



## County of Elgin Draft Tourism Signage Policy

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 PURPOSE OF ELGIN TOURISM SIGNAGE POLICY

To define the eligibility, use, design and authority for tourism oriented directional signage on Elgin County road right-of-ways.

#### 1.2 OBJECTIVES

- 1) Elevate Elgin County's tourist destination image;
- 2) Inform Elgin County's road users of tourism operations and attractions;
- 3) Provide roadway directions to Elgin County tourism operations;
- 4) Increase the frequency and quantity of tourism visits by;
  - i) Providing consistent tourism signage information to road users;
  - ii) Improving the management and delivery of tourism signage to customers;
  - iii) Protecting the safety of road users;
  - iv) Minimizing additional road maintenance costs;
  - v) Recovering program operating costs.

### 2.0 REGULATIONS

#### 2.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

##### 2.1.1. Applicability

The Regulations define the requirements allowing eligible businesses and attractions to obtain tourism signage on County road right-of-ways in approved site locations. Tourism signage shall be located only where sufficient space for signs occurs along a route that will lead motoring tourists to their destination in a reasonably direct manner.

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## 2.2 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

County of Elgin Department of Economic Development and Department of Engineering shall jointly administer and implement the Elgin tourism signage program in the following areas:

### Department of Economic Development

- i) Approval or denial of tourism signage applications;
- ii) Approval of signage symbol and content;
- iii) Collection of fees and payment terms for tourism signage;
- iv) Receipt and refund of payment for tourism signage;

### Department of Engineering

- v) Approval of signage locations;
- vi) Supply of tourism-oriented directional signage;
- vii) Erection and removal of tourism signage along County road rights-of way;
- viii) Replacement of signage; and
- ix) Removal of signage not consistent with this policy.

## 2.3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following requirements must be met to be eligible to obtain tourism signage on Elgin County road rights-of-way:

- i) Only those tourist-based businesses and facilities listed in Appendix "A" will be permitted to erect tourism signage on County roads.
- ii) The tourist-based operation and/or facility must be accessible by a road open to the general public.
- iii) A seasonal tourist operation must be open during a specific season with set days and hours of operation; no indeterminate tourist operation is eligible for tourism signage.
- iv) The tourist-based operation must have a reception structure such as a controlled gate, staff reception and orientation point or permanent interpretation panels or displays and have adequate off road parking.
- v) The operation must comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations.
- vi) The tourism signage must not detract or interfere with other traffic control devices.
- vii) The signage must not interfere with visibility at intersections or entrances.

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## 2.4 SIGNAGE CRITERIA

### 2.4.1 Type of Signage

Elgin County tourism operators will have the opportunity to acquire (1) classification of tourism directional signage:

<b>Type 1)</b>	Size:	240 cm x 60 cm (8' x 2')
	Location:	Along county roads, 0.5m of the road shoulder and not in front of an existing residential land use. The County determines the exact location and will make a conscious effort to prohibit signs in congested areas.

### 2.4.2 Design

Elgin County tourism directional signage will project a consistent design and image that will be easily identifiable by County road users.

- a) Elgin County tourism directional signage will contain the following design elements:
  - A white reflective header with a full colour engineering grade reflective logo and tagline identifying Elgin County at the top of the sign (applies to first sign only);
  - The principle body of the sign will be a blue background with engineering grade white reflective legend and border;
  - The sign legend will be a maximum of two lines using Highways font, with one symbol as an option;
- b) The content of the sign legend shall be limited to the identification of the business by its operating name, the mileage to the business and a directional arrow.
- c) All sign legends are subject to the approval of the Department of Economic Development.
- d) Standard General Service Symbols and white Recreational Cultural Interest Symbols as displayed in the MUTCD (Manual of Universal Traffic Control Devices), as revised, may be used to indicate a general class of business. When symbols are used, they must be contained entirely within the border of the legend. If a symbol does not exist for the class of business, no symbol will be included on the sign.
- e) No business logos or trademarks may be used in the tourism signage legend.

