

City of Richmond

Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy

2021 Update



Community Social Development Department



Contents

Introduction.....	2
About the Strategy	3
Implementation Priorities.....	4
The Child Care Sector in 2021.....	5
Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Child Care	5
Federal Government Initiatives.....	6
Provincial Government Initiatives	8
Status of Child Care in Richmond.....	11
City of Richmond’s New Child Care Spaces	11
Richmond School District Child Care Initiatives	11
Richmond’s Child Care Inventory.....	12
2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan.....	17
Progress.....	19
2021 Significant Achievements.....	19
Strategic Direction #1: Policy and Planning	20
Strategic Direction #2: Creating and Supporting Spaces.....	21
Strategic Direction #3: Advocacy	22
Strategic Direction #4: Accessibility and Inclusion.....	23
Strategic Direction #5: Collaboration and Partnership	24
Strategic Direction #6: Research, Promotion and Marketing	25
Strategic Direction #7: Monitoring and Renewal	26
Next Steps.....	27
Conclusion	28
Appendix A.....	29

Introduction

The City of Richmond is a municipal leader in its commitment to support child care in the community and has achieved significant progress in the creation of child care spaces in Richmond in 2021. Over the past thirty years, the City has been innovative in fostering the conditions for a comprehensive child care system in Richmond. The City recognizes that child care is a vital economic service that supports a wide range of the community's population including residents, employees, employers and post-secondary students. Child care also provides important benefits to children and supports healthy child development. The *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* provides a framework of ongoing, short and long-term actions for completion over a five-year span to guide and support expanded and enhanced child care options for families in Richmond.

The City's role is to provide leadership in creating and nurturing child care in Richmond as this is important to the liveability and economy of the city. The City demonstrates a commitment to child care through the establishment of child care policies, bylaws and statutory reserve funds that support and provide opportunities for additional child care; the process of securing child care amenities through development; and the allocation of staffing resources focused on this important community service. The City currently owns twelve purpose-built child care facilities including two progressive, state-of-the-art Early Childhood Development Hubs. One additional child care facility is under construction and will be complete in 2022. These existing and secured facilities will provide approximately 620 licensed child care spaces.

Since the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* was adopted in July 2017, there has been significant progress in addressing the actions outlined in the Strategy. Achievements from the first three and a half years of the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* were outlined in the *2018, 2019 and 2020 Updates*. The following report provides a high-level summary of the accomplishments and endeavours the City and community have accomplished in 2021.

