

## OBIAA 2023 AWARDS SUBMISSION

<b>Contact Name:</b> Stephanie Hicks	<b>Pillar &amp; Category:</b> Marketing, Communications & Special Events: Marketing
<b>BIA/Organization:</b> Downtown Bench Beamsville	<b>Time period:</b> Nov & Dec 2021 & 2022
<b>Entry title:</b> Elf on the Bench	
<b>Project description:</b> <i>Leveraging the popular “Elf on the Shelf” phenomenon, we took it to the next level and brought a life size elf to the businesses downtown bench for some mischief and fun. Linc the elf visits businesses downtown from November at the Tree lighting until Christmas eve when he returns to the North Pole for his busy night with Santa.</i>	

### NEED OR OPPORTUNITY

The Downtown Bench Beamsville is nestled in the municipality of the Town of Lincoln. The Town is home to 24 000 residents that frequent our quaint downtown for shopping, gathering, work, and engaging. Our BIA has grown both catchment and budgetary since 2019, when we were able to expand our boundaries and update our bylaws that had us pigeonholed to a \$8000.00 maximum levy. Since then, we have been getting creative to build our new brand, encompass our new businesses that were brought about by a successful expansion and create awareness, of what we have to offer downtown bench Beamsville.

This initiative was undertaken to bring awareness of the businesses we have downtown, it was necessary to remind people through the 2021 pandemic regulations, and 2022 Christmas shopping season that our businesses were open, safe, and ready to serve.

### AUDIENCE

**Community**-Residents, organizations, our Municipality, our neighboring municipalities.

**Business owners/members**- We needed our businesses to participate and see that there was a benefit to their business to participate.

**Social Media**- people on social media that would follow the shenanigans and location of Linc the elf (predominantly people with children).

### GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL**- To get more people shopping downtown during the Christmas Season.

**Objective**- Have enough businesses participate that Linc the elf could be in a new business daily (7 days a week) for 30 days (during the Christmas shopping season) and businesses would be engaged enough to use Linc, take the photos and send the content to the BIA for posting.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Linc was purchased in August of 2021 and received in October of 2021. He was originally a mascot costume (\$275.00) so alterations needed to take place to stuff him and sew on the feet, head and hands (\$60.00)

A contest was launched 1 week before the Town’s Tree Lighting to help us name our new “elf on the bench” (side bar we used bench instead of shelf because we are the downtown bench, which in this area there is a topographical piece of the escarpment that is referred to as the “bench” of the escarpment, of which our entire downtown runs through

this “bench”, also downtowns are known for implementing benches for sitting so it all works). A week later the winning name was Linc (shortened from our Municipalities name Lincoln), and this was announced at the Tree lighting of 2021. From there businesses were sent an email from the BIA to solicit interest in businesses having Linc the elf come to their business for them to use in and position in photos, promotion of sales, initiatives, and just a fun opportunity for their customers. A calendar was curated of interested businesses, dates, time, and instructions. The BIA then ensure that Linc the elf was delivered to the business and the business then utilized Linc, took pictures and sent us photos for posting.

**RESULTS** The results were exceeded our expectations.

**Business Participation-** In 2021 after our call out to businesses we did not have a full 30 days of participation, but as soon as Linc launched on social media going into businesses, we had steady calls and request to have this jolly, fun elf attend businesses for their opportunity to use him. In 2022 when we launch that Linc was returning his visitation schedule filled immediately with some days having to stop by several businesses, we ended up having to turn away some business because it was not feasible to get the elf there in time (don’t worry they are on the list for 2023). The businesses did not disappoint in their utilization of Linc. Linc ate at many restaurants, and helped bake cakes and donuts, he took dance lessons, and had his teeth checked and cleaned. He rode a bike, he helped out at the pet store, he created awareness to the food bank on what was needed for those in need, he read stories at the library and at a local daycare, he painted and did crafts, he made pizza, and drove the Zamboni, and skated. He did yoga, and Pilates, and had a spa day and so much more. Businesses noticed that they had customers coming to specifically see Linc and would grab something while they were there, or specifically travel to the business downtown instead of the one with similar offerings closer to their home because Linc the elf was there.

**Community-** Our residents would love to follow where Linc was going to be (via our social media or the businesses themselves announcing it). People would attend those business just to take a photo with Linc the elf. Organizations that were hosting events downtown would request Linc’s presence at the event for the community to enjoy. Our oversized stuffed mascot became “real” to our community and to the Children.

**Social Media-** We created a hashtag #elfonthebench for people to follow and use, the platforms that Linc was most popular on was Facebook and Instagram. These posts were liked, shared, and commented on the most. This was a great way for Linc to reach our community, region, province and the world to see what Beamsville was doing.

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

Ann Buys  
I saw him at Tim Hortons this morning at 6:30 am having his first coffee of the day!  
Like Reply Hide 9w 2

Colleen Evans-Ridler  
After hanging out with the crossing guards everyone is asking where is he, we just tell them to look all around town as you never know. One mom came and told me she saw him serving at Timmy's.  
Like Reply Hide 9w 4

Sherry Ross  
Yes we did . Thank you Linc  
Like Reply Hide 8w

Mike Jenken  
Fantastic program! So informative!  
Like Reply Hide 7w

Sharon Smith  
He’s a very busy dude. No wonder he sleeps for 11 months. 🤪  
Like Reply Hide 10w



**downtownbenchbeamsville** Linc had a full check up at Dr. Marta Skibinska Family Dentist #downtownbench #Beamsville no cavities to report! 🦷👍 #elfonthebench #LincontheBench  
61w

**joanneloney** 🙌  
61w Reply

**saradudley1** She is the best!! ❤️  
61w Reply

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👍 🗨️ 🚩

👤 Liked by beamsvillebakery and 39 others  
DECEMBER 9, 2021



**downtownbenchbeamsville**

**downtownbenchbeamsville** Linc had the best time at COUNTY CYCLE today, even tested a sweet ride for the pump track! #downtownbench #Beamsville #elfonthebench #LincontheBench Posted @withregram • @countycycle LOOK WHO DROPPED IN KIDS! Scroll through to see Linc the Christmas Elf up to his usual antics - County Cycle edition! 🎅🚲👍👍👍👍  
#elfonthebench #linconthebench #townoflincoln #beamsvillebench #beamsvilleontario #christmaself #holidayelf #elfontheshelf #happyholidays #merrychristmas #downtownbenchbeamsville #elfinabikeshop #elfonabike  
61w

**angelggconsulting** ❤️  
61w 1 like Reply

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👍 🗨️ 🚩

👤 Liked by beamsvillebakery and 33 others  
DECEMBER 8, 2021

🗨️ Add a comment



**downtownbenchbeamsville** We hope your day is as nice as Linc's hair! Getting your hair washed at Hair Creations is just as magical as Santa. #downtownbench #Beamsville #LincontheBench #elfonthebench  
60w

**floraellenphotography** Can I please have Linc's life?! 🙏❤️  
60w 1 like Reply

👍 🗨️ 🚩

👤 Liked by shoplincoln and 56 others

Linc the Elf is at Hair Creations

