



DRAFT Lakefield Campground Utilization Study

Virtual Open House Information Boards



Study Purpose

- ▶ To undertake a high level analysis of existing conditions, industry trends and local feedback in order for Township Council to determine the future operational model for the Lakefield Campground.
- ▶ Build upon the Service Delivery Review for the Parks & Recreation Department by evaluating future operational models for the campground
- ▶ Based on this high level analysis and the direction from Council, Township Staff will undertake additional work based on the recommended model (e.g. negotiations, capital and operating implications, site design and layout, etc.)
- ▶ The scope of work excludes condition assessments, negotiations with operators, and economic impact analysis, nor does it defining a vision or end use for the property or Hague Point should the Township decide to cease operations.

Planning Process

<i>Completed Tasks</i>	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July
Initial Meeting	■					
Review of Campground Operations		■				
Campground Trends & Benchmarking		■				
Preliminary SWOT Analysis		■				
Community Survey (<i>ongoing</i>)			■			
Stakeholder & Advisory Committee Interviews			■			
Council Update				■		
<i>Upcoming Tasks</i>						
Draft Campground Utilization Study				■		
Council Update					■	
Public Commenting Opportunity					■	
Final Study & Council Presentation						■ ■



National & Provincial Outlook

- ▶ **Growing Participation:** In recent years, more people are camping including people that never camped before or did so infrequently in the past
- ▶ **Comfort & New Experiences:** People seeking new or unique camping experiences are driving growth including through “glamping”
- ▶ **Market Diversification:** More culturally diverse populations, Millennials and Gen Xers, and families with young children are camping
- ▶ **Surging Interest:** many campgrounds across Canada are already fully booked for the 2021 season, largely attributable to COVID-19
- ▶ **Economic Impact:** The Canadian camping industry generated \$4.7 billion in economic impacts along with 60,000 jobs and \$1 billion in taxes (CCRVC, 2015)
- ▶ **Municipal Campgrounds:** Of the 505 municipally-owned campgrounds in Canada, 51 are located in Ontario (CCRVC, 2015)

Site Context



Note: map boundaries are not exact nor to scale

- ▶ Hague Point is located along the Otonabee River and forms part of the Lakefield Marsh and wetland complex.
- ▶ The Marsh is a Provincially Significant Wetland and part of a Conservation Area
- ▶ Douglas Sports Centre, Lakefield Beach and the shoreline trail are publicly accessible but are distinct and separate components from the campground.



Peterborough County Official Plan Recreational Open Space Designation

The County Official Plan designates the park/campground as Recreational Open Space.

Section 6.3.2.6 b) - Permitted Uses

- ▶ The predominant use of land within the Recreational Open Space designation shall be for active and passive recreational and conservation uses. The uses permitted shall include public parks, pedestrian walkways and bicycle pathways, public access areas for such activities as cross-country skiing, angling and swimming and other similar public or private open space recreational uses. In addition, facilities such as arenas, swimming pools or other similar public recreational facilities shall also be permitted.

Section 6.3.2.6 d), i), c) – Site Specific Special Policy Areas

- ▶ Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, on those lands designated Recreational Open Space located adjacent to the westerly shoreline of the Otonabee River, south of Katchawanooka Lake and north of Hague Boulevard, the permitted uses shall include a campground owned and operated by the Township of Selwyn, or its delegate.

Existing Campground Operations

- Campsites:** 117 seasonal sites and 11 tenting sites identified on the operator's website. Of these sites: 53 are serviced with hydro, water and sewer; and 64 are serviced with hydro and water.
- Township Income:** The Township received an average of \$52,000 per year from the operator between 2017 and 2020
- Economic Impact:** Selwyn's EDBC and the Kawartha Chamber of Commerce indicate that the campground creates spin-offs for local business through retail, food, beverage, fuel sales, etc.

Township Operating Budget – Campground	2017	2018	2019	2020 (draft)
<u>Revenues</u>				
Campground Operating Agreement Fee	53,200	62,450	62,250	64,500
<u>Expenditures</u>				
Campground Wages & Payroll Benefits	2,650	2,450	2,600	1,800
Campground Maintenance	9,650	5,900	2,800	6,400
Net Operating Surplus	40,900	54,100	56,850	56,300

Note: the Township sets aside \$10,000 per year from the campground operating surplus through municipal reserves

Infrastructure Renewal Cost Estimates



Water and electrical services were installed in the mid-1970s and infrastructure is thus over 40 years old.