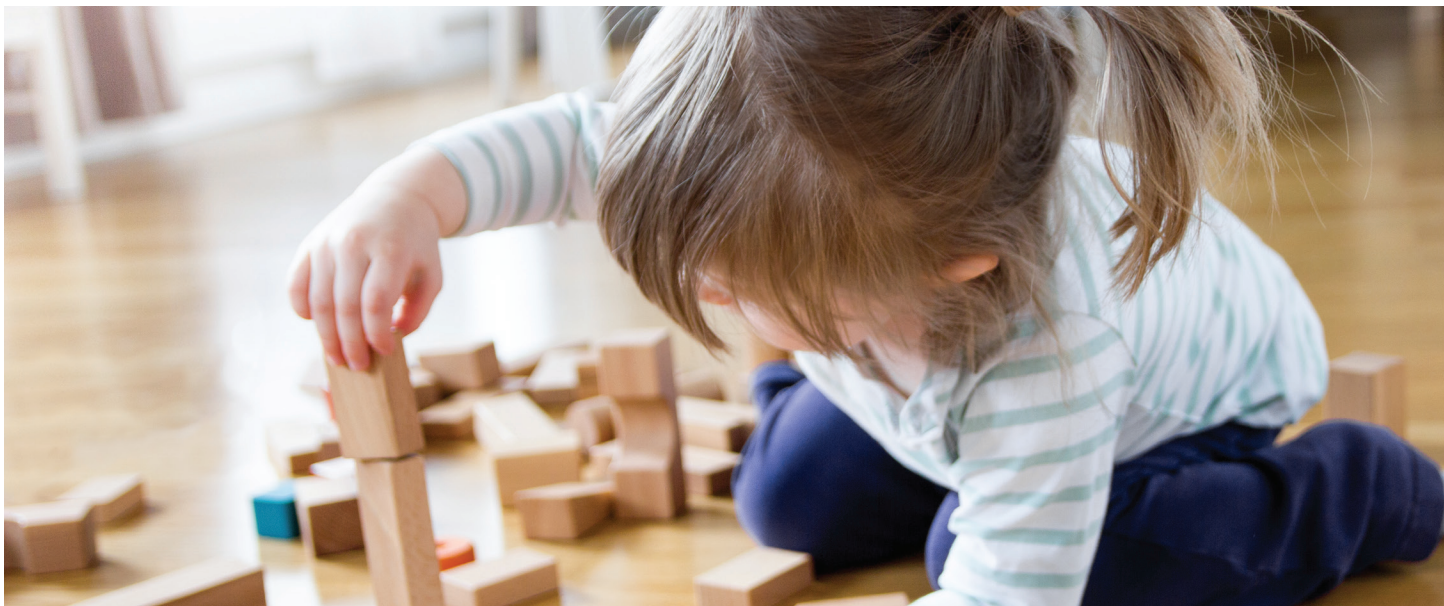


About the Strategy

The *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* (the Strategy) was adopted by City Council on July 24, 2017. It is the fourth child care needs assessment undertaken by the City since 1995 and provides insight into the status of child care in Richmond. This five-year strategy for the City outlines steps to support the development of a healthy child care system in the community and guides the City's actions. In addition, it recommends that the City and other stakeholders work together to address the need for quality, affordable and accessible child care spaces in Richmond.

The City of Richmond's first municipal child care strategy was created in 1991. The vision for the current five-year strategy is for the City to build on three decades of work to continue to support the development and expansion of a child care system in Richmond. The *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* involved a comprehensive review and analysis of the child care landscape in Richmond. It was developed with participation from the public and child care operators through focus groups and surveys, as well as engagement with key stakeholders. The award-winning strategy was commended for being outcome-based with short-term and long-term actions. Its commitment to inclusiveness and representing the needs of Richmond's diverse community was also significant.

The Strategy identifies emerging trends in early child development and early learning including securing Early Childhood Development Hubs with co-located child care and family support services, and the importance of multilingual community engagement. It is recognized as a high-quality resource among other municipalities and the City has established itself as a leader in the development of this planning document and the creation of community child care spaces.



Implementation Priorities

In the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*, seven strategic directions and 32 recommended actions address the current and future needs related to child care in Richmond. The seven strategic directions are:

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

These strategic directions have guided the City's priorities since 2017. Over the next year, the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* will continue to provide focus and direction for the development of quality, affordable and accessible child care spaces in Richmond.



The Child Care Sector in 2021

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Child Care

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have wide-reaching impacts on the world and the long-term impacts on children, families, the child care sector and the economy continue to evolve.

The COVID-19 pandemic has validated the critical role that child care plays as an essential service to support Canada’s economic viability and, in particular, women’s participation in the workforce. In the initial stages of the pandemic, women lost work at a faster rate than men with women’s total employment declining 17% between February and April 2020, compared to 15% for men.¹ Access to child care for families simultaneously became even more challenging than prior to the pandemic. The Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ) administered by the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) and completed by over 5,000 parents of children entering kindergarten in BC, collected information on the impacts of COVID-19 on families in September 2021. This data indicated that 41% of families had less access to consistent child care during the pandemic and 25% indicated that their family income decreased during the same period.² These combined factors have resulted in a critical period for the child care sector and have drawn attention to the overall vulnerability of the current child care system.

