



Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

2023 Customer Satisfaction Report

Commitment to Excellence in Customer Service

In September 2013, NVCA adopted a Customer Service Charter that sets out our commitment to provide excellent customer service. As part of this commitment, NVCA reports on customer feedback on an annual basis.

NVCA Customer Service Mission Statement

We aim to provide a high standard of effective and efficient service to all our customers. We achieve excellence in customer service by being:

- Accountable
- Personable
- Accessible
- Efficient
- Knowledgeable
- Trustworthy
- Convenient

Watershed Management Services, Permit Process

A customer satisfaction survey is sent out to all individuals and organizations that received an NVCA permit. Out of 751 permits issued, 67 individuals and organizations completed a customer satisfaction survey.

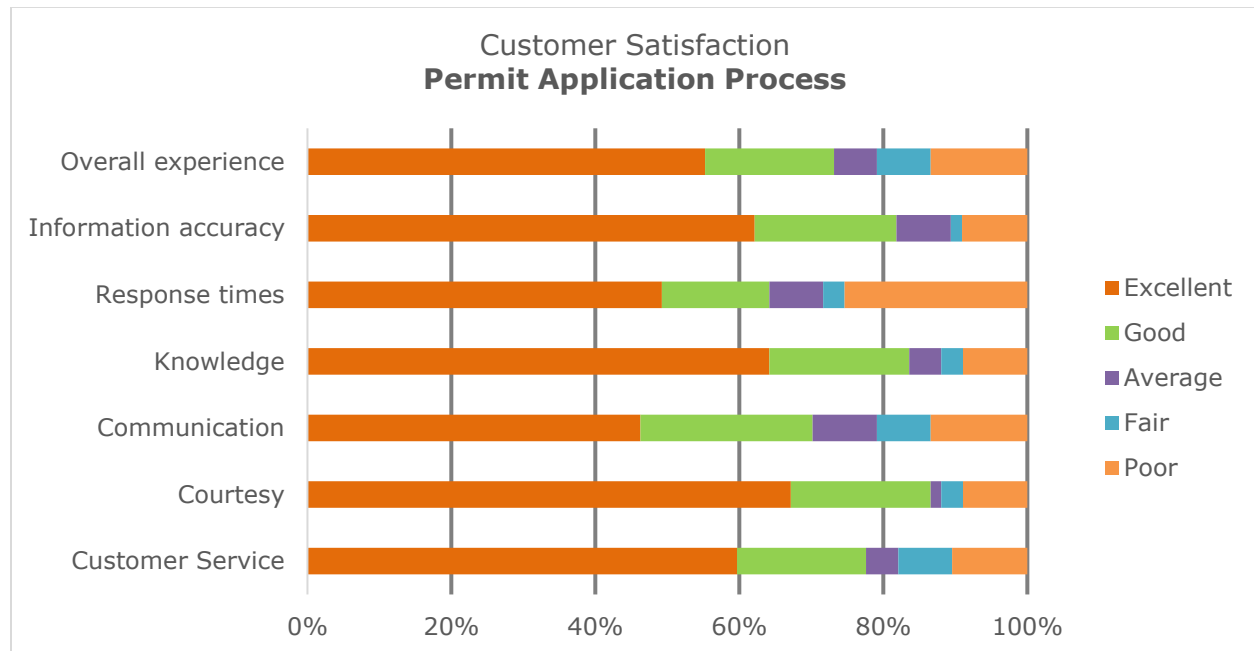
Sixty-eight (73%) of those completing the client survey rated their overall experience with NVCA's permit application process as good or excellent. Between 78% and 87% of respondents rated staff knowledge, courtesy, information accuracy, communication, and customer service as good or excellent. Response time received a slightly lower rating, with 64% of survey respondents rating it as good or excellent.

In general, the responses that were ranked as good or excellent in 2023 was 73%, slightly higher than the 68% rating received in 2022.

In 2023, NVCA contracted Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. to review planning and regulation program rates and assess the full cost of providing plan review and permitting services, applicant affordability, competitiveness, and industry best practices. Watson & Associates also considered recent legislative changes such as the *More Homes Built Faster Act* which altered the role of conservation authorities in the plan review and permitting process.

The analysts assessed the cost of adding additional staff in order to provide a desired level of customer service. Their recommendations included hiring more staff, and increasing some Planning Act application and permit review fees to recover the full costs of plan review and improve cost recovery levels for permitting.

