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# Evaluation of the Diversified Accommodations Program

**FEBRUARY 2026**



Cover: oTENTik, Grasslands National Park, 2016.

Ce document est disponible en français.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

Table 3: Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>Names in Full</b>
BIA	Basic Impact Assessment
CFOD	Chief Financial Officer Directorate
DRR	Departmental Results Report
ERVE	External Relations and Visitor Experience Directorate
PCRS	Parks Canada Reservation System
PRIA	Preapproved Routine Impact Assessment
RPAD	Real Property and Assets Directorate
The Fund	National Accommodations Fund
The Program team	The Visitor Experience Infrastructure team - Accommodations
The Program	Diversified Accommodations Program
VE	Visitor Experience



# About the Evaluation

# Evaluation of the Diversified Accommodations Program

Consistent with the requirements of the Treasury Board Policy on Results (2016) and associated Directive on Results and Standard on Evaluation, this evaluation examines program relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency for the period between 2018-19 and 2023-24.

The scope is limited to accommodations acquired through the National Accommodations Fund (2014- 2020). Accommodations acquired outside of this Fund (i.e., cabins, yurts, etc.) are not included. Parks Canada evaluation staff collected data and conducted field work between June 2024 and January 2025.

Data from multiple lines of evidence were collected for the evaluation. These included:

- Document and data review;
- Key informant interviews;
- Benchmarking exercise and literature review;
- Social media and media scans; and
- Site visits to the following sites:
  - Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site;
  - Grasslands National Park;
  - Rideau Canal National Historic Site; and
  - Forillon National Park.

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Questions	1. To what extent does the Program align with Parks Canada’s priorities?  2. How does the Program respond to the needs of Canadians?	3. To what extent has the program met its intended objectives?  4. What kind of supports did field units receive in implementing the program?	5. To what extent is the program efficiently delivered?

# Program Profile



# Program Profile

The Diversified Accommodations Program supported the development of unique overnight offers and provided visitors with new ways to experience and connect with Canada’s heritage places.

The Diversified Accommodations Program (the Program) was created in 2011 and was meant to help respond to a decline in camping at Parks Canada in the early 2000s as well as international trend towards more services and comfort at camping sites. Through developing and implementing alternative accommodation options, the Program was intended to improve the economic sustainability of Parks Canada’s operations by attracting new visitors and retaining current markets. A timeline of key dates and milestones for the Program is provided in Figure 1 below.

## The Diversified Accommodations Fund

The Visitor Experience (VE) Infrastructure Camping and Accommodations (the Program team) delivered the National Accommodation Fund (the Fund), which funded the development of overnight accommodations between 2013 and 2020. The oTENTik was introduced in 2013 and, following further research and development, two additional types of accommodations were introduced in 2017: the MicrOcube and Ôasis. An overview of the different diversified accommodations options is provided in Figure 2 (page 10).

## Unit fabrication

The oTENTik and Ôasis units were purchased from Biome, a Québec-based firm who designed, fabricated and distributed units across the country. With the initiation of that contract, a standing offer was put in place for replacement parts and maintenance. This contract was set to expire in 2024-25 but was extended through the 2025-26 fiscal year. The MicrOcube unit was designed by Parks Canada and manufactured by multiple contractors.

Figure 1: Diversified Accommodations Program Timeline (2011-12 to 2025-26)

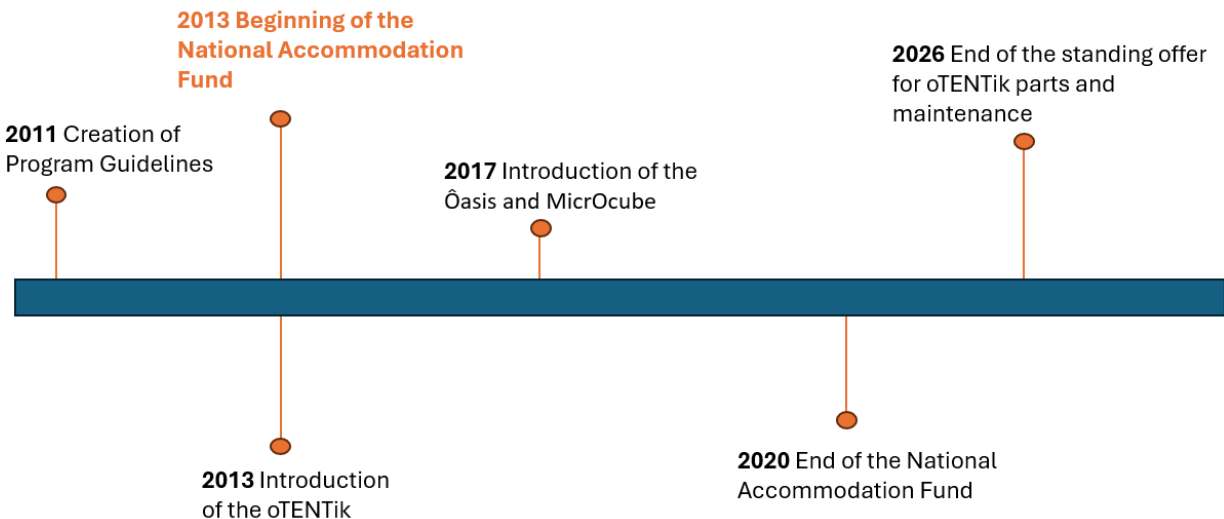


Figure 2: Diversified accommodations offers

<p><b>oTENTik (2013)</b></p> <p>Capacity: 6 people.</p> <p>Possible services: wood, propane or electricity heating, electric or solar lighting.</p> <p>Seasonality: 3 or 4 seasons depending on upgrades made.</p>	<p><b>Ôasis (2017)</b></p> <p>Capacity: 2 adults and 2 children.</p> <p>Possible services: wood, propane or electricity heating, electric or solar lighting.</p> <p>Seasonality: 3 seasons.</p>	<p><b>MicrOcube (2017)</b></p> <p>Capacity: 2 people.</p> <p>Possible services: electrical unit, propane heating.</p> <p>Seasonality: 3 seasons, depending on upgrades made.</p>
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Images 1-6: Parks Canada (PC) Image Bank

### Units installed

Overall, the Fund provided \$15 million to field units to support the construction and installation of diversified accommodations. During that time, field units installed 470 units in 38 different locations. The majority of these were oTENTiks (n=428).

Table 4 provides a breakdown of the number of different accommodation types installed as well as the current inventory of units. The Fund did not cover ongoing maintenance costs and these were expended from field unit budgets. Field units remain responsible for these costs.

Table 4: Number of oTENTik, Ôasis & MicrOcube units

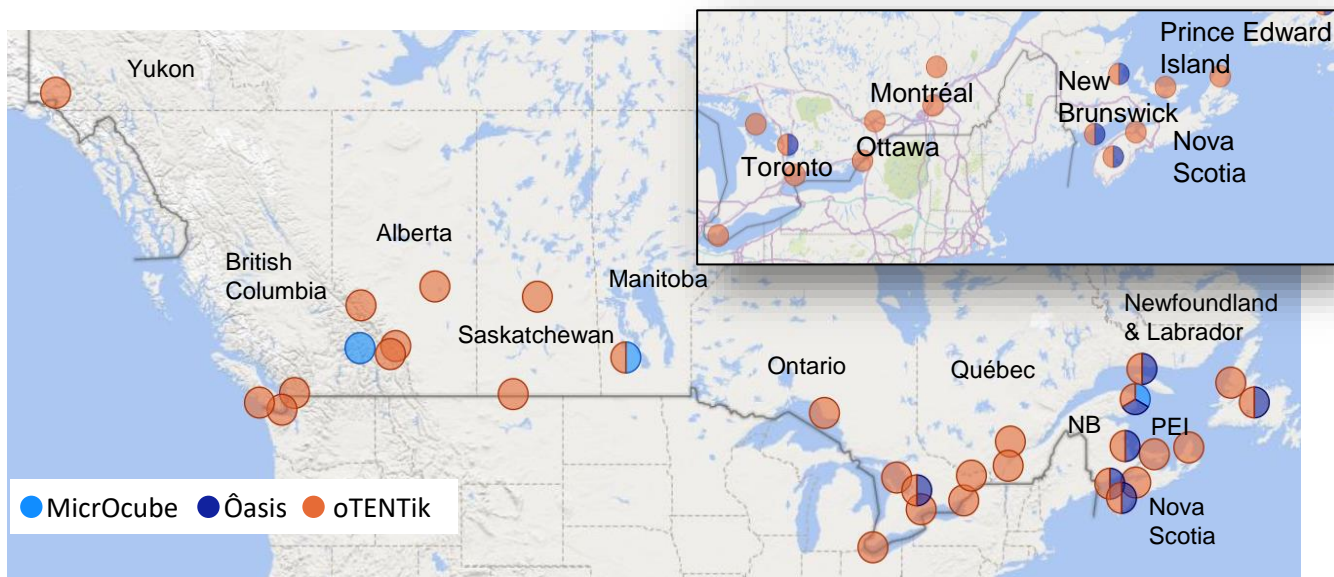
Type of unit	# of units funded	Inventory (2023-24)
oTENTik	428	418
Ôasis	37	27
MicrOcube	5	5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>450</b>

Source: Program documents.

