



PROGRAM REVIEWS FOR MEDTT

Ontario, Canada

■
*Solutions
with a
Focus on
Cultural
& Natural
Heritage*

Commonwealth was retained (1997) as heritage consultant by KPMG to assist in a program review of three living history attractions owned and operated by the Ontario Government. As part of an overall assessment of Provincial agencies, this review was intended to increase the ability of each attraction to be self-financing while preserving their natural and cultural heritage aspects, and to recommend legislative and administrative changes in order to implement the recommendations.

The three attractions – **St. Lawrence Parks Commission**, **Huron Historical Parks**, and **Old Fort William** – all contain well-established living history sites with substantial heritage value in both their material settings and their interpretive programs. Examples include:

- **Upper Canada Village** (a typical early Canadian riverside settlement, interpreted to the mid-1800s),
- **St. Marie-among-the-Hurons** (an early Jesuit community, interpreted to the 1600s),
- **Discovery Harbour** and **Old Fort William** (a fur trading post, interpreted to the early 1800s).

Commonwealth inventoried the heritage components of each attraction and assessed their heritage value. Commonwealth and KPMG also assessed the operational aspects of each attraction and made recommendations for internal efficiencies and for alternative service delivery. The unique aspect of this project was the assessment of heritage value in sites where the physical setting was in large part either a reproduction of an historical setting, or was a new site with relocated original structures. Recommendations from this study are now being implemented and an RFP for private sector opportunities has been issued.

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Commonwealth was retained (1998) as heritage consultant by KPMG to assist in a program review of two commissions operated as agencies of the Ontario Government. The objectives of the review were the same as those for the living history sites assessed previously, but in this case the agencies operated two major scenic parkways, within which are located several historic sites:

- The **St. Clair Parkway Commission** operates a series of public parks located along a scenic drive, but their primary site of heritage value is **Uncle Tom's Cabin**, located on the site of the former Dawn Settlement, a key site in the early history of black Canadians.
- The Niagara Parks Commission manages the **Niagara Parkway** within which are such famous natural sites as **Niagara Falls** and a wide range of cultural heritage sites, most of which relate to the **Niagara Campaign of the War of 1812**.

Commonwealth inventoried and assessed each site for its heritage value and made recommendations for improvements to interpretation, operation and development. These recommendations were integrated with the overall review of each agency and have resulted in a substantial shift in emphasis towards conservation and development of the heritage sites.