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## 2.5 SIGN AND SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- a) The location of other official traffic control devices shall take precedence over the location of tourism directional signage.
- b) The maximum distance allowed to the tourism business from the sign location is 15 km.
- c) A maximum of 3 tourism signs shall be placed on one post location, with the Elgin County logo, branding sign at the top of the first sign.
- d) For the direction of traffic when approaching an intersection where more than one tourism directional sign is located, the order of the tourism sign shall be:
  - First, businesses signed for the left direction;
  - Second, businesses signed for the right direction;
- e) Where the total number of tourism signs to both the left and right are less than the maximum allowed for a double post location, the signs will be accommodated in one location. When tourism signs are located in one location, the order of the signs shall be:
  - Top, businesses signed for the left direction,
  - Bottom, businesses signed for the right direction.
- f) Position, height and lateral clearance of tourism signage shall be in accordance with the Ontario Traffic Manual and County Signing Standards. Appendix "B" provides illustrative diagrams as follows:

Diagram I. Illustrates typical tourism signage layout.

Diagram II. Illustrates location of tourism signage.

- g) The Department of Engineering shall give notice of their intention, then will remove permitted tourism signs in the event of the following:
  - The location of tourism signage is needed to be utilized for roadway purposes or activities including construction, reconstruction or maintenance;
  - The tourism operator is no longer in operation;
  - The tourism operator declines renewal of the signage contract;
  - The location of a tourism sign endangers the health, safety or welfare of the public.
- h) When a tourism sign is removed and cannot be re-erected at an approved substitute location, the tourism operator shall be entitled to an appropriate pro-rata rebate of that part of paid annual fees applicable to the remainder of the term.
- i) All installation, removal and maintenance of tourism signage will be performed by the Department of Engineering or an approved contractor. At no time shall the tourism operator enter upon County road right-of ways for such purpose or perform any such activities within the roadway right-of-way.
- j) The granting of tourism directional signage does not convey any rights, title or interest to the County road rights-of-ways.

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## 2.6 APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Every tourist operator must apply to the Elgin County Department of Economic Development Office for tourism directional signage to be located on County road right-of-way. No approval of application or sign installation will occur unless all requirements and criteria for eligibility have been satisfied.
2. Application packages can be obtained from the Department of Economic Development or the Elgin County web site, [www.elgincounty.ca](http://www.elgincounty.ca).
3. The effective date of applications delivered by mail or facsimile shall be the date and time of receipt by the County Department of Economic Development office rather than the date of mailing or the stated date on the application. Applications will be considered in order of date and time received.
4. The Department of Economic Development will act promptly in the denial or approval of any tourism sign application. The Department of Economic Development office shall deny applications which do not comply with this policy.
5. The Department of Engineering will review the proposed sign location. If the sign location is not approved they will contact the tourism operator with an alternate sign location.
6. The applicant shall provide to the Department of Economic Development office a complete application form.
7. The Department of Economic Development office may reject any application which is incomplete.
8. The approved applicants shall have the right to request a change to their tourism sign during the stated term of agreement, provided that the changes conform to the regulations. Any approval of sign changes will result in the applicant incurring additional expenses related to sign removal, sign production costs and remount.
9. The Department of Engineering office will not accept any signs to be located along local municipal roads, only County roads.
10. If a tourism operator qualifies for tourism directional signage but is observed by County staff that there are existing operational problems created by the business, the applicant will be responsible to correct, at their expense, such problems as a condition of the sign(s) approval. These observed operational problems shall be items such as, but not limited to, the following:
  1. Access improvement – throat width
  2. Radius
  3. Relocation of access
  4. Reduction in the number of access points
  5. Provision of parking prohibitions on an adjacent roadway(s)
11. Upon approval of the tourism signage application, the sign will be installed within 4-8 weeks.

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## **2.7 EXEMPTION**

Upon a satisfactory demonstration of submitting proof of being a non-profit tourism operation, as listed in Appendix "A" the operation shall be exempt from the signage and renewal fees for up to a maximum of 1 tourism directional sign for each non-profit operated tourism attraction. In order to qualify for this exemption the applicant must submit certification showing registration as a non-profit entity, and/or provide satisfactory evidence with their application, which, in the determination of the County of Elgin will grant the exemption.