In addition, the pandemic has accentuated the importance of implementing a national early care and learning strategy that includes the provision of licensed child care across Canada. This need for universal high-quality child care is now widely accepted in Canada, and the willingness of the current federal government to move forward with a transformational early learning and child care strategy is strong.³ The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for the child care sector in BC and the implementation of systemic approach would help to counter this significant concern.

Another critical impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and their families is the loss of social, recreational and educational opportunities provided in high-quality early care and learning environments including licensed child care settings. Many parents, concerned for their children’s health, due to job loss or reduction in income or as a result of working from home, withdrew their children from child care completely. This has resulted in decreased opportunities for children to socialize, build relationships with caring adults outside their family and develop skills to support successful transitions into elementary school. Of the families completing the CHEQ (2021) who identified barriers to accessing local community activities, 84% indicated that COVID-19 was a barrier. Access to



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- 1 Stanford J (2020) The Role of Early Learning and Child Care in Rebuilding Canada’s Economy after COVID-19 Centre for Future Work, November 2020.
 - 2 Human Early Learning Partnership (2021) Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Families and Young Children in British Columbia.
 - 3 Stanford J (2020) The Role of Early Learning and Child Care in Rebuilding Canada’s Economy after COVID-19 Centre for Future Work, November 2020.



community-based services to address developmental needs was also impacted. CHEQ data (2021) indicated that almost 50% of families reported the need for additional supports or services for their child and, of these, 15% indicated that they no longer use services and supports necessary for their child while 48% indicated that they had continued to access these services however in a different way.⁴

Ongoing monitoring and additional research will continue regarding the long-term implications of the pandemic on the child care sector in BC. The specific impacts on child care in Richmond, as well as impacts on children themselves, will not be clearly known for some time and will require further monitoring and research at the local, national and international levels.

Federal Government Initiatives

Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

On July 8, 2021, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Premier of British Columbia, John Horgan announced a new early learning and child care agreement between the Governments of Canada and BC. This agreement includes an investment of \$3.2 billion over the next five years by the Government of Canada to help improve regulated early learning and child care for children under 6 years old in BC. In addition, the Provincial Government will invest an additional \$2.5 billion over the next three years in early learning and child care programs and initiatives.

The provincial and federal governments share a common goal of improving access to quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care programs and services, and are committed to working together to build a comprehensive system of early learning and care.

The early learning and child care agreement supports the following outcomes for BC:

- A 50% reduction in average parent fees by 2022;
- An average parent fee of \$10 per day for regulated child care spaces for children under 6 years old by the end of the five-year agreement;
- The creation of 30,000 regulated early learning and child care spaces for children under the age of 6 years old within five years and 40,000 spaces within seven years;
- Support for early childhood educators through the creation of a wage grid; and
- The creation of an Implementation Committee to monitor the progress on child care commitments.

Investments into new child care spaces will be directed to programs that are community-based, long-term and operated by public and non-profit institutions. This new funding for early learning and child care was part of the 2021 Federal Budget. A total investment of \$30 billion over the next five years, with a

⁴ Human Early Learning Partnership (2021) Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Families and Young Children in British Columbia.

minimum of \$9.2 billion per year on an ongoing basis, will be provided to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system. Of this \$30 billion in funding, there will also be the following investments:

- Up to \$2.5 billion over the next five years to create 3,300 new high-quality early learning and child care spaces for Indigenous families; support for before and after-school care for First Nations children living on reserves; repair and renovate existing Indigenous early-learning and child care centres; and build and maintain new early-learning and child care centres in additional communities; and
- \$29.2 million over two years to support child care centres as they improve their physical accessibility.

This announcement also included an acknowledgement that women’s participation in the workforce has been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and public health restrictions. This investment supports and continues the work towards improving the accessibility and affordability for early learning and child care services for families, as well as allowing parents, particularly mothers, to get into the workforce.