Based on the recommendations of the Watson Report, NVCA staff have developed and presented an updated fee structure to the Board of Directors. The draft fees have been circulated to the development community, member municipalities, the agriculture community, aggregate industry and members of the public for comment. Based on the feedback received, the new fees will be phased in over a two-year period once the province lifts the freeze to conservation authority planning and development fees.



Lands, Education and Stewardship Services

NVCA’s lands, education and stewardship services include a wide variety of service areas. Below are highlights of the feedback received from clients via email, letters and surveys.

Stewardship Program

NVCA’s stewardship services include river restoration, forestry, the Healthy Waters grant program, and other projects to protect and enhance our watershed. Below are some reviews received from partners, funders and landowners.

- The program is extremely well coordinated and amazing at how it engages and involves community. Grassroots programs of this nature are extremely effective in educating people on habitat and important environmental issues, exemplifying how community can come together to create change with impact. Participants were of all age groups, generating broad smiles, young and old! The restoration

has been dramatic - proof positive that thoughtful planning, proper resourcing and some back bending work can create meaningful benefits to a natural habitat.

- Thanks so much for the fantastic tour and discussions on the Notty and Sheldon Creek. You guys are certainly making a difference and I am so pleased by the great and innovative work that you are doing! – Jack Imhof, Aquatic Ecologist and Watershed Scientist
- I was very impressed with your project and for your and your fellow staff members' passion for such a well thought out and implemented environmental restoration project. These Headwaters are extremely important from source to completion. – Lynn Sinclair-Smith

Conservation Lands Program

NVCA's conservation lands program maintains the conservation areas and other properties owned and managed by the authority.

NVCA's conservation areas received 89 reviews in 2023, one from a customer satisfaction survey, and 88 reviews on Google's business listings. Ninety-three (93%) of the reviews received were 4-star or 5-star reviews. The conservation areas that received the most review were Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area, Edenvale Conservation Area and Minesing Conservation Area.

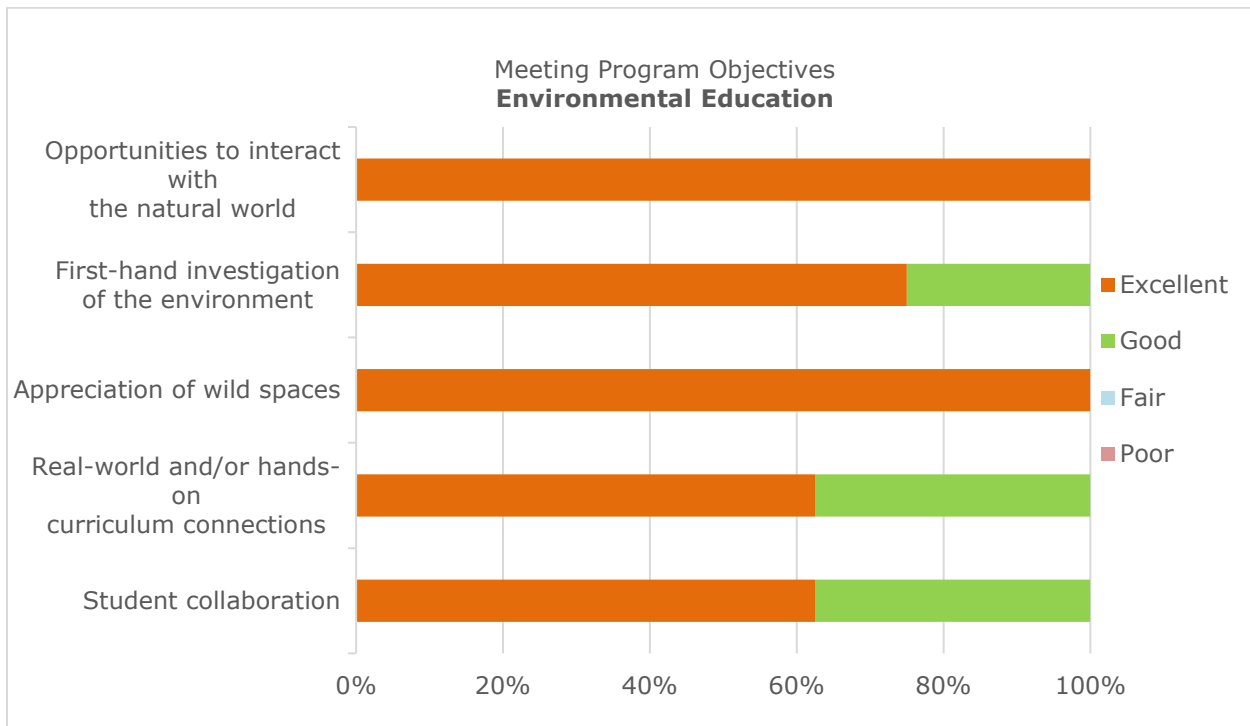
Below are some reviews received from Google reviews.