	Infrastructure Improvement	Electrical Upgrade to 30 Amp Service	Electrical Upgrade to 50 Amp Service	Total Estimate (2021 Dollars)
Area 1	\$487,000*	\$40,000	\$80,000	\$527,000 to \$567,000
Area 2	\$113,400**	\$32,200	\$40,000	\$145,600 to \$153,400
Area 3	\$0***	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$601,400	\$32,200	\$120,000	\$672,600 to \$721,400

* Includes replacement of watermain and sewer laterals/risers along with site/lane rehabilitation

** Includes replacement of watermain and risers along with site/lane rehabilitation

*** Infrastructure upgrades are not required for Area 3 and thus status quo is assumed

Source: DM Wills Associates Ltd. and Heffernan Electric, 2021

Summary of Community Consultations

The Options have been presented to Selwyn residents and campground/Hague Point stakeholder groups through:

- Community Survey (online and print)
- Workshops with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC), Trails Committee and Economic Development & Business Committee (EDBC)
- Interviews with the Kawartha Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Hague Point, Real Friends of Hague Point, and Lakefield Trail Stewardship Committee while Imagine the Marsh submitted a written brief
- Written submissions received from residents and project stakeholders
- Curve Lake First Nation has also been contacted

Community Survey: Survey Sample

1,311

Responses over the 4-
week period

58

Average Age of
Respondents

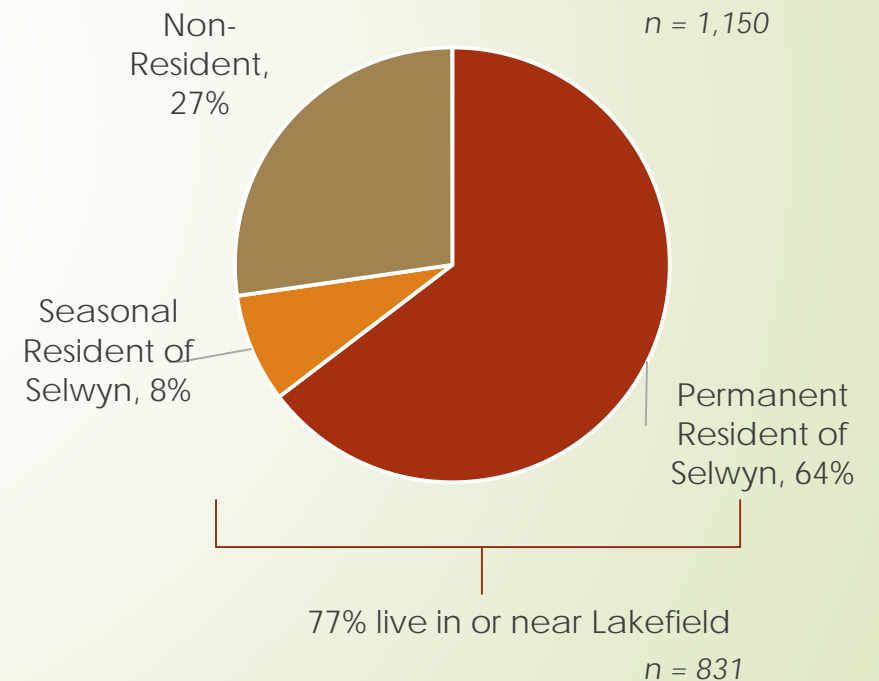
2.8

Persons per
Household

14%

Own a business
in Selwyn

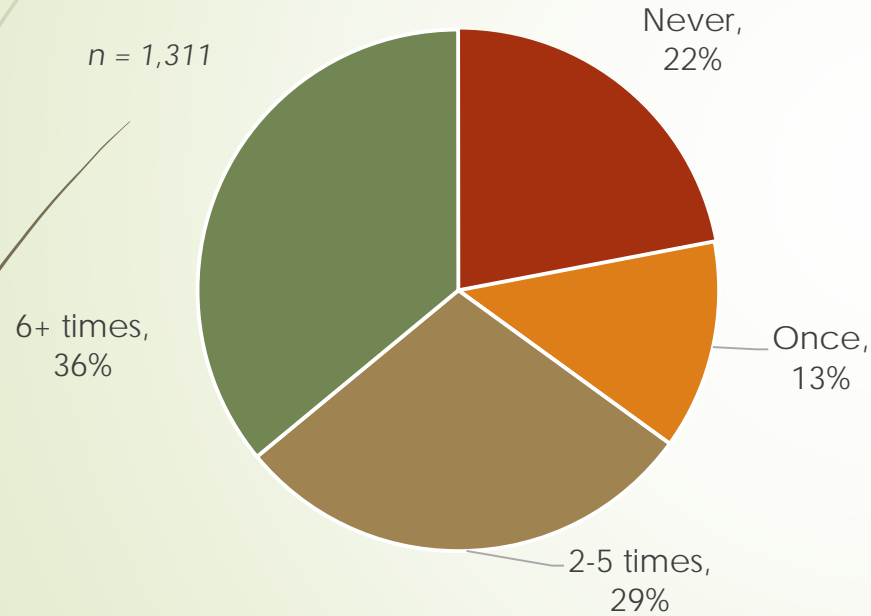
Residency Status



NOTE: Survey results are considered preliminary and may be subject to change as data is reviewed

