

# Beyond the Counter

**Elevating Local Government through  
Extraordinary Customer Experiences**

AKBLG Convention & AGM 2026 | April 19, 2026



# SESSION CONTENT

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**1**

**The Extraordinary  
Customer  
Experience**

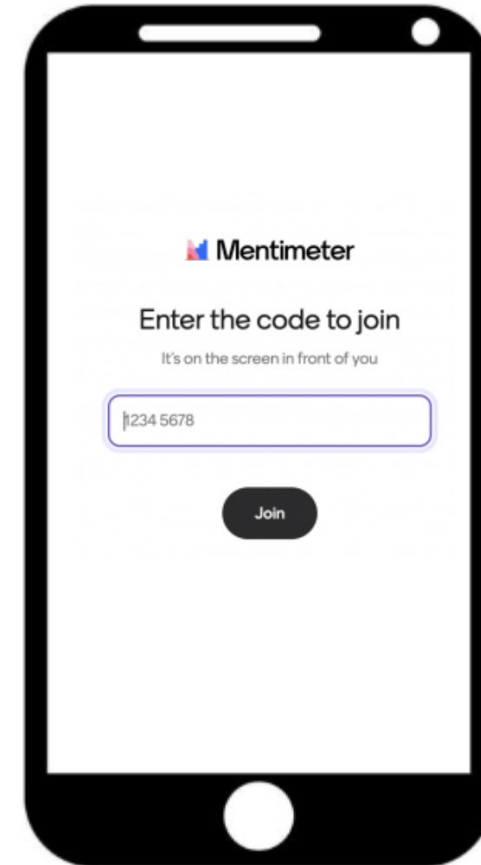
**2**

**Local Municipality  
Trends and Data on  
Customer Experiences**

**3**

**Case: RDCK's  
Achieving  
Extraordinary  
Customer Experiences**

# Have your device ready for an interactive session!



# The Extraordinary Customer Experience

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# What People Remember About Service

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- **16 people** hear about a bad experience
- **9 people** hear about a good one
- **One poor interaction carries more weight than many good ones.**
- **75% of people say a bad interaction can ruin their day**
- **58% share bad experiences**
- **52% share good experiences**

# What Strong Customer Service Actually Drives

- Trust in local government
- Fewer complaints and escalations
- More consistent experiences
- Greater staff confidence



**“Best-in-class customer experience.” - Castlegar**

**“Polite and courteous conduct expectations” - Cranbrook**

# **What Service Excellence Looks Like Across the Kootenays**

**“Performance accountability and complaint processes.” - Nelson**

**“Kindness as a service value.” - Fernie**

### Impressions and Experiences



11. Have you had any contact either in person, by phone, or by email with a Town of Creston representative in the last 12 months?

Results are weighted. Base: All Respondents n= 503

12. Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'Very Poor' and 5 is 'Very Good', please rate the Town of Creston representative on the following elements. Please use your most recent contact as your reference.

Results are weighted. Base: All Respondents less those that noted the element was 'DK/Prefer not to answer'.(n=297-302).

For graphical clarity, response percentage of less than 3% have been removed.

**Staff are courteous and respectful**

**85-90%**

**Staff are helpful and knowledgeable**

**75-80%**

**Satisfied with communication and clarity**

**65-75%**

**Satisfied with responsiveness and follow-through**

**65-75%**

Source: City of Nelson Resident Survey Results (2023–2024), Council Agenda Materials  
<https://nelson.civicweb.net/Portal/>





**Residents satisfied with their most recent interaction** **64%**

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**Issue was resolved in their most recent interaction** **58%**

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**Poor Customer Service/Lack of Staff** **14%**

Source: 2023 Citizen Satisfaction Survey Fernie.pdf



# Municipal Customer Experience

Local government leaders say improving customer experience is a top priority in the next 3–5 years

72%

Customer service is a strategic focus for leadership, but fewer than half deliver it consistently across departments

80%

Citizens that are more likely to trust government when service experiences are simple and effective

9x

Sources: MNP (2024); Liferay, 2025

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# Insights

## 1. Frontline service is strong. System experience is not.

- Staff are rated highly for friendliness, professionalism, and knowledge. But communication, responsiveness, and follow-through consistently lag.