Speech from the Throne

On November 23, 2021 the House of Commons Speech from the Throne outlined child care as an important priority to addressing the rising cost of living in Canada. In order to make life more affordable for Canadians, the Government will continue building the first-ever Canada-wide early learning and child care system. With a goal to cut average fees in half by the end of 2022 for regulated child care in most of the provinces and territories, families will save thousands of dollars. Throughout the Speech from the Throne, child care was positioned as an important service to grow the economy.

Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Mandate Letter

On December 16, 2021, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Mandate Letter outlined an immediate priority to build a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system. It also identified implementation of a culturally appropriate Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care system. In addition to the commitments outlined in the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, these objectives include:

- Build 250,000 new high-quality child care spaces across Canada and hire 40,000 more early childhood educators by the end of fiscal year 2025–2026;
- Strengthen and protect a high-quality Canada-wide child care system;
- Establish a National Advisory Council on Early Learning and Child Care;
- Reduce fees for before and after-school care;
- Ensure the Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care is fully resourced and operational by early 2023; and
- Work with Indigenous partners to ensure Indigenous children can access a culturally appropriate Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care system.



Provincial Government Initiatives

The Province of BC has developed two new pieces of provincial legislation related to child care that were introduced in the legislature on June 8, 2021 and became law on October 27, 2021. The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Act and the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Act streamline early learning and child care legislation and confirm the provincial government's commitments to child care while supporting recruitment and retention of early childhood educators. These new pieces of legislation support further progression towards the development of a universal child care system in BC.

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Act

The ELCC Act combines the Child Care BC Act and the Child Care Subsidy Act into a single piece of legislation and includes the following provisions:

- Support for the use of grants for the child care sector to enhance inclusivity for children who have disabilities, special needs or require additional supports;
- Expanded regulation-making power to allow regulations that can set limits on child care fees; and
- A legislative foundation for an inclusive universal early learning and child care system that can adapt and be modified as the system grows.

Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Act

The ECE Act incorporates the existing provisions related to early childhood educators (ECEs) and post-secondary ECE programs previously outlined in the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and Child Care Licensing Regulation, and combines them in a new statute under the responsibility of the minister responsible for child care including:

- Enabling the creation of a public registry for ECEs;
- Providing title protection for ECEs and ECE assistants; and
- Reducing barriers to ECE certification for ECEs who completed their education outside of BC by allowing temporary certifications to enable ECEs to work while undergoing the transfer of credentials.

This piece of legislation will support the continued professionalization of the child care sector while also addressing critical workforce recruitment and retention issues.

Ministry of Child and Family Development Initiatives

The provincial Childcare BC New Spaces Fund underwent updates and provided additional funding opportunities in 2021. The call for applications for a new round of New Spaces funding closed on November 16, 2021 with maximum funding amounts per project maintained at \$3 million of eligible project costs for public sector organizations and Indigenous Governments, and \$1.5 million for Indigenous and non-Indigenous not-for-profit organizations. Successful applicants are expected to be notified in March 2022.

In 2021 changes were made to the New Spaces Fund in order to maximize the number of licensed child care spaces created in the areas of highest need and align with local community priorities. Changes to the program include:

- Eligible organizations now include only public sector organizations, Indigenous governments, not-for-profit organizations and Indigenous not-for-profit organizations. Private businesses are no longer eligible for this funding program;
- Increased priority for projects creating child care spaces for infants and toddlers under three years of age;
- Focus on full-time child care for children prior to school entry and part-time child care for school age children;
- Provision of child care spaces for underserved populations and communities; and
- Increased focus on creation of spaces on school grounds and inclusion of the new license category, 'School Age Care on School Grounds' as an eligible child care type for funding.