Additionally, Figure 3 on the following page represents the locations of units that appeared in the Parks Canada Reservation System (PCRS) in 2023-24. See Appendix 2 for a complete 2023-24 Program inventory by site.

Note: A number of units have been decommissioned. Details are discussed on page 27.

Figure 3: Diversified accommodation units by location, 2023-24



### Program Guidelines

Created in 2011, the Program Guidelines provide direction and guidance for the management of diversified accommodations. The document defines the roles and responsibilities for the Program and outlines the key principles that guided the development of the Program.

During the planning phase of the evaluation, the Program identified that the objectives identified in the Guidelines remain relevant to current Program delivery. As such, some of these principles were used to guide evaluation questions. Throughout the report, there are findings related to each of the following principles:

- **Visitor experience:** Diversified accommodation offers will be based on needs and expectations of visitors;
- **Environmental impact reduction:** Sound environmental practices and efforts to minimize consumption of resources and the reduction of waste;
- **Environmental compliance:** Meeting appropriate environmental legislation and standards;
- **Accessibility:** Efforts to provide accessible options, where feasible; and
- **Cost recovery:** Following a cost-recovery model that considers the amortization of the investment, maintenance and operation costs, thus ensuring no deficits are incurred.

### Roles and Responsibilities

According to the Program Guidelines, the Program is currently administered by the External Relations and Visitor Experience (ERVE) Directorate and the Operations Directorate. Roles and responsibilities are as follows:

#### Visitor Experience Infrastructure – Camping and Accommodations Team

- Program management, updating program guidelines, and providing approvals;
- Providing policy support and advice to field units; and
- Facilitating national procurement processes.

#### Operations

- Managing and implementing diversified accommodations offers at sites;
- Ensuring financial sustainability; and
- Conducting maintenance and repairs.

Following the sunset of the Fund in 2020, the Program team continued to conduct research studies, respond to questions from sites, manage the contract, and provide advice on maintenance concerns and accessibility issues. For a more detailed description of current roles and responsibilities, please see Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities.



# Key Findings



# Relevance

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## Expectations

## Findings

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### Evaluation question 1:

**To what extent did the Program align with Parks Canada's priorities?**

The Program aligned with relevant Parks Canada priorities.

It was found that the Program aligned with Parks Canada's priorities of attracting new audiences, increasing accessibility, and promoting environmental sustainability.

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### Evaluation question 2:

**How did the Program respond to the needs of Canadians?**

The Program aligned with national and international trends.

Data demonstrated that diversified accommodations offers aligned with national and international trends for greater privacy and comfort in camping.

The Program caters to the diverse needs and preferences of Canadians.

Efforts are being made to meet the camping needs and preferences of Canadians. However, additional data collection on visitor demographics and visitor satisfaction would help inform decision-making.

There is a visitor demand for diversified accommodations at Parks Canada sites.

Evidence found that visitor demand for diversified accommodation units has been stable between 2018-19 to 2022-23, with an increase in 2023-24.

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# Alignment with Parks Canada Strategies

Expectation: The Program aligns with relevant Parks Canada priorities.

Finding: It was found that the Program aligned with Parks Canada’s priorities of attracting new audiences; increasing accessibility; and promoting environmental sustainability.

Since its inception, the Program has aligned with several overarching Parks Canada strategies. This alignment was found in the Program principles (as presented in the Program Guidelines), and in additional supporting documentation. In the case of efforts to attract new audiences, the Program aligned well with the On-Target Strategies, which are outlined in greater detail below.

### Attracting new audiences

The 2011 On Target Strategy listed the Program as an initiative in support of its objective to: “diversify and renew visitor experience opportunities to attract and grow target market segments.” This objective continued in the 2019-20 to 2022-23 On Target Strategy, which maintained an emphasis on investing in visitor infrastructure to attract new audiences.

Furthermore, interviewees indicated that attracting new segments of visitors was a key priority driving the implementation of the Program at their field units. This is discussed in greater depth on the following page (p. 15: Diverse Needs and Preferences of Canadians).

### Accessibility and environment

As mentioned, accessibility and environmental sustainability are also Program principles. The principle of accessibility aligns with the Parks Canada 2022-2025 Accessibility Action Plan and the principles of environmental impact and environmental compliance align with the 2023-2027 Departmental Sustainability Strategy. These links are further discussed on pages 23 and 24. Further, these two areas were identified by interviewees as guiding Program implementation at their sites.



Image 7: Kouchibouguac National Park and National Historic Site. PC Image Bank.

# National & International Trends

Expectation: The Program aligns with national and international trends in camping and accommodations.

Finding: Data demonstrated that diversified accommodations offers aligned with national and international trends for greater privacy and comfort in camping

This section explores how the Program aligns with larger trends within the camping and outdoor recreation sector and was informed by a literature review and benchmarking exercise. Data analysed highlighted that the Program aligns with larger domestic and international trends in the camping and outdoor recreation sector. This includes a 14% increase in overall average occupancy rates between 2018 and 2024 (see page 16 for more information on occupancy rates).

### Similarities among agencies

Within the benchmarking exercise, there were broad similarities found between the Program at Parks Canada and those being run through Ontario Parks, Sépaq, and the National Capital Commission (see Appendix 3 for a full matrix of findings).

More specifically, Parks Canada's accommodations were roughly similar in aesthetic, capacity, and pricing to the comparable agencies reviewed.

Popular ready-to-camp styles across the review were prospector-style canvas tents (i.e., oTENTik) and cube-like miniature cabins (i.e., MicrOcube).

### Alignment with trends

The Program aligns with the literature around the growth of glamping, a style of camping with access to more comfortable amenities such as roofs or beds, in the 2000s and 2010s. It also aligns with an observed shift in campers' expectations for comfort and privacy. This was supported by the benchmarking analysis, which identified ready-to-camp options at all of the reviewed park agencies, largely developed in the same time frame as the Program.

Interestingly, the literature review identified an increase in interest in roofed accommodations after the pandemic, which aligned with the increases demonstrated on page 11 at Parks Canada's sites. It was also found that many of the reviewed agencies were continuing to invest in the construction of glamping and ready-to-camp units. This suggests a continued contemporary demand for the accommodations.

## Diverse Needs & Preferences of Canadians

Expectation: The Program caters to the diverse needs and preferences of Canadians.

Finding: Efforts are being made to meet the camping needs and preferences of Canadians. However, additional data collection on visitor demographics and visitor satisfaction would help inform decision-making.

Visitor experience, including meeting the different needs and expectations of visitors, is a guiding principle outlined in the Program Guidelines. It was found that some sites implementing the Program have begun to make efforts to align to the diversity of visitors. To inform the analysis, a literature review was completed to better understand needs and expectation of visitors in the camping sector.

### Barriers to camping

Literature analysed revealed that certain demographics (newcomers, racialized communities, lower-income individuals) experience barriers to park access.

It was found that there is no single factor preventing access, although most scholars point to interconnected socioeconomic, structural, and cultural factors and could include factors such as access to transportation and cost.

While only part of the picture, some factors identified as barriers included:

- lack of access to camping equipment;
- inexperience with camping; and
- cultural preferences for developed amenities.

In addition, a comprehensive study commissioned by the Government of Northwest Territories, Ontario Parks, and British Columbia Parks found that new Canadians showed greater interest in camping in cabins than in tents or RVs.

Diversified accommodations options offered by Parks Canada inherently better meet the needs of visitors who may not have the required equipment for traditional camping (i.e., tent, camping mattress, etc.) and show a greater interest in a cabin-like structure. This aligns with data collected indicating that field unit staff perceive the Program to appeal to diverse visitors who do not own camping equipment and/or are inexperienced campers.