A maximum of 20 tourism signs per year for the first 3 years, and 10 signs per year for the next 2 years will qualify for non-profit exemption over a 5 year term on a first come first serve basis. After the 5 year term, 3 signs per year will qualify for non-profit exemption. Non-profit tourism operations also have the option at any time to enter into the tourism signage fee schedule at the expense of the applicant.

## **2.8 CONTRACT AND FEE SCHEDULE**

The Fee Schedule is attached as Appendix "C".

The Department of Economic Development will only accept payment for tourism directional signage fees in the form of cheques, money orders or certified funds. Payment must accompany the application. The Department of Economic Development shall not accept any payment in the form of cash and shall not be responsible for the transmittal of cash payments.

All fees for tourism directional signage are to be based on the cost recovery of administering, supply of new and replacement signs, erecting signs, and maintaining this sign program. The duration of the tourism directional signage agreement between the applicant and the County of Elgin will be 5 years from the time the sign is installed.

## **2.9 RENEWAL OF CONTRACT**

The Elgin tourism directional signage term will begin from the installation date. Applications for renewal of Elgin tourism directional signage will be mailed by the Department of Economic Development 60 days prior to the expiry date of the permit/agreement. The tourism operator shall renew their application, accompanied by full payment according to the fee schedule. If the renewal application is not received within 30 days of expiry of the permit/application, the tourism signage will be removed.

If an application for renewal is denied, all applicable fees shall be refunded.

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## 2.10 EXPIRY OF CONTRACT

Pending the tourism operators renewal of the Elgin tourism signage application after the 5 year term, the permit/agreement between the applicant and the County of Elgin will remain active for 10 years from the date of sign installation. After the 10 year term the tourism operator signage will be removed.

Tourism operators may reapply for signage after the 10 year term, following the same conditions as the initial application.

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## Appendix "A"

### Tourism Operations Eligible for Directional Signage

- Antique Dealers
- Banquet Halls
- Boat Launches
- Boat Rentals and Charters (canoes, kayaks, sailboats, rowboats, motorboats)
- Campgrounds
- Casinos
- Conference Centres
- Craft Centres
- Cultural Centres
- Destination accommodations, resorts, and inns
- Equestrian Facilities
- Farm-based Tourist Attractions
- Farmers Market's
- Fishing
- Golf Courses (Open to the Public)
- Hotels & Bed & Breakfasts
- Interpretive Centres
- Live Theatres
- Major Tourist Attractions
- Major Sport Facilities
- Marinas
- Motor Speedways
- Raceways
- Restaurants or Foodservice Establishments
- Shopping Store Locations
- Skiing
- Sports Fields
- Swimming Pools
- Transit Terminals
- Wineries
- Zoos

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## Appendix "A" - continued

### Non-Profit Tourism Operations Eligible for Directional Signage

Non-commercial (non-profit / community owned) operated tourism attractions that provide visitors with an experience in Heritage or Historical, Recreational, Entertainment, Natural, Cultural, Education activities.

A categorized listing of qualifying non-profit operation types are included below.

- Archives
- Arena and Community Centres
- Churches
- Conservation Areas
- Hiking Trails
- Historic Sites; Historic / Heritage Buildings
- Federal Parks
- Libraries
- Murals
- Museums
- Parks
- Public Arts Organizations/Galleries
- Points of Interest; Plaques
- Provincial Parks
- Public Beaches
- Picnic Areas
- Scenic Lookouts/Natural Attractions
- Tourism Information Centres
- Tourism Related Associations
- Municipal Airports

Note: Signage listed above is exempt from renewal fees for up to a maximum of 1 tourism directional sign for each non-profit operated tourism attraction that qualifies for the non-profit tourism signage fee exemption.

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## Appendix "C"

### Contract and Fee Schedule for Directional Signage

Type 1)	Size: 240 cm x 60 cm (8' x 2')
Initial Fee:	\$600.00 for 5 years + applicable taxes
Renewal Fee:	\$600.00 for additional 5 years + applicable taxes

Note: The sign costs are staff estimates and are subject to change based on actual costs.

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