

**PLANNING HERITAGE TOURISM HARBORSIDES:
HIGHLIGHTING BAHIA USHUAIA,
TIERRA DEL FUEGO**

Roy B. Mann, ASLA
Principal, The Rivers Studio, LLC
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.
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Roy Mann, winner of the American Society of Landscape Architects President's Award of Excellence, has consulted on coastal harbors and tourism in the U.S., Argentina, Canada, and Jordan. He is the author of Rivers in the City and, among other writings on related subjects, Shoreline Appearance and Design (U.S. National Park Service, 1975).

PowerPoint Presentation


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We are gathered at this excellent conference to exchange insights into the make-up and challenges of coastal tourism today. Foremost, in my view, is to explore ways in which any destination might encompass all the resources of its community or region, to open as large an umbrella as possible. This will do several things: One, spread visitor numbers over a

greater geographical area and thus potentially, though not assuredly, thin out over both space and time adverse environmental and social impacts; Two, extend per person per day expenditures as visitors come to understand that a four-day stay might be far better than a three-day visit; Three: convince cruise lines to dock overnight rather than land-and-leave, or dock for two nights rather than one; and Four: further build civic pride, attraction to the young to stay and serve, and the conservation and protection of all the resource values on which the golden goose of tourism attractions are based: natural and scenic environment on the one hand and culture and history on the other.



Ecotourism =
visitation into the uncommon natural environment, often guided, and more specifically the exploration of ecological expression and dramatic wildlife, vegetation, and land, sea and ice forms.

Heritage Tourism =
visitation into the holistic realm of ecotourism, cultural & historic tourism, and all else that serves as the iconic nature of place.

We call this umbrella “Heritage Tourism”, the all-encompassing arena that can and must recognize and develop even the least appreciated fishing village, or underdeveloped birding or wildlife observation station, or an abandoned factory that once made tools for a world-famous gold mine

now closed down. It isn’t enough to rely on one or even two successful destination magnets. More, not less, is better.

Nature Tourism in the U.S.

- Contributes \$730 billion annually to economy
- Supports nearly 6.5 million jobs nationally
- Generates \$88 billion in annual state and federal tax revenue
- Provides sustainable growth in rural communities
- Generates \$289 billion annually in retail sales and services across the U.S.

As you can see from this slide – and you may already be familiar with these figures, nature tourism brings in quite a bit in the U.S. But cultural and historic tourism and sightseeing bring in comparable figures as well

and the right way to think and plan is to weave together all destination resources, as I have said, under one umbrella – that of Heritage Tourism.

Heritage Tourism and Selected Coastal/Waterfront Projects

I'd now like to show you, before moving on to Ushuaia, a few projects my firm and I have undertaken over the past some years that have brought considerable benefit to the communities we've served.



The first of these is Buffalo, New York, where we were invited to consult in 2000 on how to convince the state's governor, George Pataki, not to build a marina on the downtown riverfront but to preserve and restore the terminus of the historic Erie Canal and the Canal District.

This was no ordinary canal or district for they served to carry the great majority of men, women, and children who became pioneers in the American Midwest and Far West. And the same canal barges and Great Lakes vessels that carried these people to the territories, brought ores, wheat, buffalo hides, and other commodities eastward in turn. Our plan

convinced the governor, in good measure because it wasn't a single-objective plan, not to undertake that marina, but a very large umbrella that would take advantage of every heritage resource and turn economically disadvantaged Buffalo into a genuine tourism magnet destination. Last year, our Buffalo waterfront plan was still only 25 percent realized but it still attracted nearly a quarter of a million visitors and brought in almost \$250 million.



Just briefly, our environmental tourism Program for a Georgia coastal county devised a heritage trails network to take cars, buses, tour-boats and light planes to the widest array of the area's resources: the famed Sea Islands, historic forts, fishing expeditions, the region's significant wetlands, and much else.



Probably the most financially successful tourism plan we've created is our vision plan for a canal for Oklahoma City, a community that never had one but for which we saw a canal as compensation for the relocation of the North Canadian River away from the downtown in the 1950s in the interest of flood-

protection. This new canal could hardly be a heritage feature, one can say, but the barge passengers and all other visitors are introduced to

hundreds of old buildings, railroad relics, and much else. The Bricktown Canal has become the prime factor in introducing visitors to OKC's heritage. The total economic benefit since 1997: in excess of \$3-4 billion.