### Visitor needs

Sites have made efforts to adapt diversified accommodations offers to meet the diverse visitor needs. Some efforts align with the barriers identified in the benchmarking and literature review and include leveraging partnerships with local community groups to expand their offers.

Some examples include:

- housing community artist-in-residence programs for cultural and artistic organizations;
- using diversified accommodations for Learn-to-Camp programming targeting new Canadians;
- facilitated overnight camping experiences for organizations serving diverse communities (people with disabilities, etc.); and
- clustered into a “village” format to accommodate larger groups.

### Visitor demographics

There were some differences in visitor demographics found across locations, as indicated by data from Camping Reports (Parks Canada Social Science Branch). These reports highlighted variation in group size and composition.

It was found that many diversified units were reserved approximately half the time by adults with children and/or youth, while campsites were booked at a higher rate (e.g., sometimes 70% or more) by adults only, therefore supporting the appeal to families. This presents an opportunity for sites to use this information to further meet the needs (i.e., additional cots for rent, group reservation options, etc.).

### Data collection

At the time of booking, the Parks Canada Reservation System (PCRS) records information that includes party size, admission types (i.e. adult, senior, or youth), and postal code. Although useful, this data does not capture further demographic details, such as race, ethnic background, or socioeconomic background.

### Visitor satisfaction

Some sites collect print comment cards to obtain feedback from visitors. These are collected on a site-by-site basis and vary in focus from overall comments on the entire visitor offer to more focused questions on diversified accommodations units. Through the comment cards, oTENTik units have generally received positive feedback while the Ôasis units have faced some criticism for issues with humidity and discomfort during warm weather. Comments were also made that the need for visitors to provide their own bedding is a challenge, especially for those traveling from outside the region.

Anecdotally, site staff shared that feedback from visitors was largely positive, with common themes including the accommodations’ cleanliness and check-in process.

Progress is being made in refining efforts to collect visitor comments. For example, thirty-four sites across the country have participated in a pilot project for QR code comment cards, which can be made specific to diversified accommodation units. This QR code system is planned to be rolled out at all sites for the 2025-26 summer season.

Overall, collecting more detailed visitor information, such as demographic details and visitor feedback, could help inform decision-making moving forward both at the national and field unit levels. The information collected should be aligned with the goals for the use of diversified accommodations, as determined by Parks Canada moving forward.



Image 8: Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site. PC Image Bank.

# Visitor Demand

Expectation: There is evidence of a visitor demand for diversified accommodations at Parks Canada sites.

Finding: Evidence found that visitor demand for diversified accommodation units has been stable between 2018-19 to 2022-23, with an increase in 2023-24.

## Demand for units

Overall, site staff expressed that there is a demand for roofed accommodation options, whether this be the current diversified accommodations units available, or alternate options that may be better suited to any particular site (i.e., yurt, cabin, etc.) Anecdotally, it was highlighted that bookings fill up quickly, for example, one site stated: "Within the first hour of booking availability, 80 reservations were recorded." (CBC News, 2018).

Occupancy data\* was analysed as one method of gauging the level of visitor demand for diversified accommodation units. Occupancy rates were retrieved from the Parks Canada Reservation System (PCRS). These rates aggregate the average yearly occupancy of each unit or campsite, which reflects the number of occupied nights compared to the number of nights available for booking.

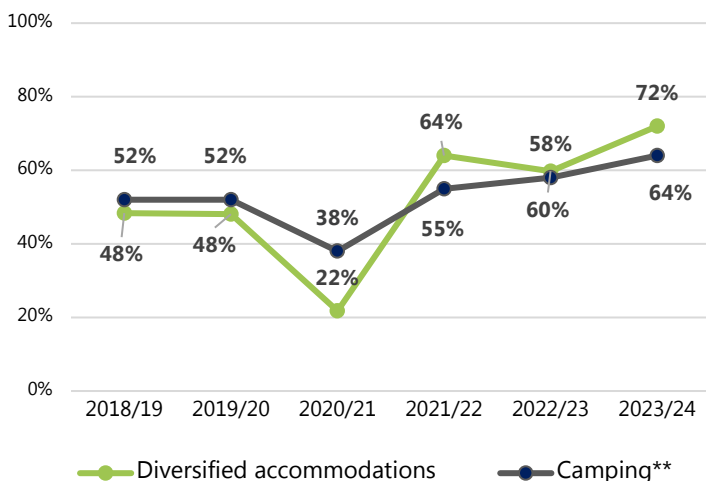
Overall occupancy rates for diversified accommodations were comparable to traditional camping options between 2018-19 to 2022-23.

Notably, in 2023-24, the occupancy rate for diversified accommodations increased by almost 10 percentage points from 2022-23 (58% to 72%) while the campsite occupancy numbers saw a smaller increase from 60% to 64% during that same time.

Figure 4 below illustrates the annual occupancy rate for all diversified accommodation units, as compared to camping options. It was found that occupancy of diversified units varied, where sites with the highest levels also had historically high levels of camping occupancy.

The sites with lower diversified occupancy rates were those with historically lower levels of camping occupancy, no or limited pre-existing camping offers, and/or maintenance and repair issues. The variability of occupancy between sites is further highlighted by the difference between the highest and lowest rates (i.e. 24% vs 85%).

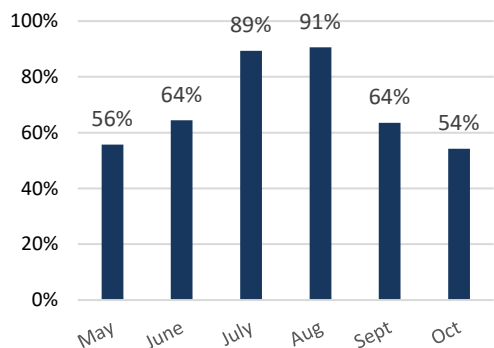
Figure 4: Average annual occupancy rate by year, 2018-19 to 2023-24



\*Occupancy data was retrieved from the Parks Canada Camping Reservation System. Occupancy rates in the 2020-21 year are impacted by closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. \*\*Includes campsites, group, equipped, seasonal, and overflow.

Figure 5 below represents the monthly average occupancy rates for diversified accommodations (2023-24) during the operational season (May – October). Not surprisingly, the visitor demand was the highest during the summer months.

Figure 5: Average monthly occupancy for diversified accommodation units, May to October 2023-24



### Seasonality

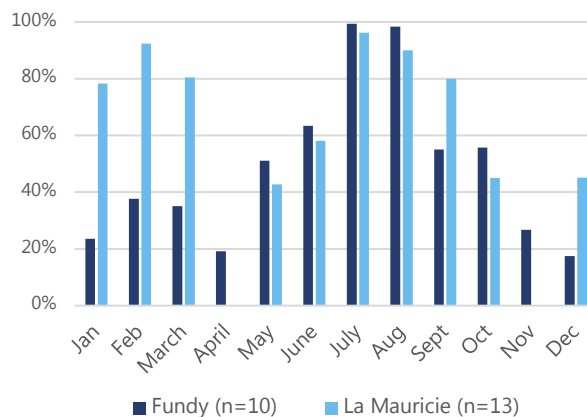
The majority of diversified accommodations offered at Parks Canada are suitable for up to 3-seasons, though operating seasons vary from site to site.

Some sites opted to purchase winterized four- season units at an additional cost. All of these winterized units are oTENTiks.

Program documentation lists the number of operational four-season units in 2023 as 76 (Source: Program documents). Data revealed that 52 units were occupied in 2023-24 (Source: PCRS). The table below represents the number of units at sites with occupancy over the winter months. Taking Fundy National Park and La Mauricie National Park as examples, Figure 6 represents the average monthly occupancy in 2024-25.

As shown, the occupancy at these two parks varies, with La Mauricie National Park reaching high levels of occupancy in the winter months. This could be due to multiple factors, including the availability of activities in the park, the level of services provided, etc. and could warrant further exploration.

Figure 6: Occupancy rates for four-season units at Fundy National Park and La Mauricie National Park, 2024-25\*



\*Note: The 2024-25 data was selected as a more accurate representation of occupancy at La Mauricie National Park, as the 2023-24 season was impacted by an extreme weather event that necessitated the closure of certain units within the park.

Overall, the occupancy data presented supports a continued visitor demand for diversified accommodations. Evidence also reflects that there is variability in occupancy, which may be influenced by the specific site, and the time of year.

