
together with [its] comments and recommendations”, unless Section 25(3) applies wherein the Board has the ability to refuse to “authorise” an application.

In this instance, Section 25(3) is seen to apply as the property “is zoned by bylaw to permit [an] agricultural or farm use” and an amendment to the Electoral Area “C” Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw will be required in order for the development to proceed.

Section 30(4) of the Act grants the Board the authority to not “authorise” an application to proceed to the ALC if the land is zoned by bylaw to permit an agricultural or farm use, or an amendment to an Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw or Zoning Bylaw would be required for the proposal to proceed.

Site Context:

The subject area is approximately 5.5 ha in area and is situated at the north-east corner of the intersection of Secrest Hill Road and Covert Plan is 6.5 km north of the Town of Oliver. It is understood that the parcel is comprises various structures associated with an existing campground use.

The surrounding pattern of development is generally characterised by an agricultural operation (Covert Farm) to the north and un-developed Crown land to the east, west and south.

Background:

The area under application represents Crown land that was originally surveyed in 1921 as part of the subdivision of the valley bottom into smaller agricultural parcels, while available Regional District records indicate that building permits have not previously been issued for this property.

The Regional District has held a License of Occupation on an approximately 3.62 ha parcel of Crown land where Loose Bay Campground is located for the past 20-25 years. The Loose Bay Campground Society, an independent agricultural industry group has managed the operation of the campground on behalf of the Regional District.

At its meeting of January 19, 2017, the Regional District Board adopted Bylaw No. 2757, 2016, the purpose of which was to establish a Loose Bay Campground Service in Electoral Area “C”. This bylaw allowed the Regional District to operate a campground, enter into contracts, own assets (land, water connection pipe, and any other improvements / infrastructure) and borrow for a capital purpose and addressed the discontinuance of a potable water supply from the neighbouring property to the campground use in 2014.

At its meeting of April 27, 2020, the Loose Bay Campground Society resolved to dissolve in response to the challenges associated with continuing to run the campground during the current provincial health emergency related to COVID-19.

On May 22, 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture announced funding in the amount of \$60,000 to assist with the hiring of a COVID-19 coordinator, cleaning and hygiene measures, as well as printing educational materials and signage.

Under the Electoral Area “C” Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 2452, 2008, the subject property is currently designated Agriculture (AG), and is shown as comprising an Important Ecosystem Area (IEA) under Schedule ‘C’ of the bylaw.

Under the Electoral Area “C” Zoning Bylaw No. 2453, 2008, the property is currently zoned Agriculture Two (AG2) which permits a range of uses related to agriculture but does not permit “campground” as a permitted use (this use is otherwise permitted in the Campground Commercial (CT2) Zone).

The subject area is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and has been classified as “Residential” (Class 01) by BC Assessment.

Analysis:

In considering this proposal, Administration notes that the “Loose Bay” campground has a long history of serving the needs of the migrant farm labour community in Electoral Area “C” and that an objective of the OCP is “to encourage the agricultural sector’s improvement and expansion by pursuing supportive land use policies within and adjacent to farming areas.”

This objective is supported by a policy that seeks to support “establishing housing for year round farm help and seasonal farm workers” and, while a campground is not seen to equate with the provision of dwelling units for farm labour, it does fill a niche in relation to seasonal workers.

Formalising the “Loose Bay” campground would further these objectives as it provides an important accommodation option for migrant farm labourers working at the various orchards, vineyards and other agricultural operations in the area.

Formalisation of the use will also allow for an upgrading of infrastructure to provide to patrons of the campground, such as improved washroom, laundry and shower facilities. It has been shown in the past that agricultural workers will come to the area, and not all can be housed on the farms where they would be working. In 2020, during the pandemic, the province indicated they would prefer agricultural workers to be in supervised accommodation hubs, and that camping on unsupervised Crown land should be discouraged.

While it is recognised that the parcel immediately to the north (Covert Farms) has a long history of agricultural use, the area under application appears to have a longer history of not being used for agricultural pursuits. Despite being designated as ALR, Administration considers that its current use by migrant farm labour exceeds its agricultural potential.

Conversely, Administration recognises that the OCP does speak to encouraging new tourist commercial uses to lands not in the ALR. While lands capable of accommodating such a campground use outside of the ALR likely exist, it is not clear that development of such lands are feasible or provide the same level of convenience as the current location. Moreover, refusal to “authorise” this application will likely require the closure of “Loose Bay”.

In summary, Administration is supportive of the proposed Non-Farm Use application being authorized to proceed to the ALC.

Should this application be approved by the ALC, an amendment to the Electoral Area “C” OCP and Zoning Bylaws will be required in order to amend the current zoning from AG1 to CT2 in order to allow for a commercial campground use.