- Wonderful place for hiking and enjoying nature. It's beautiful here (Tiffin Conservation Area).
- Very nice conservation area. The trails are very well maintained and allows you to truly enjoy the serene setting. The river is such a nice companion in the silent forest... (Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area).
- Nice clean park! Well maintained trails. Very unique and hiking skills level ranging from easy to expert. Lookout was beautiful and easy to access. Amazing experience through the rock walls (Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area).
- A great place for a day to hang out. Love the paddling / canoeing as it connects all the way to Wasaga Beach. Although parking space is very little still a great place to be. We went fishing, although nothing was caught but if you like spending more time than it's a great place (Edenvale Conservation Area).
- I've been visiting this CA for over 40 years, it's a wonderful place to walk in new and old growth forests, explore caves and rock climb (Petun Conservation Area).

Environmental Education

NVCA's environmental education program provides hands-on, curriculum-aligned programs for Grade 4 students in the Simcoe County District School Board. Thousands of students take part in these programs each year.

In 2023, 8 teachers submitted feedback surveys on NVCA’s virtual environmental education programs. One hundred (100%) of the respondents ranked the Grade 4 program as excellent or good for the following criteria: opportunities to interact with the natural world, first-hand investigation of the environment, appreciation of wild spaces, real-world and/or hands-on curriculum connections and student collaboration.



Among the written comments, teachers mentioned these positive outcomes:

- Students were thrilled to be outside learning. The leaders were so knowledgeable and friendly.
- Being outdoors, students working and playing together and the pond study.
- Student engagement Class discussion re: habitats back in class
- J didn't go swimming, we saw butterflies and T was so excited to be in a forest for the first time.

Events/Public Programming

NVCA’s lands department hosted the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival and the Festival at Fort Willow in 2023. Although there was no official survey, the feedback that staff received were positive. One of the comments received was:

- I was attending a war of 1812 event. Friendly and knowledgeable staff.

Weddings Celebrations

In 2023, the Tiffin Centre for Conservation hosted 24 wedding celebrations. Ten (10) of these couples responded to a wedding feedback survey. Of those responding, 100% rated NVCA's customer service as excellent, and 100% said they would recommend Tiffin Centre as a wedding venue to others.

Some of the comments received included:

- We had the perfect day at the perfect venue. We received countless praises on the venue, everyone thought it was stunning. All the staff were so friendly and helpful we truly had the best experience.
- [All the staff] are amazing to work with. Made the event run so smoothly and were available quickly and professionally. Highly recommend the Tiffin Conservation Centre. Beautiful location and our guests loved the site.
- I just wanted to share that having my wedding at Tiffin Centre was the best decision I ever made!! Everything was amazing, the staff were incredible, the communication was fantastic... it was the best day of my life and having it at Tiffin was so incredible.
- We loved hosting our wedding at Tiffin Centre. From the very first tour the staff and grounds were both incredible and the staff were there to help every step of the way. We booked our wedding on a Saturday and had the Friday to decorate and the Sunday to tidy the venue, which gives so much flexibility to decorate and clean up outside of your wedding day which relieved so much stress from us, the brides, and helped make everything especially magical on our big day.

Committed to Customer Service

NVCA remains committed to providing excellence in customer service. We will continue to encourage customer feedback in 2024 through the use of formal online surveys, online reviews and event evaluations.

For more information about NVCA's Customer Service Charter or this report, contact NVCA's director of corporate services at 705-424-1479 or admin@nvca.on.ca.

Alternative Formats

If you require this document in a different format please contact NVCA at 705-424-1479 or admin@nvca.on.ca.