In 2020, a total of 3,634 new child care spaces across the province were funded by this program. Of these new spaces, 403 spaces are located in Richmond. These additional spaces significantly added to the inventory of child care for Richmond children and families. Of the projects funded in Richmond, three are in City-owned facilities. These projects include:

- Sprouts Early Childhood Development Hub – provided by Pinnacle Living, operated by the YMCA of Greater Vancouver and opened in January 2022;
- Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hub – provided by Keltic Canada Development, operated by the Richmond Society for Community Living and scheduled to open in March 2022; and
- Hummingbird Child Care Centre – provided by Oval 8 Holdings Ltd. (ASPAC Developments), operated by the YMCA of Greater Vancouver and scheduled for completion in 2022.



Ministry of Education Initiatives

The Ministry of Education recently expanded its Seamless Day Kindergarten pilot program, a valuable program that employs qualified early childhood educators to provide child care before and after the regular school day to kindergarten students in elementary schools. This expansion saw 25 elementary schools across the province participate in the program. These Seamless Day Kindergarten programs are delivered in kindergarten classrooms, under a fee-for-service model and provide an integrated all-day program intended to meet the needs of kindergarten students and families in need of child care. This innovative program provides continuity for children, fosters connections between child care and education sectors, and expands child care spaces without the need for additional capital expenditures. Pilot sites are spread throughout the province with 25 school districts participating at the current time. Future pilot sites may be added in upcoming years but are unconfirmed at the present time. Should this program expand and additional sites be added Richmond schools could be explored as viable locations.

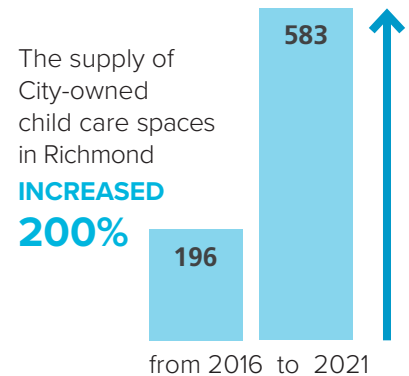


Status of Child Care in Richmond

City of Richmond’s New Child Care Spaces

In 2021, the City of Richmond took ownership of two new innovative facilities, Sprouts and Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hubs. These two facilities will create 199 additional licensed child care spaces. This adds to the existing ten City-owned child care facilities already operational and provides a combined total of 583 licensed child care spaces in City-owned child care facilities. A future 37 child care spaces at Hummingbird Child Care Centre are currently under construction and expected to be operational in 2022.

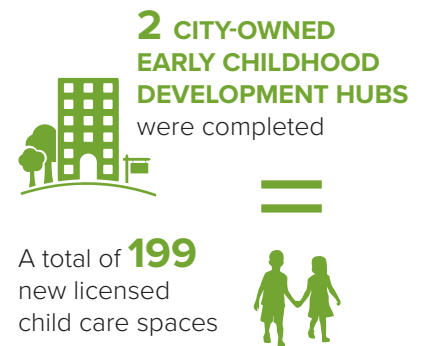
The completion of the two ECD Hubs in 2021 is a significant achievement and the result of the City of Richmond’s commitment to creating larger facilities that can accommodate both licensed child care and wrap-around family strengthening and support services. These facilities each include four different types of licensed child care and provide opportunity for enhanced community use, providing a continuum of supports for families. In addition, these facilities provide high-priority office space for non-profit organizations who support families and child care providers in Richmond.



Richmond School District Child Care Initiatives

The Richmond School District has made considerable progress to support the provision of child care for families in Richmond. The Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP), which was adopted on June 26, 2019 and recently updated on November 24, 2021, includes several strategic recommendations that pertain to child care and early learning. The School District has accessed the Province of BC’s Childcare BC Funding Programs to create 42 child care spaces at F.A. Tomsett Elementary School, scheduled for completion in early 2022; and recently opened 27 child care spaces at R.J. Tait Elementary School in September 2021.

In addition to these recently secured spaces, the Richmond School District continues to review existing school sites and funding opportunities to inform planning for additional child care spaces in schools. Staff from the City of Richmond and Richmond School District continue to work together and will collaborate around opportunities to increase child care spaces at, or in close proximity to, schools.