In addition, there may be opportunities to further explore trends in occupancy by exploring factors influencing occupancy trends and/or examining differences between weekend and weeknight occupancy rates.

Table 5: Total oTENTik inventory at sites with winter occupancy, 2023-24 (n=52)

Site	Total units	Up to 3 season (n,%)	4 season (n,%)
Fundy National Park	33	23 (70%)	10 (30%)
La Mauricie National Park	25	12 (48%)	13 (52%)
Riding Mountain National Park	38	35 (92%)	3 (8%)
Point Pelee National Park*	24	24 (100%)	

Note: Other winterized roofed accommodations, including yurts or cabins, are available at some sites; however, these are outside of the Program and are therefore not included in the scope of this report.

\*oTENTik units at Point Pelee National Park are considered 3 season; however, due to the mild climate, the units appeared in PCRS with reservations throughout the year.



# Effectiveness

<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Findings</b>
<b>Evaluation question 3:</b>	<b>To what extent has the Program met its intended objectives?</b>
Accessibility is prioritized in the delivery of the Program.	While evidence found that accessibility was considered by many sites, there is an opportunity to strategically target sites where accessibility features can be enhanced.
Environmental impact and climate resilience of units was considered in the development of the Program.	Evidence found that sites conducted the appropriate environmental impact assessments, as prescribed by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (2012) and the updated Impact Assessment Act (2019).
	While many units remain in good condition, variations were found based on site-specific climate, type of unit, and the structural adaptations implemented.
<b>Evaluation question 4:</b>	<b>What kind of supports did field units receive in implementing the Program?</b>
Field units received adequate support from program staff.	It was widely acknowledged that the Program team offered valuable support to field units and contributed to the effective delivery of the Program.

# Accessibility

Expectation: Accessibility is prioritized in the delivery of the Program.

Finding: While evidence found that accessibility was considered by many sites, there is an opportunity to strategically target sites where accessibility features can be enhanced.

This finding is addressed in Recommendation 2.



Image 9: La Mauricie National Park. PC Image Bank.

One of the key principles outlined in the Program Guidelines (2011) was to provide accessible options, where feasible. Since that time, Parks Canada’s Accessibility Action Plan 2022-2025 (Action Plan), which is linked to the Government of Canada Accessible Canada Act, has been implemented. The Action Plan outlines Parks Canada’s existing commitments and approaches to accessibility.

While the Action Plan includes the requirement to improve visitor assets through investment in infrastructure, there are no explicit requirements or timelines for updates to existing accommodations.

Furthermore, while some standards within the Action Plan (and the Accessible Canada Act) may apply, there is no single accessibility standard that applies to structures like diversified accommodation units. This has led to variation in the level of accessibility and types of retrofits implemented across sites.\*

As a result of the Act, sites have retrofitted various accessibility features to the oTENTik, Ôasis and MicrOcube units to increase accessibility features. These are presented in the following paragraphs.

## oTENTiks

It was found that some sites purchased oTENTik units with custom-made ramps specifically designed to improve accessibility.

Other sites have since made modifications to include ramps, further enhancing accessibility for a broader range of users.

Depending on the site, additional modifications have been made to enhance accessibility features. For example, modifications include lowering the height of beds for easier transfers, creating a cutout under the tabletop, and removing extra cross bracing under the table to allow for knee clearance for wheelchair users. Some sites used the guidance document created to help determine which accessibility features should be included in their retrofitting efforts.

## Ôasis & MicrOcube

The structural design of the Ôasis and MicrOcube units has presented accessibility challenges for some users. Both types of units feature small interior spaces, and the Ôasis units include lofted beds, which further limit accessibility. In addition, some Ôasis units, such as those at Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site, are suspended and are only accessible via a steep walkway, making them less accessible for some users.

\*The VE Infrastructure Camping and Accommodations team, supported by the VE Accessibility and Inclusion team, developed a list of suggestions to increase accessibility of diversified accommodations units. This is further discussed on page 24.

Additional retrofits were also made to improve accessibility features; however, changes implemented beyond the site visit locations could not be documented, as this information is not centrally recorded or readily available.

In addition to making modifications to the units themselves, accessibility can be increased through other mechanisms. For example, there may be opportunities to strategically position units in locations that offer greater overall accessibility, such as placing them in locations to allow for easier circulation to adjacent amenities (e.g., washrooms), minimizing the need to go up or down steep slopes, and minimizing entry steps, among other considerations.

### Publicly available information

It was found that the information available regarding the accessibility of diversified accommodations varied among sites. On site websites, some provide fulsome details on accessibility features. Some of the details provided include doorway width; proximity to parking; accessible toilets; bed heights; and modified furniture. Other sites provide more limited descriptions, which include, for example, whether and how many units include ramps without providing additional details. The variation in accessibility information provided to the public could create challenges for visitors in determining whether sites meet their specific needs.

Departmental actions, such as those outlined in Parks Canada's 2023-24 Departmental Results Report (DRR), have supported the improvement of accessibility information on Parks Canada's websites for visitor experiences and services. Specifically, a refreshed version of Parks Canada's mobile app was released that lists information on the availability of accessibility features.

### Accessibility standards

With no one standard that is applicable to diversified accommodation units, the VE Accessibility and Inclusion team supported the VE Infrastructure Camping and Accommodations team to produce a document outlining retrofit options based on relevant standards (updated 2023).

These include various requirements from the Canadian Standards Association\*, the National Building Code of Canada 2015, documents produced by the firm who provided the units (Biome), as well as K eroul, which is based on the barrier-free design standards of the Qu bec Construction Code.\*\*

### Moving forward

Interviewees in field units expressed a desire and openness to further incorporating accessibility into the Program, and progress has been made by many sites. However, information on retrofits is not centrally located, making it difficult to track and monitor progress. Looking forward, there was an interest at the field unit level in clearly understanding the expectations that Parks Canada has for accessibility in delivering the Program.

Overall, the accessibility landscape is evolving. As highlighted by the VE Accessibility and Inclusion team, numerous factors influence the accessibility of units. As a result, detailed information for visitors would help visitors make informed decisions for their visits (i.e., proximity to washrooms, noise levels, ramps, number and height of steps, etc.). These efforts would align with the Parks Canada multi-year project to highlight and improve accessibility information, as outlined in the 2023-24 DRR.



Image 10: Kouchibouguac National Park, PC Image Bank.

\*Standard B651-18: Accessible design for the built environment.  
 \*\*K eroul's accessibility criteria are the only standards recognized by the Minist re du Tourisme du Qu bec for the certification and assignment of accessibility ratings.

# Environmental Impact and Climate Change

**Finding 1:** Evidence found that appropriate environmental impact assessments, as prescribed by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (2012) and the updated Impact Assessment Act (2019), were conducted.

Expectation: Environmental impact was considered in development of the Program.

The Parks Canada environmental impact assessment process is guided by the Directive on Impact Assessment (2019), which applies to all projects, policies, programs and plans authorized by Parks Canada that have the potential to cause adverse environmental effects on natural and/or cultural resources.

Site visit data confirmed that necessary assessments were conducted and that relevant experts (e.g., archaeologists, biologists) were consulted. These included Basic Impact Assessments (BIA) and Preapproved Routine Impact Assessments (PRIA). Where relevant, Species at Risk analyses were also integrated into existing assessment processes.

## Basic Impact Assessments

The BIA pathway is applied when potential adverse environmental effects are predictable, will be confined to the project site or immediate surroundings, and mitigation measures are well-established. Basic Impact Assessments (BIA) typically recommend mitigation measures to minimize the environmental impact of construction.

Measures take into consideration factors such as mating and migratory patterns of wildlife and maintaining buffers between work zones and areas with sensitive vegetation or wildlife.

## Pre-Approved Impact Assessments

Updated to reflect the Impact Assessment Act (2019), the PRIA process was introduced in 2019. This streamlined process can be used for routine, repetitive projects with well-understood and predictable environmental effects.

## Tracking and monitoring

A total of 35 assessments related to the installation of diversified accommodations and related infrastructure were recorded in Parks Canada's Impact Assessment database (2013-2024).

Of these, 25 used the BIA process and 10 used a PRIA process. Of the 10 PRIA assessments, four were associated with previously assessed units that were upgrading to offer heating options such as electricity and propane tanks.

**Finding 2:** While many units remain in good condition, variations were found based on site-specific climate, type of unit, and the structural adaptations implemented.

This finding is addressed in Recommendation 1.