A major ingredient for a successful heritage tourism destination is the emphasis that can be placed on indigenous or local ethnic customs, art, commerce, and dining. McAllen, Texas has a strong Hispanic community, and in our tourism strategy plan for that border city in 1994, we recommended a number

of destination improvements. Among these were the development of a full-block market complex – a 'nuevo-viejo mercado' and the simulation, on a nearby irrigation main canal, of a 19th-century Rio Grande mercantile wharf, with a replica Rio Grande steamer. The building in the background is a retired irrigation pumphouse, which we saw as a museum of Rio Grande mercantile shipping and which has since become The Pumphouse Museum and a regional node of the World Birding Center and its trail system.

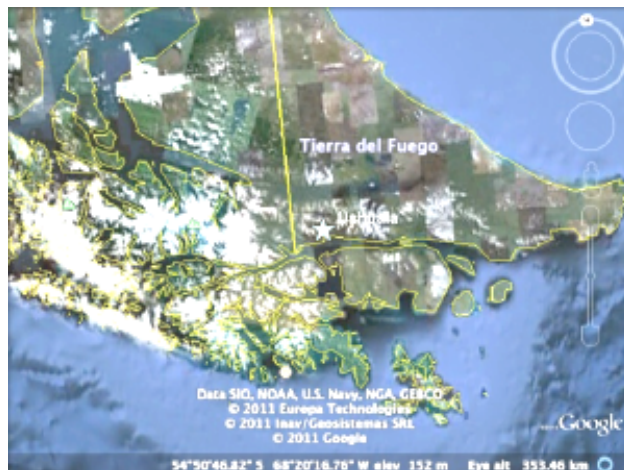
The objective here, of course, was how to transform ordinary resources, pumphouse and canal, into a richly furnished theme center.

That objective also pertains to Tierra del Fuego's Ushuaia Harbor, where I consulted three decades ago to Jens Sorensen Associates, coastal management experts serving Argentina's government under an Agency for International Development grant. Sorensen's mandate was to advise

on integrated coastal zone management for Argentina's south. I was brought on board to conceive a physical plan for Ushuaia Harbor, an important component of the country's austral region.

**A Case Study:
The Ushuaia Heritage
Harbor Plan ~
Enriching the Gateway to a
Broad Region of Natural
and Cultural/Historic
Treasures**

One important national as well as provincial consideration was the significant role Ushuaia served, then as now, as a primary port of call for cruise ships and other vessels carrying ecotourists, photographers, explorers, and other visitors from South America to Antarctica and back. The frozen continent lies 700 miles from Ushuaia but, famously, there's a wealth of wildlife, including sea lions, orcas, and penguins and so very much more on the open seas and on the Tierra del Fuego land mass.



On Tierra del Fuego, visitors can find glaciers, peaks of the Andes, and avian and terrestrial wildlife, as well as dolphins and whales in the Beagle

Channel and other coastal waters, while in Ushuaia itself one finds a town with rich urban texture, a scenic harborscape and mountain views, monuments to the area's Native American and Spanish and Argentine past, and art, music, Fuegian foods, and much more.



Cruise ships account for much of Ushuaia tourism and they the number of their landings, including multiple trips each year, between this harbor and Antarctica, have grown dramatically over time.



Increases in Tourism / Ship Landings Ushuaia ~ 1978-2010			
	1978	1978	2009
Ship landings:	18	175	225
Tourists by sea:	n.a.	n.a.	70,000
Total tourists:	n.a.	65,000	225,000
Population Growth			
	1978	2010	
Ushuaia	5,300	55,000	

As we can see in the above table, ship landings have increased from 18 in 1978 to 225 in 2009. The number of tourists, arriving by land, sea, and air, have grown from small numbers in 1978 to 225,000 in 2009, a third of which arrived on cruise ships.



