



# Staff Report to Council - for Information

**Title:** Explore the Bruce Rewards - EDAC Award Recognition

**From:** Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

**Date:** November 7, 2024

**Report Number:** CDO-2024-021

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## Report Purpose:

This report is for information.

## Report Summary:

Bruce County recently received national recognition from the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) for its *Explore the Bruce Rewards* app, which earned an Award of Excellence in Digital Marketing.

## Background/Analysis:

The EDAC is the national organization representing economic development professionals across Canada. The EDAC Awards of Excellence is an annual program that recognizes exceptional achievements in promotion, economic development and community engagement, including innovative marketing campaigns, digital tools, and creative strategies.

Bruce County has been recognized by EDAC for its *Explore the Bruce Rewards* app, earning an Award of Excellence in Digital Marketing from EDAC at this year's annual conference in October. Launched in 2023, the app incentivizes tourism by encouraging visitors to explore Bruce County's top attractions - ranging from culinary destinations to hiking trails and landmarks - while earning points that can be redeemed for rewards. The app's primary objectives are to promote tourism, support local businesses, and disperse visitors across the County throughout all seasons.

The *Explore the Bruce Rewards* app was developed in collaboration with Driftscape and was supported by local tourism operators, businesses and municipalities. This innovative approach to tourism marketing was recognized in EDAC's Digital Marketing Category for its "engaging design, clear objectives, and positive economic impact."

Key achievements of the *Explore the Bruce Rewards* app in its first year include:

- Increasing visitor numbers and length of stays
- Boosting off-peak season tourism and spending
- Profiling lesser-known areas of Bruce County
- Promoting local businesses and tourism operators

This initiative aligns with Bruce County's broader goals of driving economic development through increasing support for our tourism industry, as outlined in the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan.

**Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no financial, staffing, legal, or IT considerations associated with this report.

**Interdepartmental Consultation:**

None

**Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:**

Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Growth and Innovation - Strengthen County's use of technology and innovative initiatives

**Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:**

This directly supports

**Report Author:**

Jeffrey Loney, Economic Development Manager

**Departmental Approval:**

Claire Dodds, commissioner of Community Development

**Approved for Submission:**

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

**Attachments:**

Nil.