## Condition of units

As one measure of the condition of units, an analysis of the records in MAXIMO was done. Parks Canada uses this web-based software as the central database for built assets.

Currently, there are 342 structural assessments have been entered into the database, representing 76% of the total inventory in 2023-24. However, it was found that of the 450 units in 2023-24 (418 oTENTiKs, 20 Ôasis, and five MicrOcube units), 183 inspections are considered up to date (entered in the last five years). This represents approximately 41% of the total 2023-24 inventory.

Figure 7 on the next page represents the overall assessment condition of the 183 up to date inspections in the database. As shown, just under half were rated as good (A) and fair (B)\*. The five Ôasis units at Fundy National Park were rated to be in "very poor"(D). In 2024 the units rated as "D" were decommissioned and are no longer in use.

### Climate conditions

Through site visits, document review and interviews, it was found that the impacts of climate-related damage did not generally affect the structural condition of oTENTik units. There were a small number of units that experienced damage because of extreme weather events such as windstorms, tornados and flooding.

The most significant climate-related challenges were experienced by the Ôasis units. Many of these units have experienced water leakage, which has resulted in moisture condensation in the units. Two of the site visit locations have mitigated the moisture and humidity concerns with the addition of ventilation systems. This is a promising practice that could be worth further exploration to increase the climate resiliency of the remaining units.

While the number of MicrOcube units is very small (n=3 in Maximo). Site visit data revealed limited climate related maintenance issues. According to staff, its straightforward design and fewer moving parts contribute limit the potential climate-related damage. Like the Ôasis, some units feature the addition of a ventilation system to help manage moisture build-up in the interior.

### Structural adaptations

It was observed that sites who proactively modified their diversified units, either during installation or as retrofits, felt that these modifications have successfully extended the lifespan of their units. This was particularly true of the oTENTik units.

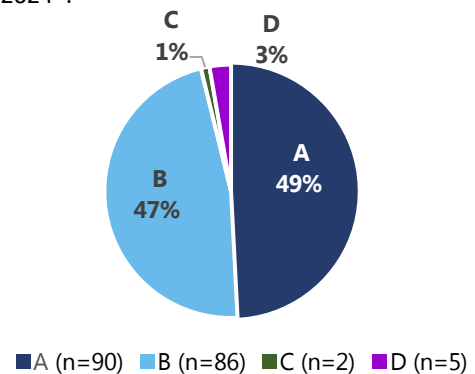
Some examples of modifications are the addition of plywood under the tarp roof and raising the supporting beams off the ground to prevent deterioration of the wood. \*Further details on how site visit locations have made efforts to increase sustainability can be found in Appendix 4: Site Visit Highlights – Climate Resilience Modifications.

At the time of installation, diversified units had an average lifespan between 8-10 years. At present, many units are still in good to fair condition (see Figure 7). In some cases, units were installed in 2013, therefore exceeding the predicting lifespan of ten years.

These structural adaptations, and additional environmentally sustainable practices such as the use of impact assessments; ecological and socially-conscious site selection; and alignment with overall site environmental planning, has aligned Parks Canada with sustainable practices identified in the literature review.

Additional efforts to adapt to changing climate conditions and to further enhance environmental sustainability efforts identified in the literature review could include moveable eco-tents to protect against events like flooding and dismantling units during off-season for ecological restoration.

Figure 7: Inspection grade recorded in Maximo between 2020-2024\*.



#### Rating descriptions\*

- **A. Good:** Identified deficiencies have no or negligible impact on the functional performance (or level of service) of the asset. No foreseeable rehabilitation work required, assuming repair and maintenance work carried out in a timely manner.
- **B. Fair:** Identified deficiencies have a significant impact on the functional performance (or level of service). Deficiencies do not, or have negligible, compounding and detrimental effect on one another. One or more of the asset's components need rehabilitation work, but do not entail prolonged closure of the asset.
- **C. Poor:** One or more components need rehabilitation work to the extent that a major intervention is required to stabilize, consolidate, reinforce or reconstruct the asset.
- **D. Very Poor:** The asset is currently unsafe, unstable or unusable.

\*Source: Maximo factsheet

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# Program Support

Expectation: Field units received adequate support from program staff.

**Finding :** It was widely acknowledged that the Program team offered valuable support to field units and contributed to the effective delivery the Program.

The majority of interviewees felt that the Program team was responsive to questions and that their issues were addressed as they arose. In addition, although the Program team lacked technical expertise, they were able to facilitate connections to the appropriate resources, where possible.

Although comments were largely positive, some staff felt that their sites did not have the appropriate expertise to develop an accurate cost-benefit analysis, as was required in the request for funding through the Fund. As such, further guidance may have helped field units more accurately estimate life-cycle costs, including on-going maintenance and recapitalization costs, as well as the potential for revenue generation at any one site.

## Community of Practice

The Program put in place a Community of Practice in 2017-18, which allowed field units to come together and share challenges, best practices, and solutions.

This also helped to reduce the loss of corporate memory in the field units due to the frequent changes of staff.

The Program developed and distributed several guidance documents through the Community of Practice, some of which are summarized in the following paragraphs. The Menu included estimated construction costs of each type of unit and any modifications that would be needed for accessibility.

By facilitating connections between sites to help identify solutions to common issues and helping field units navigate interactions with the contractor, the Program team contributed to the effective delivery of the Diversified Accommodations Program.

When looking at demand for units as a factor in Program effectiveness, evidence highlighted that despite the decommissioning of some units due to structural design concerns (i.e., Oasis units) and the on-going maintenance and repair required, 75% (n=326) of the total average unit inventory (n=423) was reserved from 2018-19 to 2023-24. Note: The reason for the difference between reserved inventory and available inventory is unclear. This may be due to sites managing some bookings outside of PCRS, field units failing to inform Visitor Experience Infrastructure staff or update Maximo with details about units that are under repair or unavailable.

In addition, as was mentioned on page 18 in the visitor demand section, occupancy for diversified units rose from 48% to 72% in 2023-24 after having remained stable between 2018-19 to 2022-23.

## Guidance on accessibility

As mentioned previously, a guidance document was produced outlining retrofitting options. Since the oTENTik is more amenable to retrofits than the other two types of units, they were the focus of the guide.

The document focused on modifications that could be implemented by site staff with carpentry skills and were prioritized based on their level of importance for accessibility. Examples of suggested modifications include, modifying bed height; clear access to windows; and providing easy to access electrical outlets. This guidance document was then shared with field units through the Community of Practice.

## Guidance for structural improvements

Through the Community of Practice, the Program team also presented recommendations from an external engineering review to extend the lifespan of oTENTik units. Some suggestions included adding plywood under the tarp or replacing it with a steel roof, strengthening the edging and providing further structural support for the overhang of the roof.

Further, an Accommodation Menu (2023) was developed to provide suggestions to field units on how to extend the life of existing offers, and detailed potential accommodation options for future planning.



# Efficiency

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Findings</b>
<b>Evaluation question 5:</b>	<b>To what extent is the program efficiently delivered?</b>
Program roles and responsibilities are clear and promote efficient program delivery.	Further defining and communicating roles and responsibilities could provide opportunities to create increased efficiencies in Program delivery.
The Program used a cost-recovery model as a guiding principle.	Evidence indicated that diversified accommodation units generated higher revenue per unit when compared to camping offers.
	Difficulties in accurately capturing operational costs, as well as variations in capital costs across sites, hindered an accurate assessment of cost-recovery.

# Program Roles & Responsibilities

Expectation: Roles and responsibilities are clear and promote efficient Program delivery.

Finding: Further defining and communicating roles and responsibilities could provide opportunities to create increased efficiencies in Program delivery.

This finding is addressed in Recommendation 1.

As outlined on page 11, roles and responsibilities for Program delivery are currently shared between the Operations Directorate, who are responsible for implementation at the field unit level, and ERVE, who are responsible for program management, policy support, and national procurement.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The recently created (2023) Real Property and Assets Directorate (RPAD) has also provided support to the Program; however, field units had limited understanding of their role. As such, defining and clearly communicating the roles of RPAD within the Program is one area that could increase efficiency of Program delivery.

Another such area is in further defining and communicating field unit responsibilities for entering up-to-date assessment information into Maximo (as discussed on page 22). It was found that, despite evidence indicating that many sites undertake these assessments with relative frequency, not all records have been updated.

## Structural assessments

Structural assessments are crucial in identifying various maintenance and repair needs. Additionally, many units are nearing the end of their expected life cycle, making up-to-date structural assessments important.