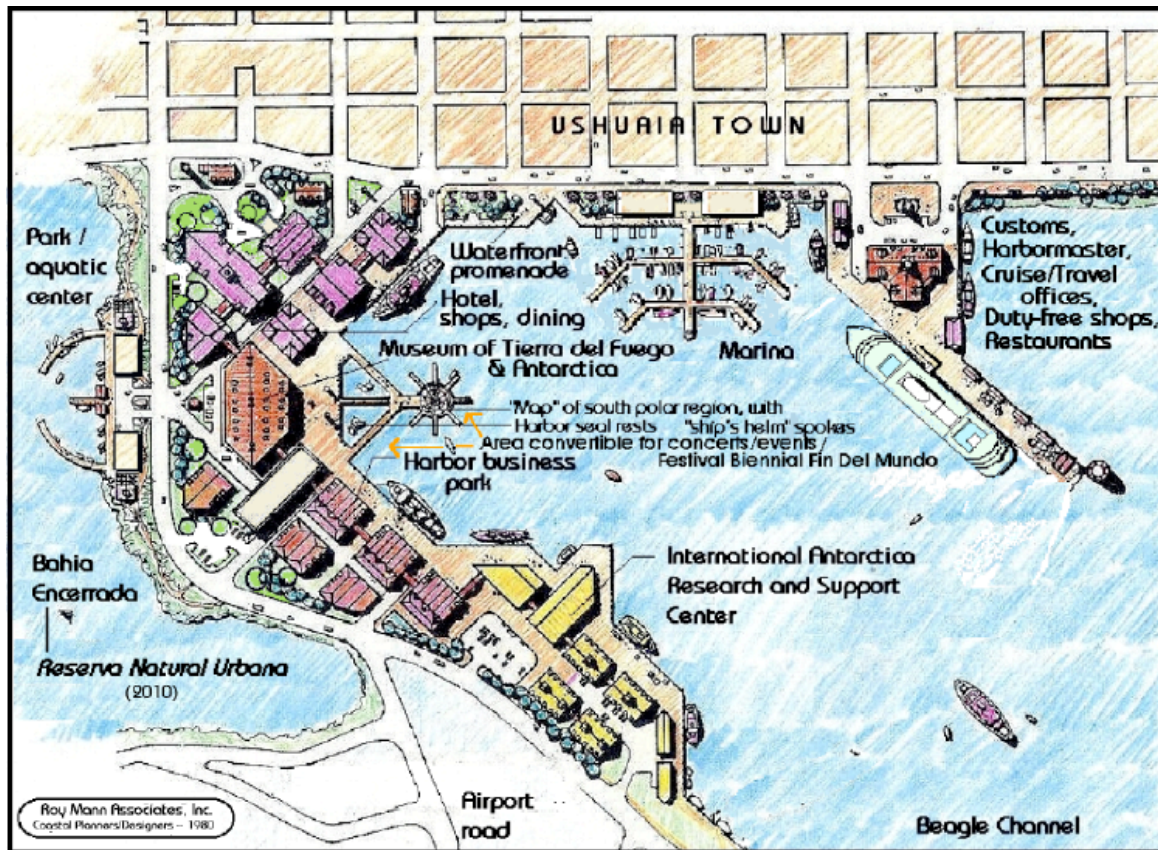
Taking a look now at the resource, rather than visitors to the resource, we can well understand one of the chief reasons people come. The landmass is dramatically beautiful and the city, with its interesting small-scale buildings and visitor-friendly offerings, has an attraction all its own... as we can see in this view of one of Ushuaia's busy streets.



We can understand why the instructions we were given in 1980 included the request to find a way to develop new harbor-oriented tourism infrastructure that would not encroach on the existing townscape and, further, would be compatible with Ushuaia's center. This Google-Earth image of the harbor in 2011 is

remarkably the same as it was thirty years ago. Our plan for improvements was not acted on at the time since the Argentine

government had higher priorities for provincial highways and infrastructure for Fuegan cities, including Ushuaia.