Richmond's Child Care Inventory

The City currently owns twelve purpose-built child care facilities and Early Childhood Development Hubs which are leased to and operated by not-for-profit organizations. These facilities provide a total of 583 spaces of licensed child care and represent approximately 8% of the total 7,710 licensed child care spaces in Richmond. There is currently one additional City-owned facility, Hummingbird Child Care Centre, under construction which will contribute an additional 37 spaces of licensed child care in 2022. In addition, Community Associations and Societies currently provide an additional 801 spaces of licensed preschool and school age child care. Combined, the child care spaces in City-owned facilities and those operated by Community Associations and Societies represent 18% of the total child care inventory in Richmond of 7,710 spaces.

As part of the development of the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*, an analysis of licensed child care space in 2016 was conducted. The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan* and the 2020 Update to the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* included an update to the inventory of child care spaces in Richmond, based on 2020 licensed child care spaces and 2016 Census population data. To build on previous profiles of child care spaces, this section provides an updated child care profile that includes licensed child care spaces in 2021 and 2016 Census population data. It is important to note that information on current space availability has been calculated using 2016 population statistics and not population projections outlined in the action plan.

Information on licensed child care spaces was collected in December 2021 to update the data on child care spaces in Richmond. To compare trends over time, information on licensed child care spaces from Vancouver Coastal Health and 2016 Census Data was used to calculate the child care space profiles for Richmond Planning Areas. Information on licensed child care spaces was also analyzed with child population data to create a 2021 inventory of child care spaces. This information will be used to update the City's child care planning priorities for 2022.

The overall number of licensed child care spaces in Richmond increased by 10% between 2020 and 2021 (Table 1). A total of 688 new child care spaces were licensed for operation in 2021, amounting to a total of 7,710 licensed child care spaces in Richmond. In addition, analysis of data from the previous five years indicates that there has been a significant increase in licensed child care spaces, with 1,908 new child care spaces in Richmond between 2016 and 2021.

Table 1: Trends in Licensed Child Care Spaces in Richmond: 2016–2021

Type of Care	Number of Licensed Child Care Spaces					Change 2016 - 2021		Change 2020 - 2021	
	2016	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change in spaces	% Change	Change in spaces	% Change
Group Care - Under 36 Months	664	928	1,023	1,211	1,495	831	125%	284	23%
Group Care - 30 Months to School Age	2,103	2,581	2,708	2,850	3,210	1,107	53%	360	13%
Group Care - School Age	1,666	1,685	1,822	1,817	1,814	148	9%	-3	0%
Family Child Care	341	234	248	197	204	-137	-40%	7	4%
In-home Multi-age Care	81	104	105	72	80	-1	-1%	8	11%
Multi-age Care	88	96	80	120	120	32	36%	0	0%
Preschool	819	769	791	729	761	-58	-7%	32	4%
Occasional Care	40	42	26	26	26	-14	-35%	0	0%
Total	5,802	6,439	6,803	7,022	7,710	1,908	33%	688	10%

In the past year, the number of new licensed Group Care (Under 36 Months) spaces represented the majority of the increase in licensed child care spaces in Richmond. This is similar to the trend seen in 2020, where licensed Group Care (Under 36 Months) spaces experienced the largest growth in a single year of any type of care. As indicated in Table 2, there are currently 28.5 licensed Group Care (Under 36 Months) spaces per 100 children aged 0 to 2 years in Richmond. While this increase varies by Planning Area, large increases in the number of spaces for the 0 to 2 years age group addresses a significant priority area outlined in the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*.

Since 2016, there have been increases in the number of Group Care (30 Months to School Age) and Group Care (School Age) spaces in Richmond. There are currently 60.5 Group Care (30 Months to School Age) child care spaces per 100 children aged 3 to 5 years in Richmond (Table 2). Group Care (School Age) has experienced significantly less change in the number of licensed spaces with long-term space increases of only nine percent between 2016 and 2021. While 70 new licensed Group Care (School Age) spaces were created in 2021 (Table 3), this type of care also experienced the loss of 35 licensed spaces. An overall decrease was seen in Group Care (School Age) spaces from 2020, indicating that this type of care is still a priority for space creation in Richmond. In Richmond there are currently 14.1 Group Care (School Age) child care spaces per 100 children aged 6 to 12 years (Table 2).

