

Net Promoter Score/Customer Satisfaction (NPS/CSAT) Survey Analysis Update

Recommendation:

That Council receives the tourism Net Promoter Score / Customer Satisfaction Survey (NPS/CSAT) results for information.

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

To bring forward the survey results, key themes, and strategic recommendations to support Maple Ridge's ongoing efforts to enhance tourism and community engagement.

The Net Promoter Score/ Customer Satisfaction Survey (NPS/CSAT) survey was conducted to understand sentiments and evaluate residents' and visitors' experiences, satisfaction, and engagement levels with tourism attractions and services in Maple Ridge. Open from September 10 to October 20, 2024, the survey highlighted the City's reputation for natural beauty and scenic ambiance, with outdoor destinations like Golden Ears Park, Kanaka Creek, and Hammond Park emerging as favorite spots for locals and visitors. Key findings reveal opportunities to enhance the visitor experience through targeted marketing campaigns, improved access to amenities, and strengthened collaboration across internal departments such as Corporate Communications, Parks & Facilities, Recreation Services, and Economic Development (Ec Dev).

Strategic Alignment: Engaged, Healthy Community; Diversified, Thriving Economy

To: Mayor and Council

File number: [6750.04]

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BACKGROUND:

As part of Council's Objectives and Key Results to explore and maximize tourism opportunities as a way to further diversify the local economy and in alignment with Council's priority to promote a diversified, thriving economy, the City deployed the NPS/CSAT survey to establish a baseline for customer sentiment and evaluate their likelihood to endorse and recommend local tourism-related products, events, and services in Maple Ridge.

ANALYSIS

Discussion:

Tourism survey as a catalyst for Economic Growth and Strategic Development

Tourism significantly contributes to our municipality's economic growth and community development by highlighting our strengths and promoting meaningful connections with people and places. The survey findings define those who speak positively or promote their experiences of tourist attractions in Maple Ridge, guide evidence-based decisions focused on training, collaborations, and innovations that improve tourist experiences, attract visitors, and ensure sustainable advancement in our tourism product segments: Adventure Hub, Urban Hotspots, and Farm Fresh. In addition, the NPS/CSAT survey is a Key Performance Indicator in the Economic Development Department that has a focus to explore and maximize tourism initiatives.

Purpose and Objectives of the Survey

The survey was designed to:

- Assess perceptions of local tourism offerings among internal and external interest-holders.
- Highlight the likelihood of residents and visitors recommending Maple Ridge-based tourism offerings and experiences.
- Provide insights into customer satisfaction and identify areas for improvement, system strengthening, opportunities, and advantages within our tourism ecosystem.
- Provide insight to inform strategic decision-making and prioritize initiatives to enhance the tourism experience.

Highlights

- The NPS and CSAT survey comprehensively examined consumer perception of the tourism industry experiences and customer service delivery.
- Economic Development designed the survey, with technical support from the Strategic Development, Communications & Public Engagement team.
- The channels used to deploy the survey were Engage Maple Ridge, social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram), print media, and physical postcards. Media campaigns, business walks, and print media advertisements were used to create awareness and encourage participation in the survey.
- The deployment strategy ensured a broad sampling of residents, visitors, and investors across diverse demographics and geographic locations.
- In the six weeks of the NPS/CSAT survey run, 331 contributions were received from 259 unique contributors.

Summary findings

Findings from the survey highlight visitors' and residents' enthusiasm about the abundant natural beauty and outdoor exploration of Maple Ridge. The analysis revealed strong participation of respondents in outdoor activities, particularly at Thornhill, Kanaka Creek, and Golden Ears Park. Key findings suggest opportunities to enhance the visitor experience through targeted marketing campaigns, better service accessibility, and continued increased collaborative efforts between Parks & Facilities, Recreation Services, Economic Development, and other related teams. In addition, expanding and promoting tourism services through guided tours, shuttle services, and cultural events can foster greater engagement and economic activity for local businesses. The result also indicates areas for improvement in visitor satisfaction, including accessibility, cleanliness, and way finding signage (direction signage). Reasons for low service usage and barriers to visitor participation in tourism activities and offerings were identified.

Detailed findings are described below:

Demographics and Preferences

The NPS/CSAT survey respondents were primarily residents of Maple Ridge (92%), with a majority being female (69%). Among them, 29% work in Maple Ridge, 25% live and work in the city, and 6% are business owners. Visitors made up 8% of respondents.

