Croix River began in the early 1980s. The joint Management Plan was adopted in 1993.

A consideration in setting up a Commission and defining its mandate under legislation is to ensure that the language used is broad enough to allow for flexibility and change over time. Great care must also be taken to ensure that parallel legislation on each side of the border creating the corridor and the management entity is essentially the same, otherwise conflicts may arise.

The success of the bi-national corridor of Los Caminos del Rio appears to be due to the persistent efforts of a few individuals, who managed to overcome certain logistic and political difficulties by contributing a great deal of their time and energy to the process. A

number of innovative and effective programs have been developed for Los Caminos del Rio that aim at bringing diverse communities together and build towards their futures. A few of the strategies discussed below are inspired, in large part, from this model.

Unlike the St. Croix River Waterway example where two similar government entities (one provincial and one state) led the process and agreed to mirror their activities, the Los Caminos del Rio Corridor raised certain issues of administrative fit, or misfit, as the case may be. On the U.S. side of the border, local community and State officials took the leadership roles, whereas authorized representatives of the national government acted as leaders on the Mexican side of the border.

The Los Caminos del Rio Corridor involves a partnership among an organization set up under the auspices of the Texas Historical Commission, SECTUR (the tourism authority for Mexico) and INAH (Mexico's National Anthropology Institute). Two twin corporations were created, one on either side of the border, to manage the corridor. It may neither have been desired nor politically feasible to create one international organization to manage the international corridor.

The Los Caminos del Rio Corridor did not receive the status of U.S. national designation, which has made funding and technical support difficult. Even though financial assistance from the U.S. government typically terminates after a period of time, it is useful in getting a new heritage program "off the ground" and on its way to financial independence in the initial years of its existence.

The third corridor model examined above, the Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor, has only recently been announced and, therefore, it is too early to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses definitively. However, a few comments may be made respecting the process to date and the goals of this corridor.

One advantage in proceeding in the relatively informal manner used in setting up the Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor is that it is a rapid and far less cumbersome process and avoids having to draft and adopt legislation. A drawback may be that support for the corridor will be more difficult to secure.

The focus of the Chaudière-Kennebec International Corridor appears to be more on tourism development through packaging than on cross-boundary cultural and natural resource management. Clearly, economic development through tourism is an important objective for recognizing heritage corridors and it is a goal that is largely supported by local communities. However, if such tourism development is not carefully planned and managed, it may be short-lived, as it may lead to damaging and destroying natural and cultural sites through increased traffic and/or incompatible development.

The international collaboration between the Detroit American Heritage River and Canadian Heritage River initiatives remains informal at this stage. No international committee has been created, but good relationships exist and are being further developed

while consideration is being given as to the best mechanisms for international collaboration.

6.0 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS

This chapter summarizes the options presented in Chapters 3 and 4 of this report. As options, they deserve and require further consideration by LCBP staff and committee members.

6.1 Guiding Principles

QLF developed a set of guiding principles to provide a framework for formulating an overall heritage strategy. The guiding principles are :

- Address needs and priorities identified by communities,
- Build upon strengths of existing regional and local initiatives,
- Support and enhance stewardship of heritage resources,
- Bring new money and resources to support local and regional heritage projects,
- Respect local decision-making,
- Provide enhanced coordination without adding another layer of governance and regulation,
- Develop cohesive themes that unify the region,
- Foster collaboration across borders and with Native Americans/First Nations.

6.2 Key Elements

Key elements of a heritage strategy represent implementation mechanisms that taken together in some combination offer a framework for a heritage program. Options related to each key element may be accepted as is, accepted with modifications, or rejected. Indeed, new elements may be devised as a result of the discussion of these options.

6.2.1 *Purposes/Vision*

A heritage strategy can encompass a variety of aims. The following general statements of purpose were broadly supported for a heritage strategy in this region.

- Revitalize local economies,
- Help communities protect their heritage resources,
- Enhance public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the region's heritage,
- Provide funding and technical support,
- Foster partnerships.

6.2.2 *Defining the Region*

There was general consensus that the linked waterways of Lake Champlain, Lake George, the Richelieu River, the Champlain Canal, and the Upper Hudson River should be the focal point of any new heritage strategy that may be proposed. From that starting point, two predominant approaches for defining the heritage region emerged from this process.

