Owners' Checklist to Sell Their Campground

A free planning guide from EverHaven Resorts

Selling a campground you've run for years is different from selling most other businesses. There's more at stake than the sale price. This checklist covers the steps most owners take to get ready, organized into six phases you can work through at your own pace. Will you be ready to hand it over when the time comes? That answer often takes longer to settle than the financial questions, so give yourself room before you set a timeline.

Phase 1: Clarify Your Goals & Timeline

Many owners find that giving themselves permission to grieve the transition makes the exit feel more complete.

- ☐ Do you still want to be involved in the business?
- ☐ If you are living on site, do you want to move off-site?
- ☐ When do you want to begin the sale process?

As you sit with these questions, it helps to think about what protecting your legacy means to you.

Phase 2: Gather Documents & Information

Buyers typically request the following, covering at least the past three years, sometimes up to five, prior to close. Pro tip: start early and create a digital folder (for example, Google Drive). Campgrounds with documented operating procedures, trained staff, and clean reservation data typically command higher valuations.

Financial & Operational

- ☐ Financial statements and business tax returns
- ☐ Reservation system data and reports
- ☐ Utility bills
- ☐ Payroll and employee records
- ☐ Key vendor and employee contact lists

Legal & Compliance

- ☐ Property deed and survey
- ☐ All permits, licenses, and zoning documents
- ☐ Lease agreements (if any)
- ☐ Insurance policies
- ☐ Contracts with suppliers or service providers
- ☐ Corporate documents (articles of organization or incorporation, an operating agreement or bylaws, and a certificate of good standing)

Environmental & Infrastructure

- ☐ Previous environmental reports (Phase I or II)
- ☐ Utility records and permitting
- ☐ Inspection reports
- ☐ Major infrastructure changes
- ☐ As-built drawings for utilities and infrastructure

Phase 3: Assemble Your Advisory Team

Selling without the right advisors is one of the easiest ways to leave money on the table. A good tax advisor and legal advisor typically save, or make, you more than they cost.

Tax Advisor

- ☐ Model your after-tax proceeds under the buyer's proposed structure, not just the gross price.
- ☐ If part of your price is a seller-financed note, get a walkthrough of installment sale tax treatment and what has to be reported in year one regardless of the note's payment schedule.
- ☐ Negotiate the purchase price allocation with the buyer's tax advisor before you sign anything, since both sides report the same numbers to the IRS.
- ☐ Get your books and the last three years of returns ready for the buyer's review.

Legal Advisor

- ☐ Review your letter of intent before you sign it, including any exclusivity terms.
- ☐ Confirm the business is in good standing and run a lien search.
- ☐ Identify every license and permit that needs to transfer, including a liquor license if your camp store sells alcohol.
- ☐ Handle the indemnification terms in the purchase agreement.
- ☐ For a seller-financed sale, prepare the promissory note and the UCC filing that protects you if the buyer defaults.

Ask either professional for a written scope of work and a flat fee or fee range before you engage them. EverHaven has a free sample RFP letter and a scope-of-work checklist for each at everhavenresorts.com/seller-resources.

Phase 4: Plan for People & Communication

- ☐ Decide when and how to tell your team.
- ☐ Protect confidentiality until you're ready. Premature rumors can affect staff morale and guest bookings.
- ☐ Think through your timing and the words you'll use before you talk with your team.

Phase 5: The Sale Process

- ☐ Respond same day to information requests from the buyer.
- ☐ Schedule 2 to 5 site visits around your schedule and guests.
- ☐ Be transparent about known issues. Surprises during due diligence create friction and can kill deals.

Phase 6: Closing & Transition

- ☐ Complete final walkthroughs and inspections.
- ☐ Sign the purchase agreement and satisfy contingencies.
- ☐ Transfer utilities, accounts, keys, codes, and records.

Ready to take the next step?

Contact us confidentially for a no-obligation conversation. We'll walk through this checklist together and answer your questions, however you'd like to reach us.

Scan the code to revisit this checklist online at everhavenresorts.com/seller-resources/getting-ready-to-sell.

Or start the conversation at everhavenresorts.com/contact-us.

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