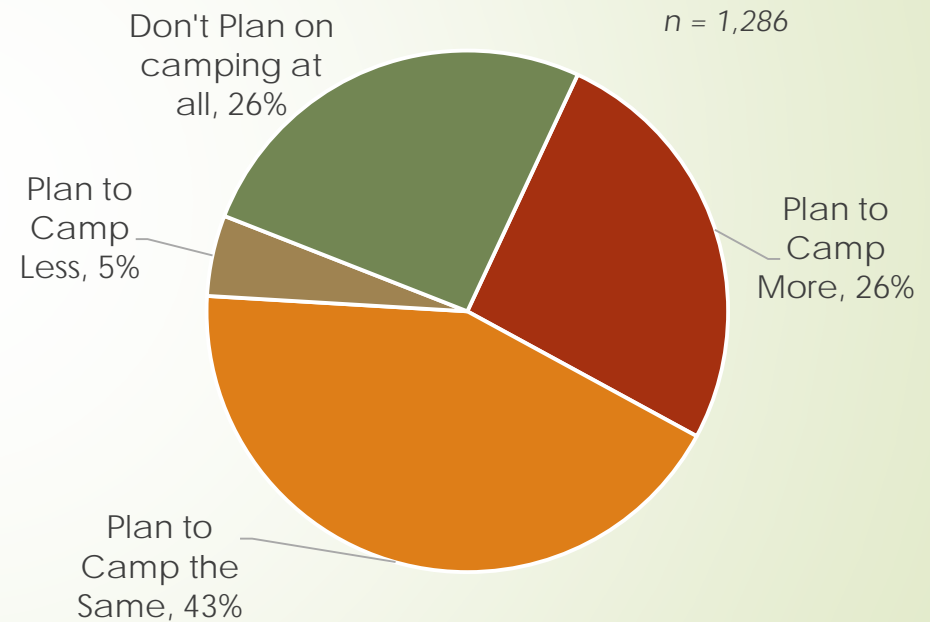
Community Survey: Interest in Camping

Campground Visits in a Typical Year



35% typically visit a municipally-operated campground

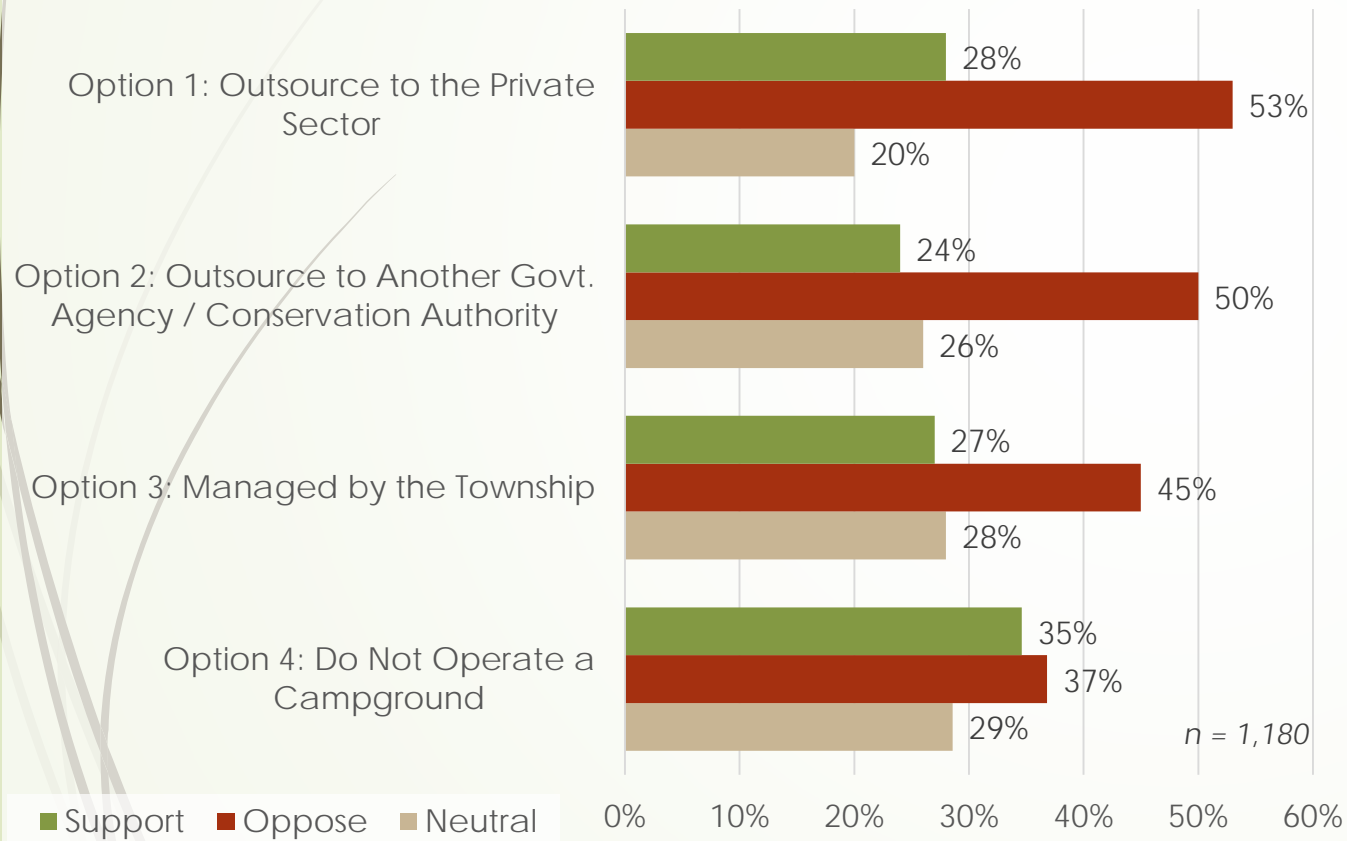
Plans to Camp after the Pandemic



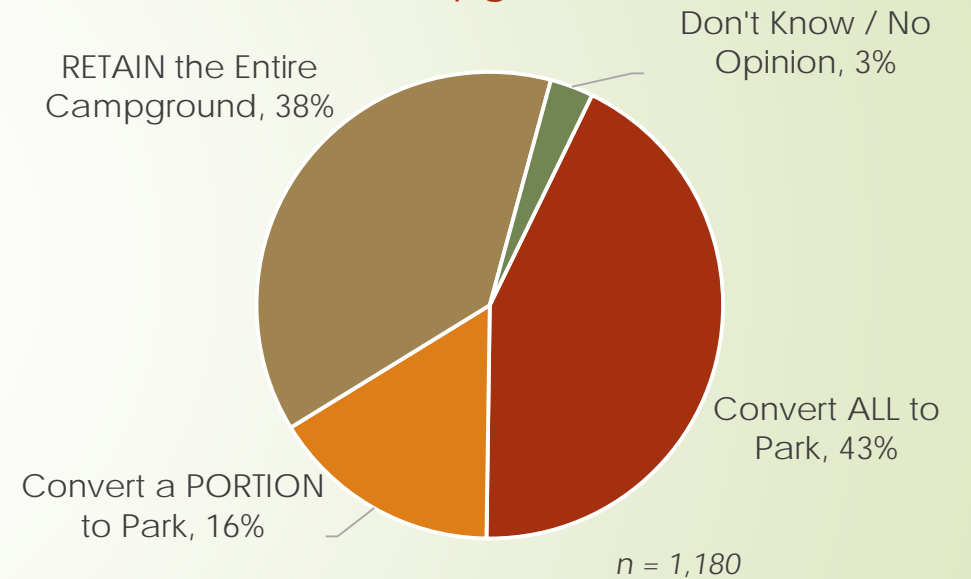
Respondents are most likely to prefer camping in a **Tent/Pop-Up**, followed by a **RV** and **Cabin**

Community Survey: Campground Options

Degree of Support / Opposition for Each Option



Support to Convert or Retain the Campground



Desired Use If Converting to Parkland:

1. Walking Trails - 92%
 2. Natural Areas - 90%
 3. Picnic Areas - 78%
 4. Playground - 44%
- n = 730



Advisory Committee Input


Notable themes and points raised by PRAC, Trails Committee and EDBC included:

- ▶ A number of PRAC, TC and EDBC members indicated that the ORCA option would represent a compromise between retaining campsites, continuing to have revenue coming in to the Township, and balancing environmental stewardship objectives
- ▶ The Township-operated option was identified as the least favourable option by PRAC and TC though EDBC suggested that having the Township retain operational control could mitigate issues/conflicts in the future
- ▶ There was recognition that even if pursuing Option 4, the type of park provided (e.g. sports fields vs naturalized park) would determine the impact on the Marsh
- ▶ Some noted that capital costs could be contained by adjusting the type of future servicing provided, changing the number or layout of sites, etc.