The largest age groups were 35-44 years (25%) and 45-54 years (22%), followed by 55-64 years (19%), 65+ years (18%), and 25-34 years (12%). This highlights substantial input from middle-aged adults and older residents, helping us understand the preferences of Maple Ridge's core population. However, the limited input from younger individuals (under 24) and visitors suggests a need for targeted efforts to gather insights from these groups, especially when designing programs and events for a wider audience.

Awareness and Participation

The survey showed that most respondents (23% strongly agreed and 54% agreed) are aware of Maple Ridge's tourism attractions and activities. While this indicates a solid baseline of awareness, it also presents an opportunity to further boost engagement through targeted awareness campaigns and outreach initiatives. The top three channels for discovering tourism offerings were Social Media (44%), Friends and Family (40%), and Word-of-Mouth Referrals (40%).

Overall participation in tourist activities was notably strong (85%), with only 15% of respondents reporting they had never participated. The primary barriers to participation were inadequate information and disinterest. Respondents suggested introducing more diverse and engaging activities, including events and festivals, promoting attractions, and improving visitor facilities like restrooms and parking to increase participation. Additionally, reducing costs and providing better transportation options were identified as key measures to increase participation.

Perceptions and Experiences

Perception and experiences were assessed through the NPS and other factors, such as services accessed, overall satisfaction, and feedback on positive and negative aspects. Maple Ridge's overall NPS is currently -31.6%, with 22% of respondents indicating a likelihood to recommend the city as a tourist destination, while 54% were categorized as detractors. The top three reasons for dissatisfaction included overcrowding or long wait times, limited food and beverage options, and insufficient information about events and tourist offerings.

Despite these challenges, 100% of respondents expressed high satisfaction with Maple Ridge's natural beauty, scenery, and ambiance. The quality of food and adventure experiences in Maple Ridge were also praised. Respondents accessed key services such as camping sites, local shopping malls, public transportation, and the visitor information center. While satisfaction with tourism activities and services showed a mix of responses, ratings tended to lean toward moderate satisfaction overall.

Communication and Marketing

Social media (44%), word-of-mouth referrals (40%), and friends or family (40%) were identified as the top channels through which respondents currently receive information about Maple Ridge's tourism offerings. Online searches (36%) and neighborhood information (33%) were also

significant. Word-of-mouth, friends, and family are trusted sources of information, emphasizing the role of community-driven recommendations.

Social media was identified as the preferred channel of communication. Facebook was the most preferred communication platform (61%), followed by Instagram (45%). Information booths at local events or festivals (39%), flyers/brochures (36%), emails directly from known individuals (like staff) (34%), and online ads (29%) were also popular. Text messaging (8%), YouTube (7%), and X (formerly Twitter) (6%) had lower engagement but could be potential areas for growth.

Tourism Preferences

The survey highlighted common participation patterns and preferences. The core tourism offerings in Maple Ridge, Adventure Hub (29%), Farm Fresh (11%), and Urban Hotspot (10%), had the highest engagements, affirming the three buckets as the most frequented and appreciated types of activities in the community. Cultural experiences (8%) followed closely, indicating residents' interest in arts and historical offerings that showcase and preserve our culture.

Visitor Behavior and Motivations

Feedback from the survey emphasizes Maple Ridge as a choice destination for nature enthusiasts and community-focused experiences. Connecting with nature was cited by 64% of respondents as the most common motivation for visiting Maple Ridge. As a community known to be family-oriented and driven by community, time spent out in tourism experiences with family and friends (63%) was a strong motivation for visiting or experiencing Maple Ridge tourism offerings. Locations like Golden Ears Cheesecrafters, local farms, and family-oriented businesses like the Patch Brewery are key contributions to the family-friendly experiences in our city.

In addition, 51% of respondents cited exploring the community as a motivation. This indicates a significant portion of residents and local visitors actively seeking to rediscover the area, affirming the importance of promoting local tourism and community events. Developing family-friendly activities and experiences such as farm visits, picnics, and festivals; partnering with local businesses to offer package deals for families, as well as promoting local events and campaigns that encourage rediscovery of the community's hidden gems are ways to leverage this strength and retain local spending.

Leisure and Entertainment (including food and relaxation) was another notable category, comprising 45% of respondents. In this segment, the popularity of dining establishments like Kingfishers Waterfront Bar & Grill, Chameleon, and Big Feast Bistro indicates Maple Ridge's strength in farm-fresh and culinary experiences. Maple Ridge's unique combination of natural beauty, community spirit, and dining experiences continues to position it as a vibrant and desirable destination in the region.