But in 2003 the city's Urban Development Plan defined new objectives for the waterfront. More recently, Ushuaia took serious steps in both environmental remediation and examination of design possibilities for harborside improvement. Its mayor, Federico Sciurano, negotiated for the city membership in the European Union's Covenant of Mayors, a privilege previously granted only to one other non-European city. He also convinced the European Union Parliament this past November to grant 20 million Euros to Ushuaia to help fund four development programs, one of which will enable a start to development of the harbor's waterfront and implementation of the nature preserve declared in the adjacent Bahia Encerrada. Although I cannot predict how this 1980 Plan will be

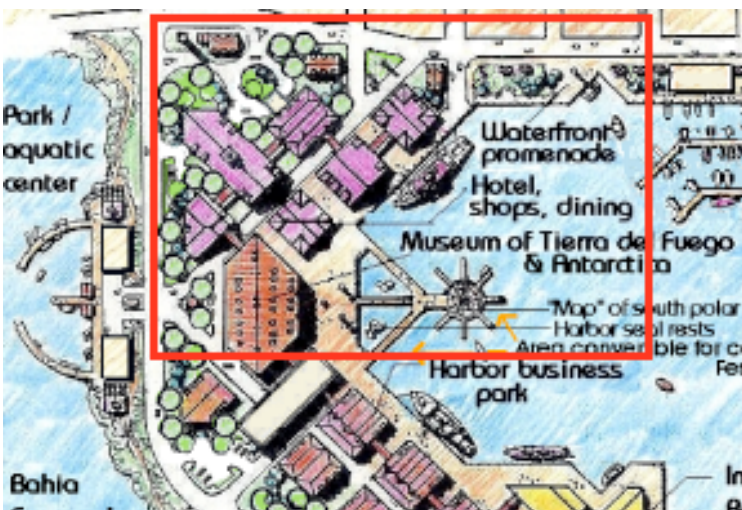
considered, I believe that Ushuaia and the province have taken a fresh look at it.

Let's see what that 1980 Plan recommended. First of all, about 90 percent of the new developments would be built on fill or on dock structures expanding slightly into the harbor from the causeway running southwards from the city to the airport, leaving the city center free of disruption.



Secondly, the theme would not be simply "any tourism attraction" but "how Ushuaia and Tierra del Fuego's heritage – natural, cultural, and historic – could play prominent roles in destination landmarking". In this slide we see a new

Museum of Tierra del Fuego, as a world-class exhibition venue with convincing audio-visual and sound-and-light presentations of the city's and region's multi-faceted heritage. An 8-spoked dock would present informative messages on the cities and significant natural resources that

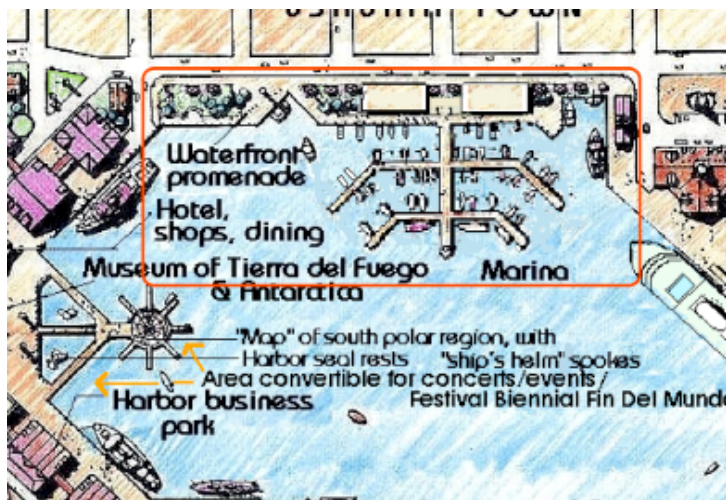


lie in each compass direction, whether 10 or 1,000 or 10,000 kilometers away. The area between the museum and the dock would serve, with weather protection, as a prime venue for concerts and art, including possibly future biennial festivals of The End of the Earth.

Here we have a hotel district, with dining places, entertainment venues, and retail shops.

South of the Museum we have a Harbor business-park that could accommodate shipping services, telecommunications, and other firms that would fit well here.

Right along the main existing waterfront near Avenida Maipu, Ushuaia would have a relocated and enlarged marina as well as a public promenade with kiosks and other small facilities suitably constructed and run by Ushuaians.

