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For immediate release

Elgin-St. Thomas Tourism Services Recognized with International Award Elgintourist.com receives honourable mention

ST. THOMAS, ON – Elgin - St. Thomas Tourism Services received an Honorable Mention for Excellence in Economic Development for the *Elgin & St. Thomas Tourism Website* in the category of Special Purpose Website for communities with populations of 25,000 – 200,000 from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).

“We recognize the Elgin-St. Thomas Tourism Services for providing successful strategies to promote new paradigms in economic development in this period of global recovery,” said William Best, IEDC chair. “Our awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in communities. Elgin-St. Thomas Tourism Services is showing that they are at the forefront of the economic development profession and are using innovative and effective practices that can be replicated in other communities.”

In 2009, Elgin - St. Thomas recognized the value of tourism as a strong economic generator for the area and chose to initiate the *Tourism Development and Marketing Plan* to see tourism become a vital contributor to the economy of the region.

“As part of the *Tourism Development and Marketing Plan*, Elgin- St. Thomas recognized that a new state-of-the-art tourism website was necessary to attract the majority of travelers of all ages and target audiences who research and plan their trips online,” stated Mayor Cliff Barwick of St. Thomas

ElginTourist.com implements various interactive tools to meet the demands of the computer savvy tourist including: itinerary planners, interactive maps, a business directory, events & attractions calendars, extensive and up to date destination information and more.

Warden of Elgin County, Bonnie Vowel notes that “the site is friendly for tourism members, where members can log in, up date business descriptions, add photos or logos as well as events.”

ElginTourist.com allows visitors and residents to experience Elgin/St. Thomas virtually.

Elgin County’s Economic Development office was also awarded an Honorable Mention for Excellence in Economic Development for their Elgin County Community Profile in the category of General Purpose Brochure for communities with populations of 25,000 – 200,000.

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The Excellence in Economic Awards Program annually recognizes the world's best economic development programs and partnerships, marketing materials, and the year's most influential leaders. The program honors organizations and individuals in 28 categories for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is the premier membership organization dedicated to helping economic development professionals create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities and improve the quality of life in their regions. Serving more than 4,500 members, IEDC represents the largest network of economic development professionals in the world. IEDC provides a diverse range of services, including conferences, certification, professional development, publications, research, advisory services and legislative tracking.

-30-

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