- *Boundary Approach:* Define a heritage corridor or strategy by a geographic boundary connected to the waterway. Options for this approach include :

- the watersheds of Lake Champlain, Upper Hudson (as defined in for this report), and Richelieu River
 - one town width from the waterways, or
 - one county width (Municipal Region County in Quebec) from the waterways.
- *Thematic Approach:* Define a heritage corridor or strategy by themes connected to the waterway (some themes may overlap). Adopting a thematic approach may require the identification of a geographic northern and southern terminus (e.g. the confluence of the Richelieu and St. Lawrence Rivers to the north and the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers to the south). Possible themes include but are not limited to :
 - Native American/First Nations history,
 - history of European exploration,
 - military history,
 - making of nations,
 - corridor of commerce,
 - cultural and natural landscapes,
 - magnet for tourism.

6.2.3 Funding and Other Support

Securing financial and technical resources as a primary aim for developing a heritage strategy was broadly supported throughout the region. Other support opportunities identified include in-kind contributions, volunteerism, and partnerships. Sources for such resources could include :

- Federal government,
- State/provincial government,
- Local government,
- Philanthropic,
- Corporate and business,
- Citizen and non-profit.

There was strong agreement that most of the funding provided for a new heritage strategy should be distributed through grants and low-interest/no-interest loan programs.

6.2.4 Local Decision-Making and Empowering Communities

Six mechanisms were identified to address concerns raised about top-down decision making, to mobilize public support for the program, and to develop a successful program that is “owned” and implemented by the community. The mechanisms suggested are:

- i. Invite communities to opt-in and opt-out,
- ii. Confirm that no powers of land use regulation or property acquisition will be accorded to a coordinating entity in relation to this initiative,
- iii. Ensure community representation on the coordinating entity and grant/loan review boards,
- iv. Encourage communities to define their needs and priorities,

- v. Support communities to tell the region's story in their own way,
- vi. Adopt flexible match requirements for grants and low-interest or no-interest loans.

6.2.5 Organization and Coordination

i. Coordinating Entity

There are two basic types of entities that could be given responsibility for implementing a new heritage framework for the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region: 1) an existing organization; or 2) a new entity created specifically for this purpose. There are several options in each of these two categories.

Existing Organizations:

- 1) State/Provincial Agency
- 2) Nonprofit Organization
- 3) Regional Initiative

Possible New Entities:

- 1) New Regional Nonprofit Organization
- 2) New Regional Commission

ii. Stakeholder Representation

Stakeholder representation in the oversight of a new heritage framework is another critical component under the broad heading of organization and coordination. A careful balance must be struck between ensuring sufficient representation of key interests, and maintaining a manageable size and structure. Among the many key categories of stakeholders that should be considered for direct participation/representation in the oversight of the program include landowners, local elected officials, First Nations/Native Americans, and representatives from organizations or agencies managing significant historic sites, tourism promotion, and other heritage-related activities within the region.

iii. Partnership and Coordination with Existing Organizations and Initiatives

A clear need for any new heritage program in the Champlain-Richelieu-upper Hudson region is to develop constructive partnerships and coordinate effectively with existing organizations and initiatives at all levels. Given the likely nature of any new heritage program, the concept of partnerships is particularly important with respect to other broad regional initiatives that are already working on heritage activities. Yet, given the unique nature of each of these initiatives, it is difficult to identify specific options for how partnerships might be developed. Clearly, though, inviting those leaders to participate in the oversight of key elements of a new program (e.g., grant and loan review) could build trust, open lines of communication, and increase the likelihood of complementary efforts rather than duplication or competition.

6.2.6 Naming the Initiative

Identifying a name for a heritage strategy initiative in this region was not a specific topic of the meetings; however, the subject did arise in numerous occasions in relation to discussions regarding definition of the region. In part, selection of a name will depend on whether the proposed heritage strategy adopts a geographic or thematic approach. In all cases below, the word 'International' could be added. In addition, the specific reference to the Upper Hudson could be modified or dropped should it prove misleading (name only, not from inclusion in the overall strategy). The suggestions include :

- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Waterway,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Partnership,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Network,
- Champlain-Richelieu-Upper Hudson Heritage Corridor.

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