- ▶ While one committee expressed concern that a passive park could result in underutilization, another noted that conversion to parkland could attract more use



Feedback from Local Stakeholders

- Three stakeholder groups firmly believe campground operations should cease and that the land be used to provide a nature-based park experience. Some state that the campground restricts people from accessing the waterfront.
- Two organizations expressed hope that a compromise can be found so that camping can continue while improving the experience for park users. They state that the campground facilitates access for those that could not otherwise experience a waterfront property.
- Local business representatives and campers indicate that they support many local stores to buy groceries, fuel, alcohol and hardware. Business representatives think that a greater transient mix could encourage more spending in retail and entertainment sectors as well.
- Current campers indicate that they have had a positive experience with the operator, have formed a strong sense of community over the years (including with the broader Village), and support initiatives that would make camp operations more sustainable.
- A couple of groups are concerned that the current campground may not be operated in a manner that respects the environment while campers indicate that they are willing to work with the Township/operator and learn how they can help meet environmental objectives.



Discussions with Other Municipal Campground Operators

- ▶ **Operating philosophies:** operations range from enterprise models that compete with the private sector, subsidized models community services along with campgrounds primarily intended to support local festivals
- ▶ **Capital Reinvestment:** All reported some sort of concern with aging infrastructure, though to varying degrees – only one reported having a dedicated capital reserve fund that draws from their annual operating surplus
- ▶ **Seasonal vs Transient Sites:** Many noted that seasonal campers provide greater certainty in revenue and tend to require less day-to-day maintenance and enforcement, while overnight sites tend to generate more revenue per night but can be a challenge in terms consistent bookings, clean-up and enforcement
- ▶ **Third Party Management:** A few municipalities have explored third party management agreements at some point in the past but all reverted back to municipal operations (largely due to unmet expectations or better internal ROI)
- ▶ **Campground Conversion:** two municipalities that have recently closed campgrounds were contacted to understand their rationale in doing so

Evaluation of Study Options

1. Seek a Competitive Market Bid
2. Pursue an Operating Agreement with Otonabee Region Conservation Authority
3. Cease Campground Operations

Service Delivery Review Options no longer being contemplated:

- ▶ *Renew the agreement with the current operator (notice to not renew was issued in October 2020)*
- ▶ *Assume operations through the Parks & Department (based on Council resolution at Special Meeting of May 5, 2021)*



Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria have been refined and applied to assess Study Options.

