

2017-2022

# Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy

## Key Findings



Community Social  
Development Department

October 2017



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## Purpose

The City of Richmond has been a municipal leader in fostering the conditions necessary for improving child care choices for Richmond's resident and employee populations. The 2017-2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy provides insight into the status of child care provision in Richmond and provides a 5 year plan for the City and other stakeholders to support this essential service to Richmond families. This booklet provides a summary of the key findings and strategic directions of the 2017-2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy.

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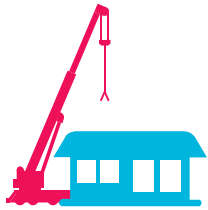
## Vision

The City of Richmond's vision for the next five years is to continue to be a municipal leader and support a comprehensive child care system. In its role, the City will strive to maintain and increase child care spaces in Richmond by encouraging the development of centres that provide a continuum of care for children from birth to twelve years, with a particular focus on increasing infant and toddler, and school age care spaces.



# What Has Been Achieved Since 2009

by the numbers...



Three City-owned child care centres were constructed.



Four child care facilities previously secured in the 1990s were upgraded.



Combined these seven existing child care facilities include a total of

**233**

licensed child care spaces.



A further five City-owned facilities, including an early childhood development hub, have been approved.



These future facilities will accommodate an estimated

**249**

child care spaces.

In total, existing and secured facilities will provide approximately

**482**

licensed child care spaces in City-owned purpose built facilities in Richmond

The supply of child care spaces in Richmond increased

**46%**



from 3,974 spaces in 2009



to 5,802 spaces in 2016.

A full time Child Care Coordinator was hired in 2013 to help implement the City's child care policy and secure the development of five approved child care facilities.



To date, over \$3M has been collected from developers as cash-in-lieu community amenity contributions that support facility development.

Approximately 40% of all child care spaces in Richmond are delivered on City of Richmond or Richmond School District sites.





# Child Care Needs Assessment Survey Results

**35%** of respondents were employed **IN RICHMOND** with 40.4% of Richmond-employed respondents working in the City Centre area

“We need to pay early childhood educators more because it is such an important job, and it’s not easy. We need to retain these wonderful staff and we need consistency for the children with less turnover. They are caring for our children, our future!”


—Parent


“While I am dissatisfied with the cost of child care, it isn’t because I think the staff and the facility are not worth the money. They work hard and they are amazing and I love my son’s daycare. But I resent having to spend so much so that I could go to school and back to work. High quality, subsidized daycare should be available in the Lower Mainland (like it is in other provinces!).”

—Parent

**72%** of families **USE THEIR OWN VEHICLE** to travel to and from child care services




**62.4%**  believed the supply of child care spaces in the city was **INADEQUATE**

**48.6%**  of respondents reported having a family member who could provide care for their child when needed

“I do understand that child care is such a struggle for all parents, so imagine the added struggle if you have a child with a disability. Finding the right program as well as someone who is willing to work with him [is challenging]. It is really difficult to find adequate childcare. If parents are not properly supported to be able to work, how will we be able to provide a better life especially when it is this expensive.”

—Parent

In the last year, **36.3%** of respondents have been **UNABLE TO ATTEND WORK OR FIND WORK** due to inadequate child care options 

“The first search for child care resources started before my child was born and did not end until he was 16 months old. Both my husband and I had to work part time. By the end of that time we directly contacted over 40 facilities, and visited 12 daycares. When our child reached 3–5 years, we started the process again for our search for a preschool.”


—Parent

**60.1%**  of respondents used **FRIENDS OR WORD-OF-MOUTH** to obtain child care services in Richmond

“Child care services are great in Richmond. I hope it gets better each year.”

—Parent

**33.3%**  of surveyed operators reported they were able to find qualified substitutes when they needed to fill short-term staff vacancies

**49.2%**  of respondent families have to **TAKE TIME OFF WORK** at some point in order to provide alternate care for their child

“If we truly value children and families there needs to be standardized monitoring of early childhood educator training in educational institutions.”

—Operator

**81.4%**  of respondents identified their work as the most common reason for seeking child care services

## Child Care Needs Assessment Common Themes

- **Affordability** – The high cost of child care emerged as a key concern of parents, particularly for group care for infants and toddlers (0 to 36 months).
- **Availability** – The number of licensed child care spaces per child has increased substantially over the years; however, many parents continue to experience lengthy waiting periods to secure care for their children. The longest waiting lists were reported for group care for infants and toddlers, school aged care and children who require extra supports.
- **Co-Location and Proximity of Related Services** – Parents reported that they would like other programs and services for their children to be co-located with child care, such as, library programs, recreation services, parks and family drop-in programs.
- **Extra Support Needs** – Parents found it difficult to secure child care spaces in inclusive settings for children with extra support needs. Operators also expressed challenges in adequately serving children with extra support requirements citing inadequate funding and difficulties in recruiting qualified staff.



- **Funding** – Parents stated that Provincial child care subsidies needed to increase and voiced support for the \$10aDay Child Care Plan. Operators expressed strong concerns about the lack of senior government commitment and funding shortfalls.
- **Information** – Many parents indicated a preference for online sources of information and information provided in languages other than English.
- **Quality of Care, Programming and Safety** – Parents wanted to know that their children were being well looked after and that their developmental needs were being addressed.
- **Stability of Facility Tenure** – The survey of child care operators revealed that several child care facilities are in rented premises with leases set to expire in the near future, and are therefore at risk of displacement or discontinuation.
- **Staffing** – Many parents commented that early childhood educators are not fairly compensated. Operators highlighted that low wages in the child care sector, along with high housing costs in Richmond, were contributing to their difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff.



## Strategic Directions and Recommended Actions

To address current child care needs and to plan for a comprehensive child care system, the 2017-2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy provides 7 strategic directions and 32 recommended actions.

### 7 Strategic Directions

- 1 Policy and Planning
- 2 Creating and Supporting Spaces
- 3 Advocacy
- 4 Accessibility and Inclusion
- 5 Collaboration and Partnership
- 6 Research, Promotion and Marketing
- 7 Monitoring and Renewal

## Moving Forward

The 2017-2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy was adopted by City Council on July 24, 2017. Moving forward, the City of Richmond will focus on creating early childhood development hubs and child care spaces co-located with community facilities. In addition, the City will focus on improving the availability of child care spaces for infants and toddlers, school-age children, and children who require extra support.

As with other communities in the province, the City of Richmond relies on resources from senior levels of government in order to partner in the creation of new child care spaces. The City will continue to seek opportunities to work with senior levels of government to support the implementation of a universal, publically funded child care system, with a shared goal to improve the availability of child care for Richmond resident and employee populations.

You can view the full report at:

<https://www.richmond.ca/plandev/socialplan/childcare/needs.htm>





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