With more up-to-date information for all diversified accommodation units, the RPAD team could help increase efficiency of Program delivery.

This could be done by developing accurate lifecycle planning for diversified accommodation units, including determining the required maintenance and repair needs - which could increase their longevity. Lifecycle planning could also be used to determine whether/which units may need to be decommissioned.

In the 2023-24 Departmental Results Report (DRR), aging infrastructure and inadequate levels of recapitalization and maintenance were identified as challenges for some built assets. In response, Parks Canada has begun updating Maximo with current conditions of its contemporary assets, under which diversified accommodations are classified. Efforts to maintain an up-to-date record of the structural condition of diversified units would build on this work.

Clear definition and communication of the roles and responsibilities of RPAD in Program delivery would allow field units to more efficiently access their skills and expertise. In addition, the responsibilities of field units should be clearly outlined to increase the ability of RPAD to create these efficiencies.

# Cost-Recovery

Expectation: The Program used a cost-recovery model as a guiding principle

Finding 1: Evidence indicated that diversified accommodation units generated higher revenue per unit when compared to campsite offers.

This finding is addressed in Recommendation 3.

Figure 8: Average annual inventory by type of offer, 2018-19 to 2023-24.

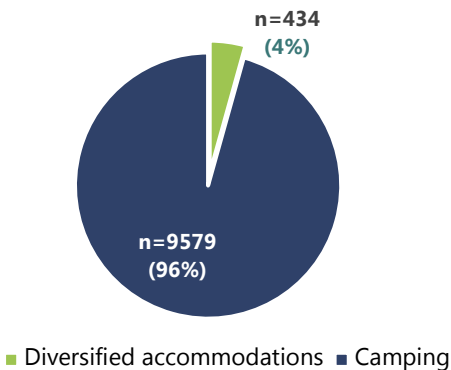
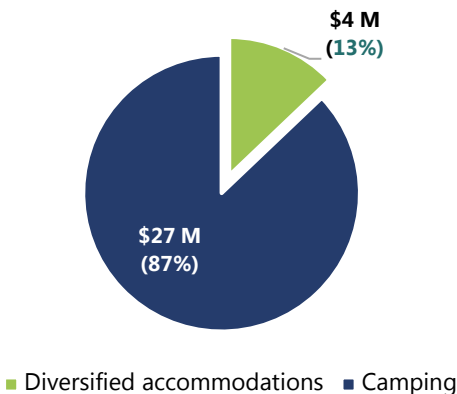


Figure 9: Average annual revenue by type of offer, 2018-19 to 2023-24.



As was identified in the planning stages of the evaluation, the Program is currently conducting a review of its costs and revenue as an effort to quantify the Program’s return on investment. The evaluation therefore focused on collecting and analysing data on revenue and expenditures to complement this work, and to attempt to provide insights on the cost-recovery of the Program.

As defined in the Program Guidelines (2011), a cost-recovery model that considers the amortization of the investment, maintenance costs and operations costs. It was meant to ensure that all costs incurred were taken into account so that no deficit was generated.

Using the average annual inventory between 2018-19 to 2023-24, Figure 8 shows the inventory of diversified accommodation and camping offers. As shown, diversified accommodations represented a small percentage (4%) of these offers overall. See Appendix 2 for a full inventory of units.

A note regarding the inventory of units: In 2018-19, the total inventory of diversified accommodation units was 400. By 2023- 24 this had risen to 450 units. There were some fluctuations in inventory over the years due to sites continuing to purchase units, closures due to maintenance and repair, and units being decommissioned, most notably the decommissioning of 10 Oasis units in 2022-23.

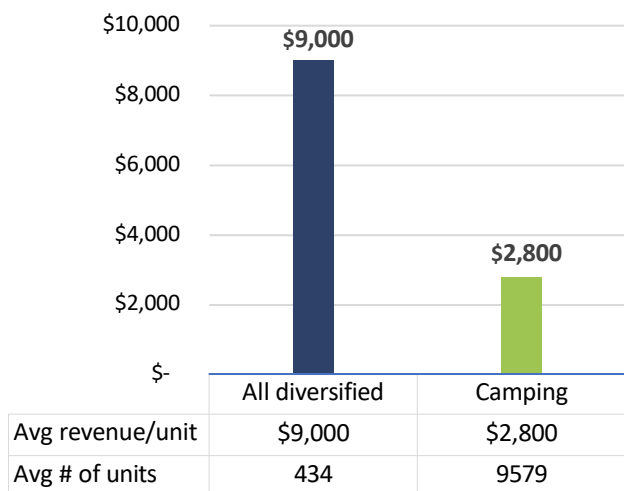
The total inventory of 450 units also excludes 10 oTENTiks that did not operate between 2018-19 to 2023-24.

## Revenue

Between 2018-19 and 2023-24, the average annual revenue for diversified accommodation units was \$4 million compared to approximately \$27 million for campsites. Using these numbers, the percentage of revenue by type of offer was calculated (see Figure 9). Further, it was found that diversified accommodations units represent a higher proportion of the revenue when it is compared to the percentage of inventory (13% of revenue and 4% of inventory) (Figures 8 & 9).

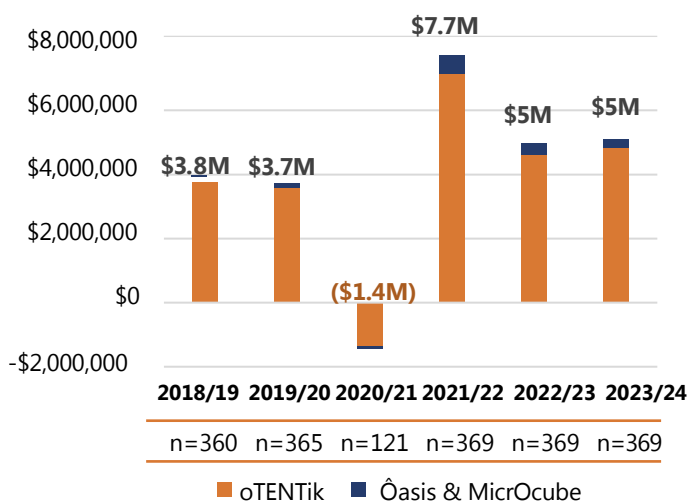
Data regarding the proportion of revenue compared to the proportion of inventory is presented in Figure 10 on the following page. Based on the average annual inventory and average annual revenue between 2018-19 to 2023-24, this details the differences in revenue between diversified accommodation and camping reservations.

Figure 10: Average annual revenue per unit with average inventory, 2018-19 to 2023-24.



When analysed by fiscal year, an increase in annual revenue from diversified accommodation units was found between 2018-19 and 2023-24, as shown in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11: Annual revenue by diversified accommodation unit type, 2018-19 to 2023-24, with n of units reserved.



The revenue data collected pertaining to diversified accommodation units suggests potential indicators of cost-efficiency. To determine whether the Program has implemented a cost-recovery model, it is crucial to assess ongoing maintenance and repair costs as well as capital investments. These cost considerations are explored in greater detail in the following sections.

**Finding 2: Difficulties in accurately capturing operational costs, as well as variations in capital costs across sites, hindered an accurate assessment of cost-recovery.**

This finding is addressed in Recommendation 3.

Within field units, expenses for ongoing maintenance and repairs of built assets are typically captured under the asset management budget. As such, this data does not accurately reflect expenditures that were associated with the Program alone. This financial coding system, and the associated challenges in determining accurate expenses related to the Program, is further detailed below.

### Operational costs

Within the financial coding system, some maintenance and repair expenditures are linked to multiple activities within the field unit. In these instances, field units may allocate costs to areas outside of the Program, even if directly or indirectly supporting the Program’s implementation. For example, field units highlighted that cleaning staff are responsible for cleaning the entire campsite which includes, washrooms, campsites, as well as diversified accommodations. These activities are therefore coded to the larger asset budget, without being linked directly to the Program.

\*Note: In early 2020-21, Parks Canada was required to reimburse reservations that were cancelled due to Covid-19 closures, resulting in negative revenue numbers. When Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in the 2021-22 fiscal year, the reservation system opened in April 2021 for 2021 summer months.

Within the same fiscal year, the reservation system opened in winter 2022, as is the typical schedule. Therefore, the revenue from reservations in April 2021 and again in winter 2022 were both recorded in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, causing a spike in revenue.