## 2. Satisfaction masks inconsistency.

- Overall satisfaction scores look solid, yet specific service areas and interactions vary widely.

## 3. The real gap is not effort. It's the resident's experience.

- Municipalities are delivering services well. Residents are not always experiencing them that way.



# The Takeaway

- **Why this matters:**

Residents don't compare you to other municipalities. They compare each interaction to their last experience with you.

- **The Thesis:**

Exceptional customer service is not about being “better.” It is how municipalities build trust, consistency, and long-term credibility.



# **Achieving Extraordinary Customer Experiences Program (A.E.C.E.)**

# The A.E.C.E. Movement

**Create meaningful, memorable moments for customers**



# ACHIEVING EXTRAORDINARY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Striving with intention and consistency to reach excellence.

Going beyond expectations, delivering memorable and meaningful interactions.

Understanding and valuing the people we serve.

Every interaction matters – creating positive, lasting impressions.



# Case: RDCK Recreational Services A.E.C.E. Program

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# The Program

- Fully customized based on specific gaps
- Staff surveys
- Developed and established a Service Promise statement based on values
- Training on the key areas: Team Dynamics, Conflict, Communication
- Developed and established “Wildly Important Goals” and actionable measures
- Patron Pulse Check Survey
- Developed and established “Wildly Important Goals” and actionable measures – **“You said, we did”**

# RDCK'S Service Promise

**“Each day, we will create a safe and inclusive environment where everyone feels respected, cared for, and heard.”**



# Customer Service Pulse Check Survey

- 4 questions
- October 21 to November 21, 2025
- 1651 responses across all recreation complexes, Salmo & Area G, Regional Parks
- Target: 80% satisfaction
- Period: Past 3 months



# Customer Service Pulse Check Survey

Identified:

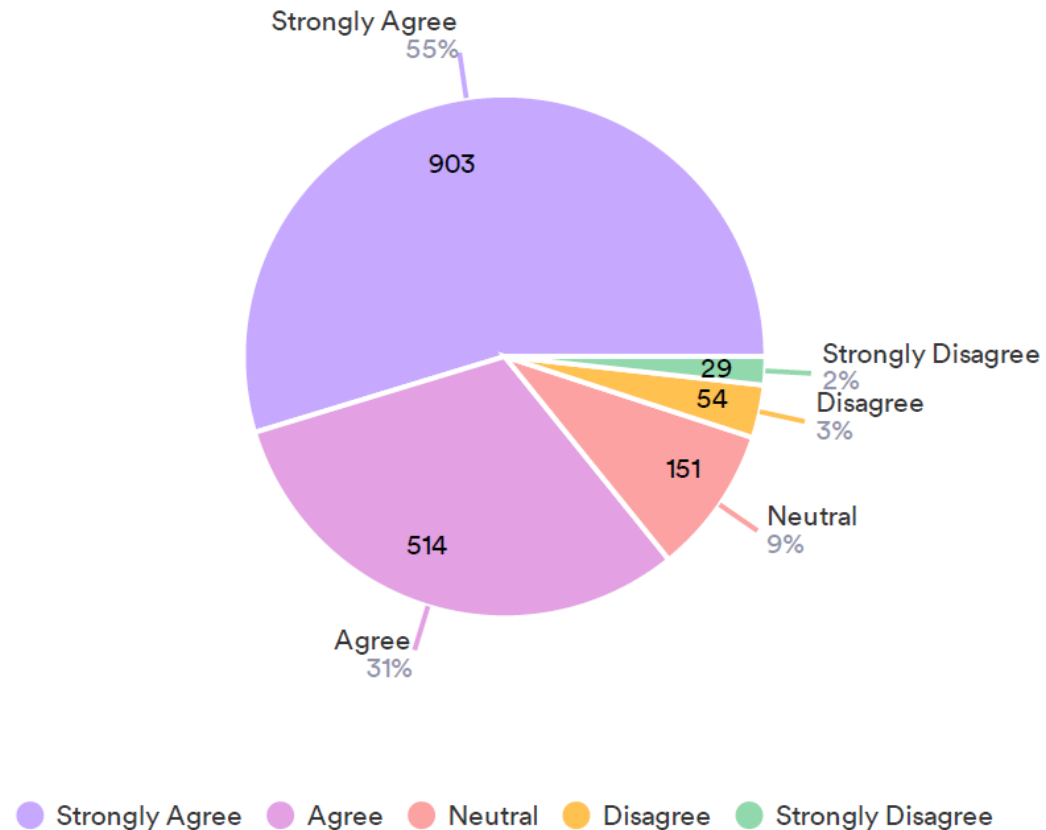
- where service is strongest and consistently excellent;
- where participants are signalling pressure points (especially communication & capacity); and
- practical recommendations for closing gaps and protecting what is already working very well



