



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Heritage Planning

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*Solutions
with a
Focus on
Cultural
& Natural
Heritage*

Commonwealth and its principals have been closely involved in Canada's precedent-setting downtown and main street revitalization projects. Immediately before he and Harold Kalman formed Commonwealth, John Stewart was the first national director of the Main Street Programme operated by Heritage Canada, a national not-for-profit foundation. Stewart was responsible for developing and implementing demonstration projects in seven municipalities across Canada, from Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, in the East, to Nelson, British Columbia, in the West. During this time, the procedures for this important ongoing programme were drawn up. Stewart was also the on-site project manager for the Perth (Ontario) demonstration programme, and he has made his home (and established Commonwealth's Ontario office) in that historic town.



Main Street Perth, Ontario

Stewart was the project director, and Harold Kalman the principal author, of *Reviving Main Street*, a comprehensive guide to downtown revitalization, published in 1985 by the University of Toronto Press for Heritage Canada. Kalman's research included visiting small and medium-sized communities across Canada to compile a profile of issues and solutions relating to downtown revitalization. The book is intended as a handbook for municipal planners as well as general-interest text. Kalman was also a co-author of *Signs on Main Street*, published by the Main Street Program.

Commonwealth has since been involved in downtown revitalization work in a number of communities across Canada. Work has included urban planning, guidelines for building rehabilitation, guidelines for the design of new buildings, recommendations for zoning and other regulations, and planning for heritage conservation districts. Some of the Canadian municipalities in which we have done work of this kind are Kingston, Port Hope, and Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario; North Vancouver and Kelowna in British Columbia; Edmonton in Alberta; and Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories.



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Commonwealth has extensive experience in the heritage component of urban rehabilitation, particularly for downtown commercial areas. The firm's two principals were authors of *Reviving Main Street*, a comprehensive guide to downtown revitalization, published for Heritage Canada in 1985; and John Stewart pioneered Heritage Canada's highly successful Main Street Programme. Commonwealth continues to be involved in downtown revitalization projects across Canada and abroad. The following is a list of some projects:

Signs on Main Street

Commonwealth was a principal participant in this publication, a Main Street Canada Technical Manual, published in 1988. The Main Street series of publications was conceived under the direction of John Stewart.

Perth PRIDE Project, Town of Perth, Ontario

The PRIDE project is an extension of the Perth's Streetscape Programme, which had its origins in Heritage Canada's Main Street Programme. Commonwealth managed the PRIDE project and worked with the Town in upgrading services, improving signage and complementing the heritage streetscape appearance and atmosphere of a town steeped in architectural significance. John Stewart was the project manager for Perth's initial demonstration Main Street work.

Queen's University Conservation District

Commonwealth prepared a comprehensive implementation plan for Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario), which recommends streetscape concepts and parking arrangements for the campus. Historical building recording and assessments were completed for that portion of the campus being considered for the creation of a heritage conservation district. This project also entailed extensive liaison with the public through open houses, discussion sessions and interviews.

Sandy Hill Heritage Conservation District Study & Streetscape Improvement

Commonwealth undertook a study for the five heritage conservation districts in Ottawa's Sandy Hill area. The work was primarily directed at providing landscape design guidelines for the private and public realms in each of the sub-areas, and it also was concerned with a number of heritage planning issues. Public participation formed an important component of the work. Commonwealth also prepared a streetscape improvement guidelines and an inventory, analysis, and guidelines for improvements to the public and private landscapes in Sandy Hill.

Urban Design Workshop, Town of Knowlton, Quebec

This urban design study included an inventory of properties and development recommendations to maintain the character of commercial areas, including natural areas, commercial and residential elements, and tourism development.

Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Revitalization Study

John Stewart provided facade improvement guidelines and the marketing strategy for the City Centre commercial area in downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

Historic Lonsdale Design Guidelines and Preservation Plan

Commonwealth participated in a study of the Lower Lonsdale area of North Vancouver, the historic commercial core of Vancouver's North Shore. Work included new zoning regulations for the area (which proposed extensive changes to the existing height, density, and set-back conditions) and design guidelines for all of the historic buildings.

Jackson's Point Design Guidelines

Commonwealth prepared design guidelines for buildings and public streetscape features along the main street of Jackson's Point, the historic resort community on Lake Simcoe, Ontario. Work was done under the direction of John Stewart. The focus of this project was economic revitalization and beautification of this lakeside community.