Although responsible for their entire sites, staff highlighted that cleaning oTENTik and Ôasis units takes longer than cleaning a standard campsite, potentially leading to a larger percentage of the cleaning costs. A document created by Program staff estimated the time required for daily maintenance of an oTENTik at 25-40 minutes per unit. No estimates were provided for Ôasis and MicrOcube units.

### Capital costs

While unit cost represented a significant portion of the overall Program expenditures, it is important to also account for additional capital expenditures. The key factors influencing these costs are discussed in the following sections.

### Cost of units

There was variability related to the addition of features and/or upgrades chosen by sites. Diversified units had a standard model onto which additions could be added, some of which included:

- Insulation;
- Heating options (wood stove, propane, electricity);
- Accessible ramps;
- Solar lighting;
- Picnic tables;
- Wood racks; and
- BBQs.

Table 6 outlines the cost of an oTENTik unit, shipping and installation to a northern site, as well as the additional items purchased. As shown, some of the additional features purchased include heating and solar lighting.

### Installation

Installation costs also varied based on whether the site had pre-existing camping infrastructure. Sites without existing infrastructure incurred higher capital spending costs due to the requirement to prepare their sites for the installation of the accommodation offers. These additional costs related included:

- Clearing land;
- Constructing washrooms;
- Renovating and upgrading picnic areas; and
- Creating a space for firewood storage.

Table 6: Purchase cost of one oTENTik unit with additional features, 2022-23

Item	Cost
oTENTik with bunk beds, table & chair	\$24,699
Shipping and installation	\$13,000
3-season plus options: insulation	\$6,417
Wood stove and chimney	\$3,501
Installation of 3 season plus components	\$3,000
Ramp for accessible unit	\$2,818
Solar lighting	\$1,415
Mattress covers	\$912
Site furniture (picnic table, firepit)	\$600
Windows and door covers	\$321
Exterior wood rack	\$139
Woodstove tool kit	\$120
Interior wood rack	\$94
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$57,036</b>

\*Costs obtained from CFOD and the oTENTik Standing offer

As one component of installation, interviewees in rural or remote sites indicated that shipping costs were high, thus causing differences in expenditures compared to those located within closer proximity to the Québec-based supplier.

Internal Program documents (Draft Accommodation Menu, 2023) provided estimates combining the cost of the oTENTik and MicrOcube units with the installation costs. The Ôasis units were not represented in the document. It should be noted that the evaluation team was not able to review the methods used to determine the cost estimates. The costs outlined are as follows:

- Up to 3-seasons oTENTik (2020): \$40,000
- MicrOcube (2019): \$33,000

### Repairs

The nature and extent of repairs required varied from site to site. As has been previously discussed, this was due largely to the type of unit and the climate conditions at sites. A table of most commonly mentioned replacement parts purchase for the oTENTik units is presented in Table 7 on the following page (p. 30).

Table 7: Common replacement items purchased for oTENTik units, 2023-24.

ITEM	2023-24
Replacement window screen	\$51.96
Replacement window vinyl	\$56.07
Mattress covers	\$910.00
Replacement outer roof canvas (PVC)	\$3,239.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,257.79</b>

Variations in expenditures were also found based on the ability to conduct repairs in-house, or whether sites were required to hire a contractor to complete the work at an additional cost. In addition, some sites procured the smaller replacement parts locally at a lower price than from the contractor (i.e., door handles, snaps).

### Retrofits

The number of retrofits initiated and completed by sites after installation also varied, both in the extent of retrofits made and the cost of these changes. Common changes targeted at extending the life-cycle of the units included reinforcing oTENTik roofs to better withstand climate conditions, structural retrofits to the Ôasis units to prevent mold, and renovating the interior of Ôasis units to prevent water leakage. Increasing accessibility features and retrofitting heating options to ensure the units remained up to code were also mentioned by interviewees.

The scope of retrofits implemented varied across sites and was largely left to their discretion. Since these upgrades were not comprehensively tracked in the Maximo system, it was not possible to accurately determine their associated costs.

### Potential cost-efficiency

The revenue numbers provide evidence supporting the potential cost-efficiency of the Program. Barriers to determining accurate operational costs such as ongoing maintenance and cleaning costs, as well as site-specific capital costs including unit upgrades, installation, site preparation and repair requirements, meant that it was not possible to determine whether the Program successfully implemented a cost-recovery model.

In order to assess the cost-recovery of units, work can be done to build on information presented in Program documents (Accommodation Menu, 2023) outlining the estimated cost and installation of units and the amount of time required to the clean units. Further examining relevant operational and capital costs outlined in this report will also be required.



Image 11: Forillon National Park, PC Image Bank.

# Recommendations and Management Response



## Recommendation 1

To further support field units in the management of diversified accommodations, the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, in collaboration with the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, should:

1. Define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the Real Property and Assets Directorate related to diversified accommodations; and
2. Develop guidance on structural assessment data entry into Maximo to assist lifecycle planning of diversified accommodation units.

For key findings related to the above recommendation, please refer to the following sections of the report:

- Environmental Impact & Climate Resilience, pgs. 23-24, Condition of Units
- Program Roles and Responsibilities, p. 27

## Management Response

**Agree.** The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will collaborate with the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, to clarify and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the Real Property and Assets Directorate regarding diversified accommodations. This collaboration will aim to improve operational clarity and support for field units.

In addition, the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, will lead the development of national guidance for the consistent collection and formatting of structural assessment data into Maximo, in collaboration with the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience. This initiative aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of asset conditions, thereby supporting more effective lifecycle planning for diversified accommodation units.

Action Plan(s)	Target Completion Date	Responsible position(s)
1.1 Convene an executive-level working group to formally define and clarify roles and responsibilities related to the national diversified accommodations program by document.	March 2026	Director, Visitor Experience, with the Director, Integrated Resource Management
1.2 Develop a standardized data entry process and training for Maximo to support consistent asset condition tracking and lifecycle planning of diversified accommodations.	April 2027	Director, Portfolio Strategy In collaboration of the Senior Vice-President, Operations, and the Director, Visitor Experience

## Recommendation 2

To enhance visitor experience, meet Parks Canada’s accessibility commitments, and support strategic decision-making on future investments the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets Directorate, the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, and the Senior Vice-President, Operations, should collaborate to:

1. Develop and implement a standardized data entry process for accessibility features of all diversified accommodation units;
2. Ensure that accessibility features for diversified accommodation units are clearly and consistently communicated to the public; and
3. Develop a set of accessibility requirements for diversified accommodation units to support strategic investments into unit upgrades.

For key findings related to the above recommendation, please refer to the following section of the report:

- Accessibility, pgs. 21-22

## Management Response

**Agree.** The Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, in collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations, and the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will lead the development of an inventory of accessibility features available across all diversified accommodation units and develop a set of accessibility requirements for diversified accommodations.

In parallel, and in collaboration with the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, the Senior Vice-President, Operations, will ensure that all field units clearly and consistently communicate to visitors the accessibility features of diversified accommodations and associated infrastructure.

Action Plan(s)	Target Completion Date	Responsible position(s)
<p>2.1 Develop and maintain a national inventory of the accessibility features for diversified accommodations assets.</p> <p>This inventory will serve as a primary source of information on accessibility across these assets. The benefit is accurate and reliable information for planning, reporting and communication purposes.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	<p>Chief Engineer, Technical &amp; Specialist Services</p> <p>In collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations, and Director, Visitor Experience</p>

## Recommendation 2 (continued)

Action Plan(s)	Target Completion Date	Responsible position(s)
<p>2.2 Implement a standardized approach to communicating accessibility information for diversified accommodations. Ensure clear, consistent, and accessible information is available during trip planning, reserving, arriving, and the on-site experience to support informed decision-making and enhance visitor satisfaction.</p> <p>The External Relations and Visitor Experience Directorate will provide training on improving accessibility communications to field units. All field units will be offered training by March 2027.</p>	<p>March 2027</p>	<p>Director, Visitor Experience</p> <p>In collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations</p>
<p>2.3 Ensure that accessibility features for diversified accommodations are clearly displayed on all field units' websites.</p>	<p>March 2027</p>	<p>Senior Vice-President, Operations</p>
<p>2.4 Develop accessibility requirements to enhance and/or add accessibility features to roofed accommodations to support strategic investment in the program..</p>	<p>March 2027</p>	<p>Director Visitor Experience</p> <p>Chief Engineer, Technical &amp; Specialist Services</p>

## Recommendation 3

With the goal of efficiently managing Parks Canada's assets and to assist financial decision-making, the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, should collaborate with the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, and the Senior Vice-President, Operations, to:

1. Conduct a cost-recovery assessment of diversified accommodations, taking into consideration variations in cost and revenue at the individual site level; and
2. Develop a plan to prolong the lifespan of existing units and for decommissioning units in poor condition, where necessary.

