

# **I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor Management Plan Foundation Documents**

## **Vision Statement (draft, as of 2/2010)**

The Illinois & Michigan Canal connected the Mississippi waterway to the Great Lakes thereby opening the heartland of America and bringing people and commerce to Northeastern Illinois. The canal and the towns that grew up along it are culturally diverse yet share its history. Respecting, retelling and preserving that legacy for current and future generations offers visitors and residents an understanding of the canal's importance and enjoyment of its benefits. Through interpretation, preservation and providing educational and recreational experiences, the Heritage Corridor builds linkages and economic opportunities for its communities and people.

## **Mission Statement (draft, as of 2/2010)**

The mission of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor is to protect, preserve, interpret, and develop the natural, historical and cultural resources of the Corridor, tell the story of the canal and how it changed the area, and stimulate increased economic opportunity in the Corridor for the benefit of present and future generations.

## **Guiding Principles (draft, as of 2/2010)**

- We will respect history and culture through honest and authentic portrayals of places, people and events.
- We will respect the environment and will show appreciation for the area's history both prior to and after the coming of the canal.
- We will educate residents and visitors about the story of the canal and the history of the Corridor.
- We will respect individual community needs and goals in a way that is consistent with our goal to create and maintain a regional Corridor brand recognition.
- We will strive to provide communications to our partners and the public in multiple ways to reach as many as possible.
- We will encourage and foster economic development opportunities in cooperation with Corridor assets.
- We will strive for cooperation among all our partners in achieving our goals.
- We will give weight to sustainability as a criterion in making plans, selecting projects and allocating resources.
- We will respect property, public and private.
- We will remember all groups, including future generations, in our plans, goals and actions.