1. **Fiscal & Economic** – operating revenue, economic spin-offs, capital renewal, etc.
2. **Environmental & Sustainability** – meeting sustainability goals, access to open space
3. **Public Transparency & Accountability** – accountability to public, operating risk associated with partners, etc.
4. **Business Operations** – alignment with municipal values, continuity of service, ability to influence operations, innovation in service delivery, etc.
5. **Township Staffing Implications** – level and cost of municipal staffing
6. **Integration with Public Services** – ability to integrate programs for the public, use of other municipal services, leverage existing municipal infrastructure, etc.

Study Option 1: Competitive Bid

Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
1. Fiscal & Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued revenue stream to reinvest in public assets or subsidize other municipal services• Operator is responsible for administrative and management costs• Economic spin-offs and tourist spending• Infrastructure renewal costs required
2. Environmental & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for non-compliance with municipal environmental expectations• Private operator may be less flexible in allowing general public to “walk through”
3. Public Transparency & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipal procurement process in place to ensure fair evaluation of bids• Operator may not be required to provide all business information to the public• Customer service is sole responsibility of operator• Potential for operator to prematurely withdraw from agreement

Study Option 1: Competitive Bid (continued)

Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
4. Business Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to “refresh” the agreement and increase benefits to the Twp.• Retains a core level of service provided for the past 70 years• Supports Department’s indirect service model, consistent with Rec. Services Plan• Operator may employ innovative practices and is nimble to respond to change in competitive market• Ability to influence decisions would occur before operating agreement is reached• Provisions/conditions imposed may affect the potential pool of bidders
5. Township Staffing Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Similar staffing implications as present (nominal)• Operator and campers provide indirect supervision - “eyes on the park”• Onus on operator to demonstrate it has required staff capacity and expertise
6. Integration with Public Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited integration potential with other municipal services

Study Option 2: Outsource to ORCA

Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
1. Fiscal & Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued revenue streams to reinvest in public assets or subsidize other municipal services• ORCA would be responsible for administrative and management costs• Economic spin-offs and tourist spending• Infrastructure renewal costs
2. Environmental & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORCA likely to meet or exceed municipal environmental protection goals• ORCA owns Imagine the Marsh and is likely to operate the campground in a sustainable manner
3. Public Transparency & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORCA is a public agency and governed by a Board of Directors that includes elected officials• Mechanisms in place to ensure transparency and accountability• Less likely that ORCA would prematurely withdraw from agreement, particularly for financial reasons• Changes to provincial funding model for Conservation Authorities may create longer-term uncertainty

Study Option 2: Outsource to ORCA (continued)


Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
4. Business Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to “refresh” the agreement and increase benefits to the Twp.• Retains a core level of service provided for the past 70 years• Supports Department’s indirect service model, consistent with Rec. Services Plan• ORCA has demonstrated experience in managing and operating campgrounds• Historical working relationship with ORCA• ORCA may be less nimble to respond immediately to changes in market conditions• Ability to influence decisions would occur before operating agreement is reached• ORCA’s existing campgrounds are primarily geared to transient or overnight rentals and do not permit year-round storage of trailers• Campers may not to have a single point of contact through ORCA’s staff structure
5. Township Staffing Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Similar staffing implications as present (nominal)• ORCA may be able to generate efficiencies through its own staffing and expertise• ORCA and campers provide indirect supervision - “eyes on the park”
6. Integration with Public Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORCA already has public programs in place• Experience in boating/small watercraft and associated rentals to generate new revenues

Study Option 3: Cease Operations

Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
1. Fiscal & Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid cost of replacing campground infrastructure• Other benefits would depend on end use• Costs of site decommissioning and redevelopment• Potential tax impact from loss of revenue• Eliminates economic spin-offs directly from campers unless end use offsets this loss
2. Environmental & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Result in long-term protection of Hague Point• Active park and investments in public amenities could attract greater usage• Potential of negative impacts if end-use is more intensive/detrimental than campground• Passive park could result in a similar level of use if it is not accessible or of interest to all populations (i.e. no net benefit)
3. Public Transparency & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong accountability as the Twp. would be responsible for operations• Re-imagination of the site would be guided by Council and Staff