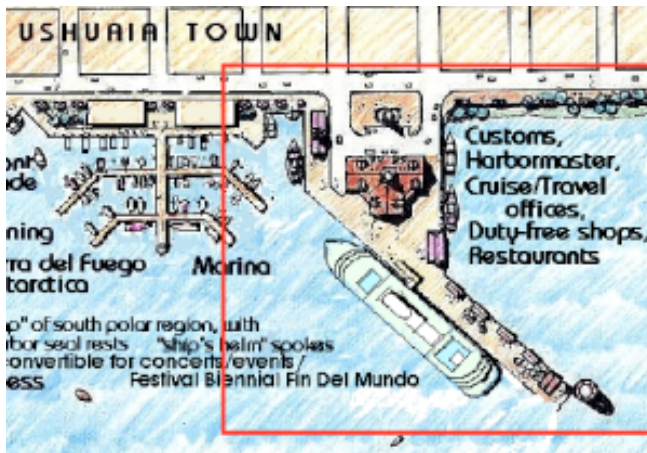


Concept for a Waterfront Promenade



between Avenida Maipu and Bahia Ushuaia

On the existing central pier we proposed a new building that would consolidate harbormaster, customs, other existing uses, an upper-story restaurant commanding harbor views, and some good number of duty-free shops below.



Finally, the sixth major improvement would be the International Antarctica/Region Research and Support Center. This concept was devised without interviewing research institutions in the U.S., Europe, Argentina, and elsewhere, but

based on the assumption that institutions located far to the north, including the U.S., Europe, and Asia, would be interested in leasing laboratory, operations management, and data evaluation space only a few hundred miles from the ice continent rather than a few thousand miles away, we concluded this would be worth Ushuaia's consideration.



Outside the Harbor, we proposed one more component, the seventh overall, a curved sailing and fishing dock and swimming shore, provided primarily for Ushuaians. The Municipality of Ushuaia recently designated this



enclosed basin, the Bahia Encerrada, an Urban Nature Preserve, an excellent step, so any such facility as we proposed would need to adopt strict safeguards for this sensitive habitat area.

Conclusion:

Ushuaia possesses a harbor with strong potential for waterfront tourism infrastructure development without encroachment on the existing center, harbor functionality, or critical habitat resources.

To conclude, we can say that now as then, in 1980, Ushuaia has a significant but still unmet potential for enhanced tourism infrastructure on the perimeter of its harbor that can be realized with minimal adverse impact.

There is one more attractant in Ushuaia and this cannot be shown in pictures. It is the high sensitivity and intelligence Ushuaians have in focusing on global warming, pollution of the seas, endangerment of habitat and wildlife, and erosion of the ozone layer. Ushuaians have always, somewhat jokingly, referred to their city as the "End of the World" - note the wordplay - but recently use the phrase as a serious admonition to all industrial nations. Their biennial End of the World festivals and writings and official declarations have carried this message far across the seas. Because of their bold voices, therefore, we might now encourage the Ushuaians to no longer call their city the "End of the World" but the "New Beginning of the Planet."

Many of the same destination-attraction principles and a focus on heritage tourism that we have discussed, of the all-encompassing kind, can be applied to most coastal harbors anywhere. Here are a few talking points, in closing.

Universal Principles

One: Destinations serve best when telling the broadest and deepest heritage story. A COMPREHENSIVE TAPESTRY is essential.

Two: Interest in birding and terrestrial and marine life link local and global human communities since many avians and marine mammals are continental and intercontinental ~ and inter-oceanic in their migrations.

Three: The "cultural/historic" portions of heritage tourism covers Native Americana, immigration to the New World, victory of Africans over slavery, the home-grown culture of each new nation and region, and the arts/literature/music/dance of each country and locale. All these need to be defined and brought under the umbrella to convince the traveling public to spend sufficient time in the city/harbor/region in question.

Four: The environment, especially that of the coasts, is a key pillar of heritage tourism ~ and so much else. Harbor cities demonstrating the criticality of global warming will earn favorable attention.

Five: Historic structures and sites are assuming an ever greater role in heritage tourism.

Thank you for your attention.



The Rivers Studio, LLC

Heritage Tourism Consultants

Coastal Planners & Landscape Architects

6311 Lakewood Hollow · Austin, TX 78750

01-512-343-9550 · rmann@riversstudio.com

www.riversstudio.com