In 2021 there were **33 CHILD CARE SPACES** per 100 children from birth to 12 years in Richmond.

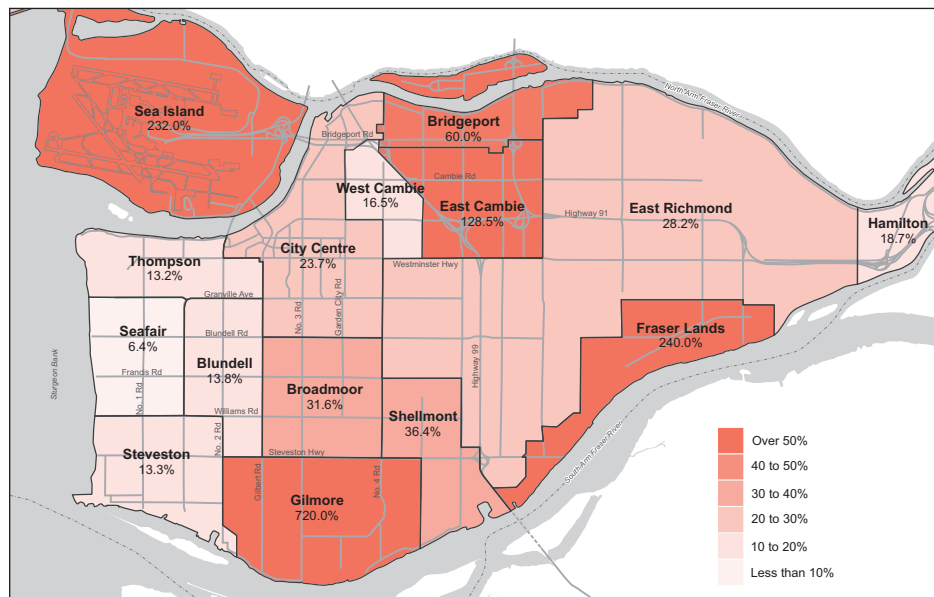


Table 2: Group Child Care Spaces per 100 Children by Type of Child Care License

Type of Child Care License	Number of Licensed Child Care Spaces	Child Population*	Child Care Spaces per 100 Children
Group Care – Under 36 Months	1,495	5,250	28.5
Group Care – 30 Months to School Age	3,210	5,305	60.5
Group Care – School Age	1,814	12,830	14.1
Total	7,710 ⁵	23,385	33.0

*Child population is based on 2016 Census Data

Figure 1: Percent of Child Care Need Met for Children Aged 0 to 2 Years through Licensed Group Care (Under 36 Months), by Planning Area, 2021⁶