# Q1. Feeling respected, welcomed, and heard

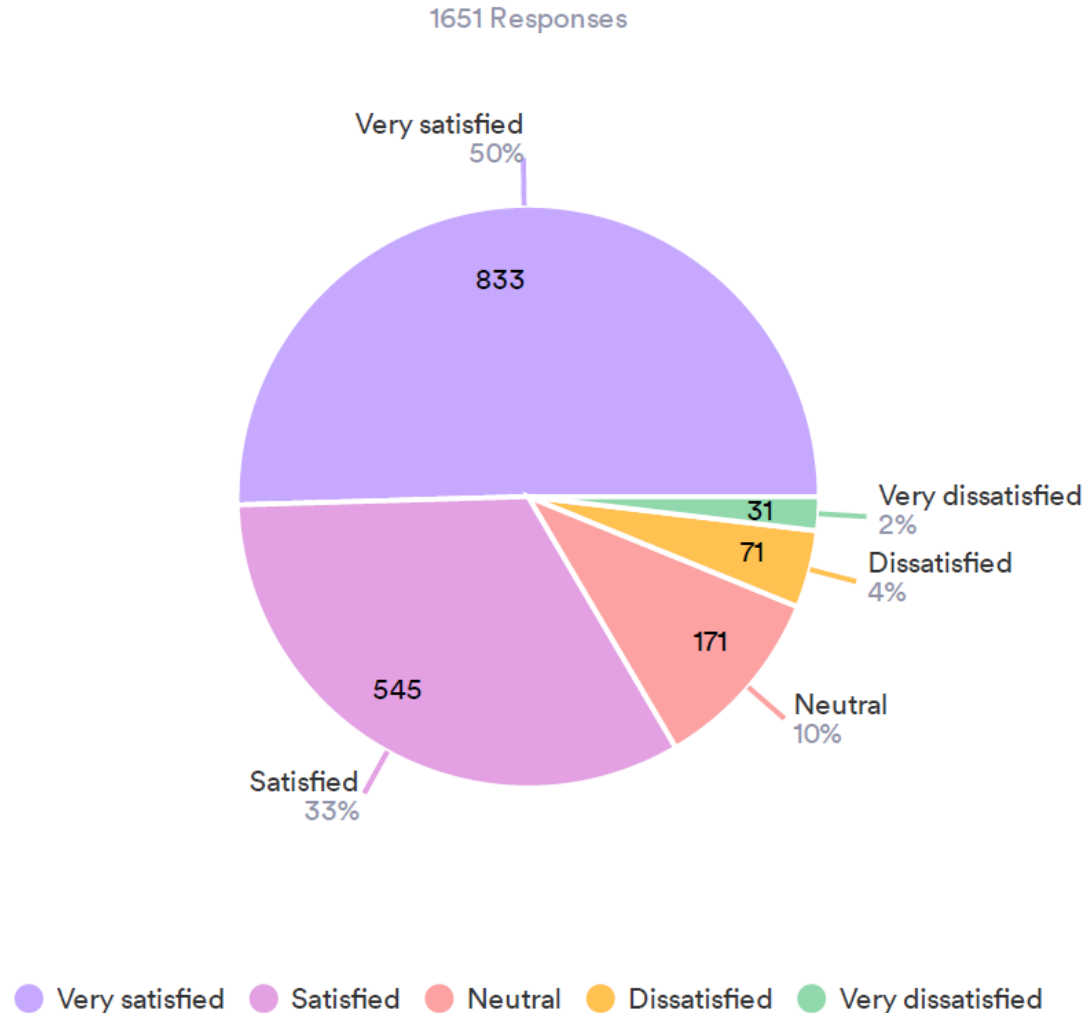
Thinking about your experiences in the past three (3) months, to what extent do you agree with the following statement: “During my interaction(s) with RDCK Community Service staff in person, by phone, or online (Email, Social Media, etc.), I felt respected, welcomed, and heard.”