Study Option 3: Cease Operations (continued)

Evaluation Grouping	Key Considerations
4. Business Operations	Would depend on end use, however, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of an established core service• Negative impact on campground users• Permanent action – cost-prohibitive to convert back to campground in future
5. Township Staffing Implications	Would depend on end use, however, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Twp. would assume daily maintenance and supervision• Twp would have to enforce illegal / undesirable activities such as encampments, unauthorized motor vehicles, etc.• Twp. operating costs can be expected to increase compared to present
6. Integration with Public Services	Would depend on end use



Preferred Option: Outsource the Lakefield Campground to ORCA

The Preferred Option has been identified on the basis of:

- ▶ Ability to Mitigate Environmental Concerns
- ▶ Proven Experience
- ▶ Continuity of Service
- ▶ Retention of Economic Benefits
- ▶ Positive Revenue Generation Potential
- ▶ Reinvesting in Community Assets



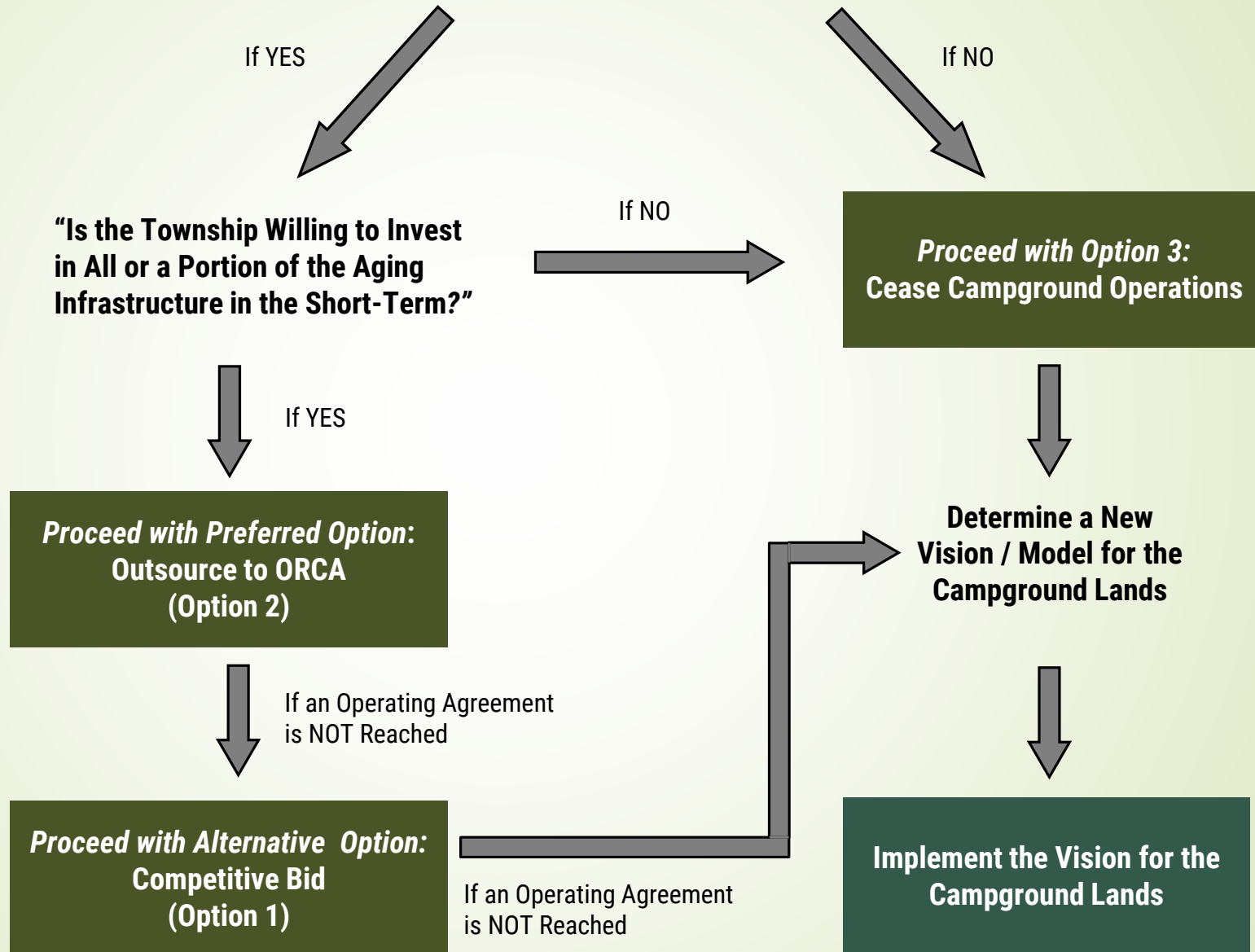
Alternative Option: Competitive Bid

In the event that the Township is unable to reach an agreement with ORCA to manage the Lakefield Campground, it is recommended that a Request For Proposal or Expression of Interest be released for a competitive bidding process.

- ▶ The Township can craft a Terms of Reference that articulates its values, objectives and expectations for a new campground operator
- ▶ Continuing to provide the campground offers greater flexibility to adjust to future circumstances than would otherwise be afforded if it were permanently closed
- ▶ issuing an RFP or EOI would be draw from a larger pool of proponents through which greater competition may result in the Township being able to negotiate a higher annual revenue contribution
- ▶ Retaining the campground would presumably generate substantially greater revenues (and reduce tax-impact) than if converted to passive parkland

Decision / Implementation Framework

"Should the Township of Selwyn operate a Campground at Hague Point?"



Task	Suggested Timing
1. Engage ORCA to confirm interest	2021 Q3
2. Assuming approval to proceed, discuss areas of common interest and alignment, anticipated roles, responsibilities and expected outcomes.	2021 Q3