Alternatives:

1. THAT the RDOS Board “authorize” the application to allow a commercial campground (“Loose Bay”) as a non-farm use on and around the parcel located at 500 Secrest Hill Road (Block A, Plan KAP1729, District Lot 2450S, SDYD) to proceed to the Agricultural Land Commission; OR
2. THAT the Board of Directors defers making a decision and directs that the proposal be considered by the Electoral Area “C” Advisory Planning Commission (APC); OR
3. THAT the application be denied.

Respectfully submitted:



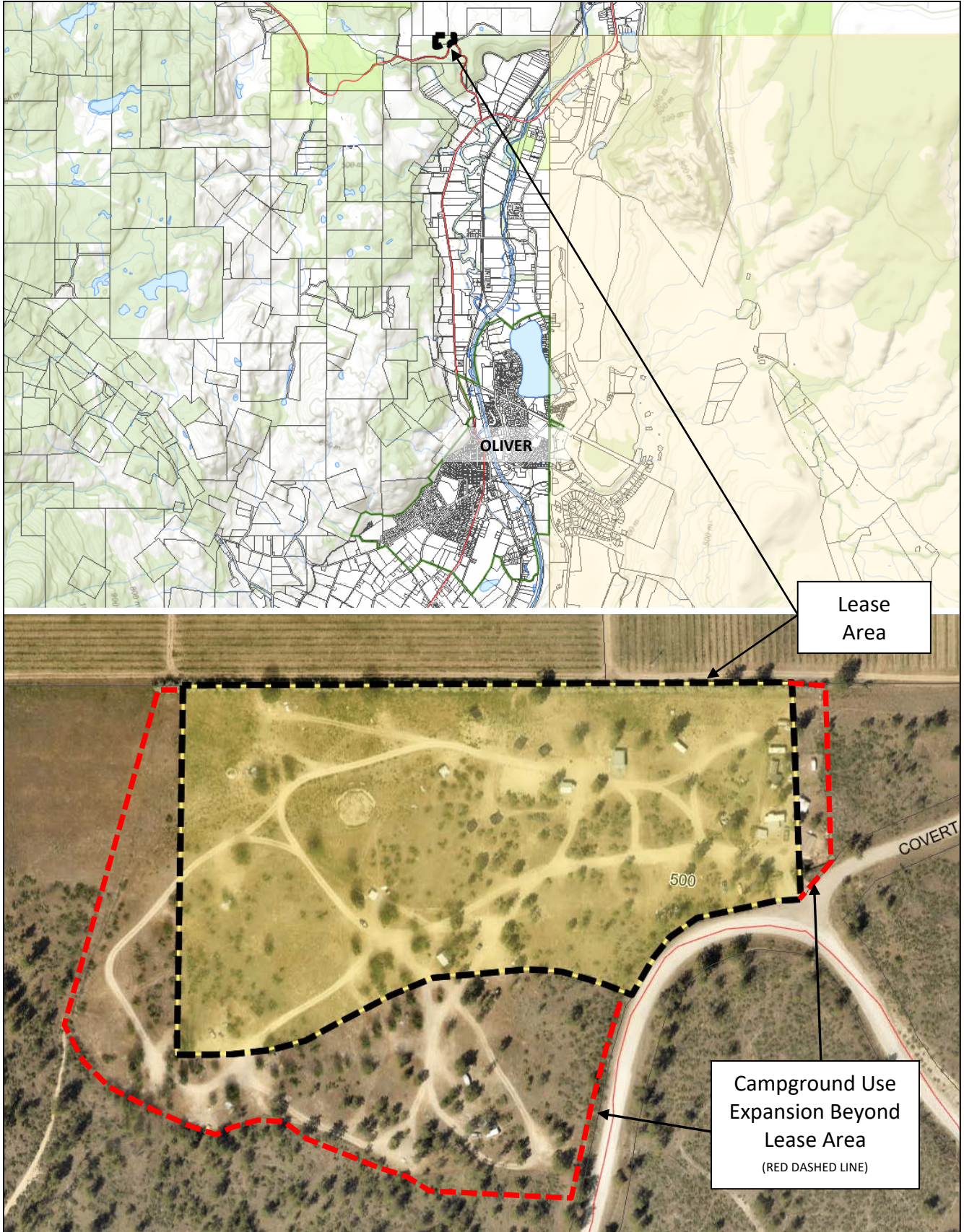
C. Garrish, Planning Manager

Attachments: No. 1 – Context Maps

No. 2 – Site Plan

No. 3 – Site Photo

Attachment No. 1 – Context Maps



Attachment No. 2 – Site Plan



Attachment No. 3 – Site Photos