1651 Responses



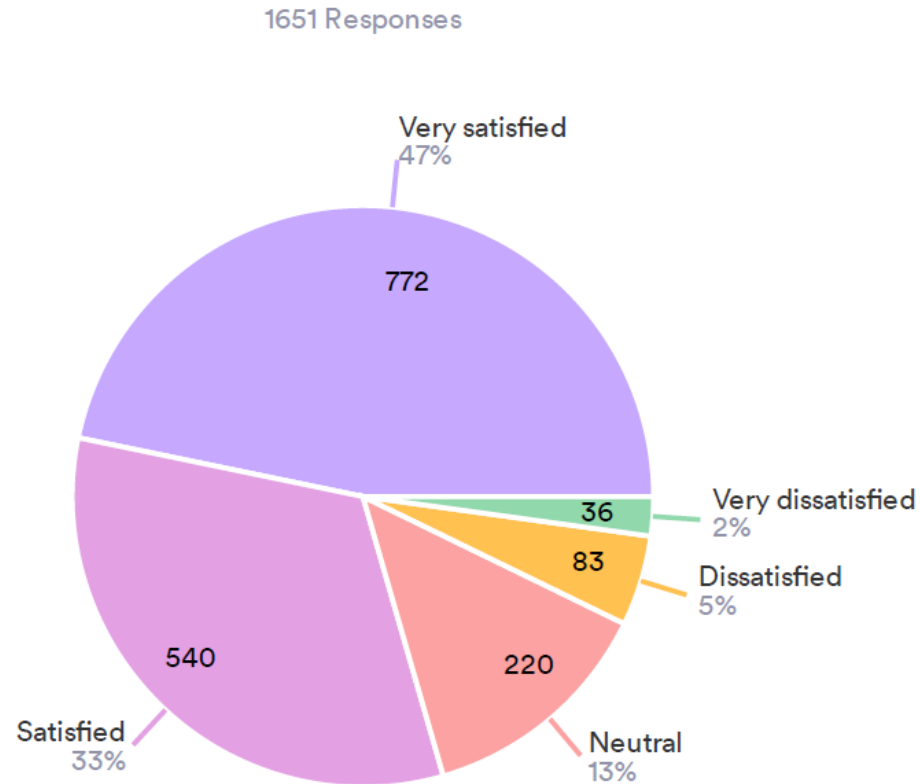
# Q2. Care, attentiveness, and overall service

In the past three (3) months, how satisfied were you with the level of care, attentiveness, and overall service you received from RDCK Community Services staff in person, by phone, or online (Email, Social Media, etc.)?



# Q3. Communication, clarity, and helpfulness

In the past three (3) months, how satisfied were you with the clarity and helpfulness of communication you received from RDCK Community Services staff in person, by phone, or online (Email, Social Media, etc.)?



● Very satisfied ● Satisfied ● Neutral ● Dissatisfied ● Very dissatisfied

# Major Outcomes



**Positive themes (friendly, caring, attentive staff; feeling respected and heard) established confidence and a standard.**



**Improvement themes (communication and inconsistencies across sites established specific and actionable opportunities.**



# **AECE'd IT!**

## **Handbook and Guide**

**Achieving Extraordinary Customer Experiences**

**Customer service is not a  
function. It's the experience  
people have in your  
organization**

# From Feedback to Visible Action

- Residents are already telling you what matters
- The gap is not insight, it's follow-through
- “You said, we did” builds credibility
- Consistency matters more than perfection

# At This Moment In Your Term

- What will your community remember?
- What still needs to be strengthened?
- What can you leave behind that lasts?
- How do you prepare the next council for success?



# Turning Insight Into Action

## **Workbook: From Insight to Action**

- Identify your current service gaps
- Sample staff survey
- Map where experiences break down
- Define 2–3 visible improvements
- Create your own “You said, we did” actions
- Align efforts across departments



# THANK YOU

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