3. Refine roles, responsibilities and expected outcomes for each party in a draft Operating Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).	2021 Q3 to Q4
4. Present the draft Operating Agreement/MOU to Township Council and ORCA Board of Directors and carry out mutually accepted revisions as necessary.	2021 Q4
5. a) Present the final Operating Agreement/MOU to Township Council and the ORCA Board of Directors for approval. b) <i>If agreement is NOT reached/approved, initiate RFP/EOI for the Competitive Bid Option and proceed through the municipal procurement process.</i>	2022 Q1 2022 Q1
6. Assuming approval to proceed is received from both parties, initiate necessary site works and improvements to the campground (majority of works assumed upon expiry of current campground agreement in October 2022).	2022 Q2 to 2023 Q1
7. ORCA assumes management of Lakefield Campground.	2023 Q2



Operating Agreement Considerations

- **CAMPSITES:** Total number of campsites along with the mix of seasonal and/or transient campsites
- **PUBLIC ACCESS:** Provisions to ensure equitable availability and booking of campsites to the public
- **PROPERTY & STORAGE:** How to address campers' property along with if/how to treat off-season storage
- **TRANSITION:** "Phase-in" period for campers to adapt to new operating policies
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Values and expectations with respect to the campground's role in maintaining environmental health/integrity of Hague Point
- **CAPITAL COSTS:** Upfront and/or ongoing contributions to repair or replace capital infrastructure
- **MAINTENANCE:** Maintenance responsibilities assigned to each party
- **COMPENSATION:** Annual compensation structure
- **TERM:** Length of term for the agreement, renewal provisions, sunset clauses
- **OTHER:** Others provisions as determined through further investigation and third party discussions



Next Steps in the Planning Process

JUNE 2021: Public Commenting Period (closes June 25, 2021)

JULY 2021: Finalize the Lakefield Campground Utilization Study
Council Presentation #3

Questions and Comments about the Lakefield Campground Utilization Study may be directed to:

Tiffany Jacobs, Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant

Email: tjacobs@selwyntownship.ca

Telephone: (705) 292-9507 ext. 243

Physical Address: 1310 Centre Line, Selwyn, Ontario, K9J 6X5

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 270, Bridgenorth, Ontario, K0L 1H0