For key findings related to the above recommendation, please refer to the following section of the report:

➤ Cost Recovery, pgs. 28-31

## Management Response

**Agree.** The Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will lead the cost-recovery assessment of diversified accommodations in collaboration with the Vice-President, Finance, and in consultation with the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, and the Senior Vice-President, Operations.

In parallel, the Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, will work jointly with the Vice-President, Real Property and Assets, in collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations, to develop guidance to extend the useful life of existing diversified accommodation units and to identify units for decommissioning where appropriate.

Action Plan(s)	Target Completion Date	Responsible position(s)
<p>3.1 Develop a profitability analysis model including a return on investment (ROI) template that could be applied to existing diversified accommodations to inform on the feasibility of cost recovery and appropriate decision making.</p> <p>The established model will also inform feasibility regarding lifecycle extension versus decommissioning of existing diversified accommodations units.</p>	September 2026	<p>Director, Visitor Experience</p> <p>In collaboration with the Director, Corporate Planning, Budgeting, Forecasting &amp; Reporting, and Director, Portfolio Strategy</p>

## Recommendation 3 (continued)

Action Plan(s)	Target Completion Date	Responsible position(s)
<p>3.2 Establish a national plan for the lifecycle extension and decommissioning of existing diversified accommodations. This plan will provide guidance for identifying units that can be strategically reinvested in to extend their operational life, as well as those that should be decommissioned using, in part, the ROI model identified in the above action.</p> <p>This plan will be based on developed business process leveraging profitability analysis.</p>	March 2027	<p>Director, Visitor Experience, with the Director, Portfolio Strategy</p> <p>In collaboration with the Senior Vice-President, Operations</p>



Image 12: Elk Island National Park. PC Image Bank.

# Appendices

Figure 12: Summary of Roles and Responsibilities, Program Guidelines (2011)

<b>Diversified Accommodation Guidelines (2011)</b> Summary of Roles and Responsibilities	
<b>National Office</b>	
<p><b>External Relations and Visitor Experience</b>                      Program management, updating program guidelines, and providing approvals.                      Provide advice to field units.</p> <p><b>Realty Services</b>                      Must be consulted when developing and reviewing realty agreements                      Provide advice on applicable regulations.</p> <p><b>Directors General, Operations</b>                      Responsible for the review and approval of the Business Case submitted by the park / the site / the area / the Field Unit.</p> <p><b>Service Centres</b>                      Can play a role in conducting market analysis, developing an evaluation program for the diversified accommodation offer and assisting with promotions and marketing.</p>	
<b>Field Units</b>	
<p><b>Field Unit / Park / Site Superintendents</b>                      Ensures financial sustainability, considers ecological footprint and choosing the right operational model. Ensure Accommodation project is coherent with the Management plan.</p> <p>The following areas of expertise are coordinated by the Superintendent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Park / Historic Site / Marine Area Managers</li> <li>• Visitor experience managers</li> <li>• Town-site managers /Realty managers</li> <li>• External relations managers</li> <li>• Asset managers</li> <li>• Cultural Resource Managers</li> <li>• Resource Conservation Managers</li> <li>• Finance Managers and contracting personnel</li> </ul>	

## Appendix 2: Program Inventory

Table 8: Inventory of diversified accommodations by site, 2023-24

Site Name	oTENTik	Ôasis	MicroCube
Banff National Park	31	0	0
Cape Breton Highlands National Park	25	0	0
Elk Island National Park	5	0	0
Forillon National Park	15	5	1
Fort Langley National Historic Site	5	0	0
Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site	5	0	0
Fundy National Park	33	6	0
Georgian Bay Islands National Park	5	0	0
Grand-Pré National Historic Site	8	0	0
Grasslands National Park	12	0	0
Gros Morne National Park	9	0	0
Jasper National Park	21	0	0
Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site	18	5	0
Kluane National Park Reserve	5	0	0
Kootenay National Park	10	0	0
Kouchibouguac National Park	25	0	0
La Mauricie National Park	25	0	0
Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve	6	6	0
Pacific Rim National Park Reserve	2	0	0
Point Pelee National Park	24	0	0
Prince Albert National Park	10	0	0
Prince Edward Island National Park	14	0	0
Pukaskwa National Park	5	0	0
Revelstoke National Park	0	0	3
Rideau Canal National Historic Site	8	0	0
Riding Mountain National Park	38	0	1
Saint-Ours Canal National Historic Site	6	0	0
Terra Nova National Park	30	0	0
Thousand Islands National Park	10	0	0
Trent-Severn Waterway National Historic Site	8	5	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: Program documents.

Table 9: Summary of benchmarking exercise results

	<b>Ontario Parks</b>	<b>Sépaq</b>	<b>National Capital Commission</b>	<b>U.S. National Parks Service</b>
<b>Program Creation</b>	Introduced 2010	Introduced 2008	Introduced 2012	N/A (no agency-wide program)
<b>Program Delivery</b>	Procure units via contractor and operate accommodations internally.	Units procured via contractor and operated internally (2008-2017).  Design, manufacture, and operate accommodations in-house (2017 – present).	Procure units via contractor and operate accommodations externally (semi-outsourced).	Outsourced via concessioner contracts on a site-by-site basis.
<b>Offers</b>	Canvas prospector tents (similar to oTENTik). Yurts. Camping pods. Historic stays.	Canvas prospector tents (similar to oTENTik) . Modular cube cabins (similar to MicrOcube but with more amenities).	Canvas prospector tents (similar to oTENTik but 4-season), yurts, cabins.	Varies site-by-site, for e.g.: historic cabins/lodges. canvas prospector tents. moveable eco-tent.
<b>Capacity</b>	Yurts, camping pods, canvas prospector tents: ~4-6.	Canvas prospector tents: 4-6 Modular cube cabins: 4-6.	Canvas prospector tents: 4 Yurts/small cabins: 6	Varies site-to-site, for e.g.: Yosemite, canvas prospector tent: 2-5 Everglades, eco-tent: 4
<b>Pricing</b>	On average, \$100-150/night (2024-25).	\$117-173/night (2024-25).	\$109-175/night (2024-25).	Market rate per site. Varies widely between site and season.

### Grasslands National Park

#### oTENTik

Strong winds at the park have resulted in considerable expenses for replacing damaged units. To improve airflow and mitigate future damage, replacement roofs were acquired. As such, several roofs now feature ventilation holes, while others have reinforced overhangs, specifically designed to safeguard against the high winds that regularly affect the park. It was also mentioned by site staff that the reinforced overhang reduces the amount of noise from wind while inside the unit.

Additional modifications included upgrading windows to more durable alternatives that are more resistant to strong wind.

### Forillon National Park

#### oTENTik

Similar to Rideau Canal National Historic Site and Grasslands National Park, Forillon National Park has reinforced their oTENTik roofs to better withstand high winds and heavy snowfall that are common at the site. The site has also installed anti-vermin grills under the oTENTiks.

#### Ôasis

The post-installation modifications to the Ôasis units include winterized windows and moisture vents to help combat the units' susceptibility to humidity.

#### MicrOcube

The park has one MicrOcube unit. One post-installation modification included a ventilation system to help mitigate moisture build-up in the unit.

Additionally, at the start of each operational season, the sites asset team conducts inspections to identify any maintenance or repair work required, thus increasing the sustainability of the units.

### Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site

#### oTENTik

While no significant modifications were made, the units have been strategically positioned throughout the park in locations where the impact of climate conditions would be minimized—such as further inland, away from direct exposure to the water, or in areas shielded by vegetation or buildings.

#### Ôasis

Water leaking into the Ôasis units has caused mold and water damage. Modifications were made by site staff to install vents to mitigate moisture build up and to reduce water-related damage.

### Rideau Canal National Historic Site

#### oTENTik

Modifications made upon installation like plywood under the tarp of the roof, and raising the beams to prevent damage to the wood, have helped to ensure the units remain structurally sound and in good condition.

Despite being installed in 2013, site staff felt that the lifespan of these units could extend another ten years, barring any unexpected weather events.

These type of roof modifications, initiated by sites, have been particularly important given their high cost of replacement (exact costs will be outlined in the efficiency section) and the labour-intensive process of using patch repairs as a solution.