Resident Preferences for Future Attractions

A strong demand for food and drink experiences (69%) indicates that Maple Ridge could benefit from expanding its culinary tourism. Opportunities include food festivals, permanent farmers' markets, and culinary events highlighting the Agri-tourism sector, especially farm-fresh experiences. Outdoor activities (63%), as well as arts and entertainment events (63%), were also popular, suggesting that outdoor infrastructure (trail lighting, park upgrades, cycling paths, etc) and cultural offerings (theater, music festivals) would be beneficial to continue focus upon.

Furthermore, family-friendly activities (55%) and cultural or historical sites (51%) were favored, showing growth potential for family and cultural tourism. Accommodation (40%) was another notable request. The demand included the need for conference centers and multipurpose event halls. This suggests an opportunity to enhance local hospitality to meet the growing demand from visitors, businesses, and residents. With major events like the 2025 Invictus Games, Web Summit 2025, and FIFA 2026 on the horizon, Maple Ridge will continue to focus efforts in tourism to attraction of accommodations/hotel. Short-term rentals could provide temporary relief while efforts are made to attract hotel investments.

Limitations

The survey recorded limited input from visitors and non-resident stakeholders (8%). Expanding the reach of future surveys to tourists and local businesses would provide a more comprehensive understanding of Maple Ridge's tourism ecosystem. Also, the age distribution highlights a need to engage younger audiences (youth less than 24) who are underrepresented but likely influential in shaping the future of tourism and recreation trends.

Desired Outcome:

The City of Maple Ridge seeks to understand resident and visitor sentiment toward its tourism offerings. Findings will inform evidence-based decisions and initiatives that will promote Maple Ridge's appeal as a destination for residents and visitors and improve the city's NPS rating by 20% over the next 12 months. Specifically, Economic Development will implement a data-driven approach focused on enhancing visitor experience, marketing, collaboration, and accessibility. Key initiatives would include, but are not limited to:

- Increased direct engagement with tourism businesses to provide feedback on service perceptions for the purpose of service improvement.
- Seasonal marketing campaigns to better highlight Maple Ridge's attractions, itineraries, and experiences available in the City borders and Region.
- Strengthening collaboration with tourism operators will ensure alignment with visitor expectations.
- Collaboration with Corporate Communications to create targeted marketing campaigns to increase the promotion of local attractions and itineraries; increasing awareness for local residents as well as demographics outside of the jurisdictional borders of Maple Ridge.

- Implement a data-driven approach to segment visitor demographics and preferences to tailor experiences; marketing those experiences to audiences throughout Western Canada and the Pacific North West.
- Strengthened collaboration with tourism operators and experience providers to align product offerings with visitor expectations.
- Collaborate with relevant departments to enhance visitor accessibility and infrastructure improvements such as directional and way-finding signage.
- Continued engagement with new potential Hoteliers, brand owners, landowners, and developers/operators regarding the opportunities for hotel development in Maple Ridge.

These initiatives will be supported by quarterly NPS tracking and satisfaction assessments, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptability to visitor needs.

Strategic Alignment:

The NPS/CSAT survey aligns with Council priorities to promote an engaged, healthy community and a diversified, thriving economy. The NPS/CSAT survey enables tourism development, a key goal in the Maple Ridge Tourism Strategy. In addition, a higher non-residential assessment base is a key performance indicator in the Economic Development Strategy. Promoting tourism is a viable way to attract non-residents, increase local spending, and grow the population.

Citizen/Customer Implications

Tourism enhances residents' quality of life while driving economic growth and community development. By promoting the community's beauty, unique experiences, and vibrant spirit, the city is positioned as a thriving, attractive destination that connects people, draws in visitors, retains residents, and grows steadily.

Interdepartmental Implications:

Multiple departments, including Legislative Services, Corporate Communications, and Recreation Services, supported the survey's planning and execution. Advancing tourism and fostering economic growth in Maple Ridge relies on collaboration between Economic Development and other relevant teams, such as Facilities, Parks, and Properties, Engineering, Engineering Operations, Recreation Services, Corporate Communications, and others.

Business Plan/Financial Implications:

Follow up actions can be accomplished within existing budget; opportunities to leverage funding through grants and provincial or federal programming is underway.

CONCLUSION:

The NPS/CSAT survey is one of the many steps toward improving tourism in Maple Ridge. The findings provide a baseline of current resident engagement and satisfaction with our tourism offerings and also provides valuable insights into the strengths and opportunities within the city's tourism sector. The NPS will be measured again in 2025.

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Attachments:

(A) Overview deck for Net Promoter Score: [Net Promoter Customer Satisfaction Survey Analysis](#)

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Net Promoter and Customer Satisfaction Survey report.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment A - Net Promoter Score Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary Slides.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Feb 24, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

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