

Subject: Elgin County Tourism Content Policy

Policy Number: 1.3

Date Approved:

Date Last Revision:

1. Purpose

The Elgin County Tourism Website and print tourism materials, including the Visitor Guide and Taste Guide, showcase local businesses, experiences, and tourism events that attract visitors to the region. This policy outlines the eligibility criteria and requirements for tourism-related businesses and events seeking inclusion. The goal is to ensure the website and print tourism materials promote high-quality, market-ready experiences that reflect the unique culinary, cultural, and recreational offerings of Elgin County.

2. Definitions

Visitor: An individual who travels to Elgin County from more than 40 kilometers away and/or stays overnight in local accommodations.

Market-Ready Facilities: A market-ready business or destination is prepared to effectively welcome visitors by meeting established standards of infrastructure, quality, and service. It provides essential infrastructure, including public parking, washroom access, and visible signage, while ensuring compliance with relevant health and safety regulations and accessibility standards. Quality standards are maintained through high-quality customer service, well-curated product or menu offerings, and on-site interpretation and destination information to enhance the visitor experience.

Tangible Experience: A direct, meaningful, and knowledgeable interaction with the local culinary culture, where food and/or drink is the central focus. Examples include participating in farmers' markets, engaging in pick-your-own farm experiences, and dining at restaurants that highlight regional cooking.

3. Business Listing Eligibility

General Eligibility Criteria (All Business Types)

- **Location:** Must be located within Elgin County or surrounding area. Priority is given to Elgin County locations.

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- **Tourism Focus:** Must actively promote to and attract visitors to the region.
 - **Consistent & Posted Hours of Operation:** Businesses must have reliable, posted hours.
 - **Web Presence:** Should have an active website or social media profile.
 - **Market-Ready Facilities:** Must include public parking, washroom access, and visible signage, with compliance to health and safety regulations.
 - **Liability Insurance Coverage:** Proof may be requested.
 - **Compliance with Local Regulations:** Must adhere to applicable planning, zoning, and health regulations.

4. Category-Specific Criteria

Restaurants & Retail Businesses should

- Operate at least 6 months of the year or longer.
- Offer locally sourced food and/or products.
- For restaurants, culinary experience must be a primary feature.

Producers / Markets / Farm-Based Businesses should

- Operate at least 6 months of the year or longer.
- Provide tangible and authentic experiences, such as on-site tastings or pick-your-own activities.

5. Submission Process for Business Listings

To submit a business for consideration, the following details must be emailed to tourism@elgin.ca:

- Business name
- Location (including full address)
- Description of the business, including primary services or experiences offered
- Website or social media links
- Contact information for the owner or manager
- Proof of liability insurance (if requested)

Submissions will be reviewed based on the criteria outlined in this policy. Approved tourism businesses may be featured on the Elgin County Tourism website (ElginTourism.ca) and may also be shared across Elgin County Tourism's social media channels, subject to content availability and scheduling.

6. Event Listing Eligibility

General Eligibility Criteria for Events:

- Have a strong tourism focus, be of interest to a broad audience, and have the potential to attract visitors from outside the local area to Elgin County.
- Be open to the general public and provide a meaningful visitor experience.
- Take place within Elgin County. For events in the City of St. Thomas, only large-scale, tourism-focused events will be considered for inclusion.
- Priority given to events organized by tourism-related businesses and partners in good standing with Elgin County Tourism.

Excluded Events:

- Camps (summer camps, PA Day camps, day camps, etc.)
- Casting calls, auditions, or networking events
- Political or religious events, or any events that conflict with local bylaws or policies
- Garage sales, yard sales, sidewalk sales, or used book sales — with the exception of large-scale, town-wide garage sales
- Happy hours, bar crawls, dining specials, or standard retail sales
- Hospital, church, or community bazaars or rummage sales
- Job fairs, educational fairs, or health fairs
- Lotteries, karaoke nights, bingo, or trivia nights
- Homecomings, open houses, or invitation-only events
- Regularly scheduled classes, programs, or recurring meetups
- Virtual-only events

7. Submission Process for Events

To submit an event for consideration, all event details along with a promotional poster or image (if available) must be emailed to: tourism@elgin.ca.

The following information must be included:

- Event name
- Date(s) and time(s)
- Location (including full address)
- Description of the event
- Website or social media links (if applicable)
- Contact information for the organizer

Approved events may be featured on the Elgin County Tourism website (ElginTourism.ca) and may also be shared across Elgin County Tourism's social media channels, subject to content availability and scheduling.

8. Conclusion

Inclusion in Elgin County's tourism materials is a privilege that supports local economic development and highlights the region's unique experiences. Elgin County Tourism reserves the right to review applications and determine eligibility based on the criteria outlined in this policy.