

# Staff Report

Presented By: Amanda Monaghan, Community Development Officer

Meeting Date: December 8, 2025

Subject: Town of Saugeen Shores Tourism Study 2025

Attachment(s): Town of Saugeen Shores Tourism Study 2025 PowerPoint  
Economic Impact of Tourism in Saugeen Shores 2025

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## **Recommendation**

That Council receive the Town of Saugeen Shores Tourism Study report for information.

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## **Report Summary**

The Saugeen Shores Tourism Study provides comprehensive insights into visitor demographics, travel patterns, and spending behaviours, offering a baseline and foundation for developing economic development programs and tourism strategies. The study was conducted in 2025 using data from a variety of sources.

## **Background/Analysis**

The Tourism Study was produced as an outcome of the Planning and Development Division Highlights for 2025 and the 'Town of Saugeen Shores Tourism Study 2025' PowerPoint (attached) provides a detailed study, including maps and data sources used to determine the findings.

The 'Economic Impact of Tourism in Saugeen Shores 2025' document (attached) provides the complete data export from Statistics Canada using the Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (TREIM). The TREIM data was determined using Bruce County as the reference for regional impact. Statistics Canada collects the total number of visitors and total spend at a County level. With that data, an average spend per visitor was calculated. The average spend per visitor was applied to the number of visitors in Saugeen Shores. With the similarity and cross-over of visitors throughout Bruce County, this data was a good benchmark to estimate spending directly in Saugeen Shores.

## Summary of Findings

Understanding who visits Saugeen Shores—and how, when, and where they spend—enables the Town of Saugeen Shores to strengthen tourism promotion, business development, and infrastructure planning. This data supports decisions that influence economic growth, public service needs, and community well-being. By leveraging these insights, Saugeen Shores can continue to build a sustainable tourism economy that benefits both residents and visitors year-round.

## Visitor Trends

In 2024, Saugeen Shores welcomed an estimated 320,000 visitors, with visitation peaking in Q3 during the high season and declining into Q1 2025, consistent with historical seasonal patterns. Most visitors originated from Toronto and other large census subdivisions, with recent increases from London and Oakville, and a decline from Mississauga.

Family travel continues to dominate overnight stays, particularly among middle-aged and mature visitors. Developed by companies like Environics Analytics, a PRIZM segment is a unique lifestyle type within a market segmentation system that classifies neighborhoods based on geography, demographics, and psychographics. Key PRIZM visitor segments in Saugeen Shores—19, 21, 33, 41, and 25—represent middle-income, suburban and urban families and couples. Most visitors are aged 35–44 or 65+, reside in two- or four-person households, and are homeowners with above-average incomes (mean household income of \$164,749). They are typically well-educated professionals working in science or utilities sectors. Visitors from racialized communities represent 19%, with South Asian Canadians forming the largest group (9%).

## Overnight Stays

Visitors generated approximately 983,100 overnight stays in 2024. While total nights, visitors, and trips declined modestly compared to 2023 (-3.3%, -2.0%, and -3.5%, respectively), travel behaviour remained largely stable, emphasizing family-oriented, regional tourism.

## Economic Impact

Tourism in Saugeen Shores contributed an estimated \$15 million in direct Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024. This reflects spending in core tourism sectors including accommodation, food and beverage, retail, and recreation.

### Selected Industry Impacts:

- Retail Trade – \$2.66M
- Food & Beverage Services – \$2.70M
- Accommodation Services – \$2.05M
- Arts, Entertainment & Recreation – \$0.96M

### Selected Spending Impacts:

- Direct GDP – \$14.98M
- Direct Labour Income – \$7.59M

- Direct Municipal Taxes – \$160,834
- Direct Total Taxes – \$692,229

## **Tourism Business Profile**

Saugeen Shores supports 1,738 total businesses, including 99 tourism-related enterprises, primarily in accommodations and food services. The sector is largely composed of independent owner-operators, with an estimated 500 short-term rental units and 1,000 hotel rooms (Statistics Canada 2023; AirDNA 2023).

## **Key Takeaways**

The Tourism Study is expected to inform and align with the development of other Town strategies and plans, including the Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Saugeen Community Tourism Strategy proposed in 2026 with Saugeen First Nation. The data and insights generated through the Study will also enhance the Town’s ability to support community organizations, business improvement areas, local enterprises, and prospective businesses and investors.

## **Linkages**

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 4: Fostering a Vibrant Place to Live and Visit
- Business Plan Alignment: Development Services Division Highlight

## **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding**

No costs or revenue is associated with this report.

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