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TWO MODERN CROSSINGS IN HISTORIC CANADIAN SITES: CREATING “PLACES FOR PEOPLE”

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Flora Footbridge is a new pedestrian and cyclist bridge spanning 125m across the Rideau Canal World Heritage Site in Ottawa, with universally accessible approach pathways on each side. Completed in 2019, it provides a direct link between previously separated mid-town neighbourhoods, improving community connectivity and promoting active transportation. The whole crossing is conceived as an inviting “place for people” that promotes social interaction. The bridge features a 5m wide deck supported on two open V-piers framing the canal’s navigation channel. High quality, long-lasting materials are used to express finer details, including stainless steel for railings, ipe wood for handrails and lookout seating, and Ontario limestone facing the approach walls on each side. The overall pathway configuration creates a sequence of different viewing opportunities, allowing users to appreciate the unique beauty of the Rideau Canal setting.

Garrison Crossing in Toronto, completed in 2019 in a close design collaboration with Pedelta Canada, provides an important new multi-use pathway connection between the City’s residential neighbourhoods and the waterfront. Inspired by the meandering alignment of the original Garrison Creek, the crossing is highlighted by two landmark tilted-arch bridges over the existing railway lines, featuring the first application in North America of Stainless Steel (Duplex 2205 grade) for the entire bridge structure. The project design palette also includes traditional durable materials with natural finishes, such as weathering steel, wood and stone to help ground the new crossing in its important railway and Fort York heritage context.

Mark Langridge has led the architectural and aesthetic design of many high profile bridge crossings in Canadian heritage settings over the past fifteen years. The presentation will contain design background, conceptual renderings and post-completion photos, with a focus on design lessons learned and how people are now using the crossings through Canada’s varied seasons.



Fig. 1. Flora Footbridge, Rideau Canal, Ottawa



Fig. 2. Garrison Crossing, Fort York, Toronto