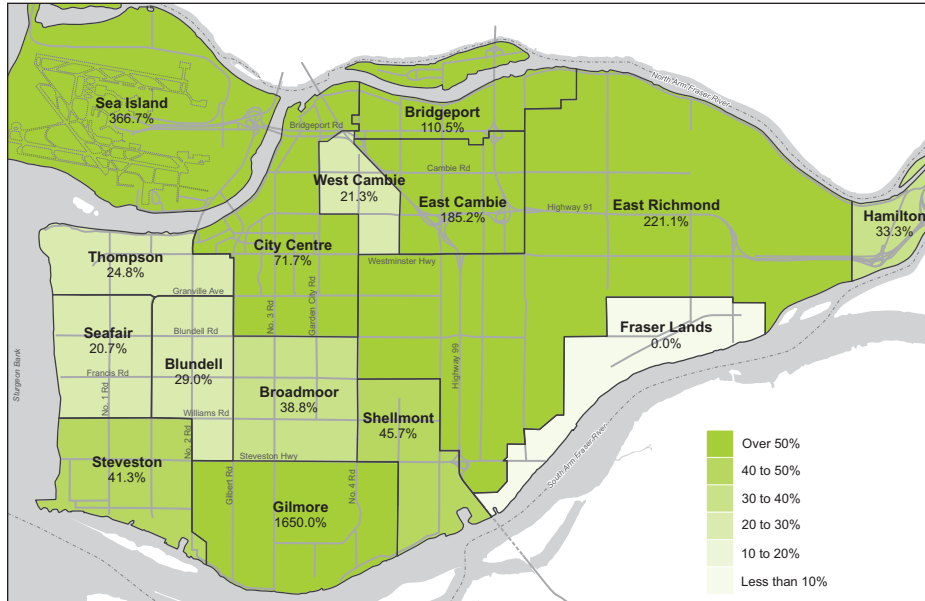


In 2021 there were **28.5 GROUP CARE (UNDER 36 MONTHS) SPACES** per 100 children aged 0 to 2 years in Richmond

⁵ Note: Includes family child care, multi-age care, in-home care, occasional care and preschool programs.

⁶ Note: Does not include family child care, multi-age care, in-home care, occasional care or preschool programs.

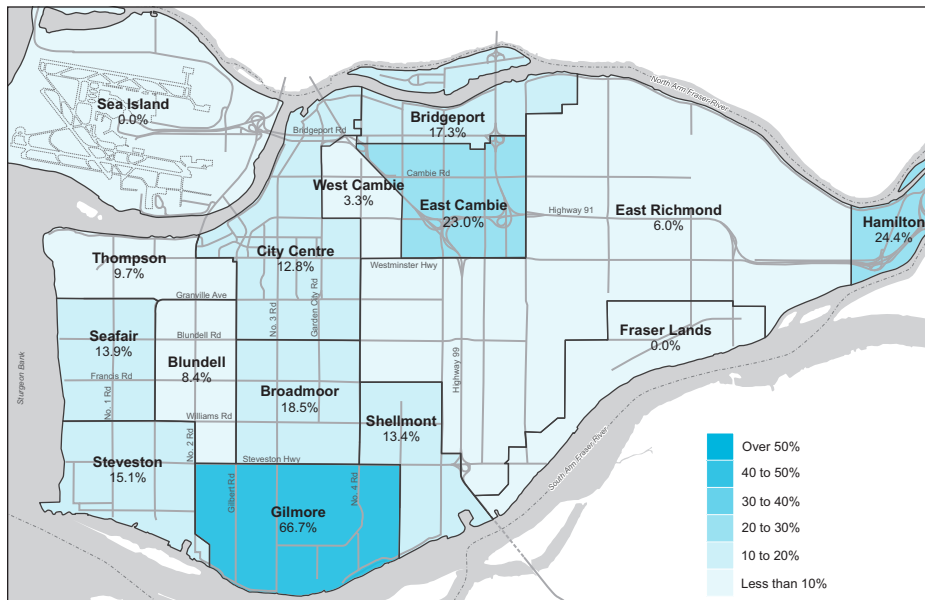
Figure 2: Percent of Child Care Need Met for Children Aged 3 to 5 Years through Licensed Group Care (30 Months to School Age), by Planning Area, 2021⁷



In 2021 there were **60.5** **GROUP CARE (30 MONTHS TO SCHOOL AGE) SPACES** per 100 children aged 3 to 5 years in Richmond



Figure 3: Percent of Child Care Need Met for Children Aged 6 to 12 Years through Licensed Group Care (School Age), by Planning Area, 2021⁸



In 2021, there were **14.1** **GROUP CARE (SCHOOL AGE) SPACES** per 100 children.



⁷ Note: Does not include family child care, multi-age care, in-home care, occasional care or preschool programs.

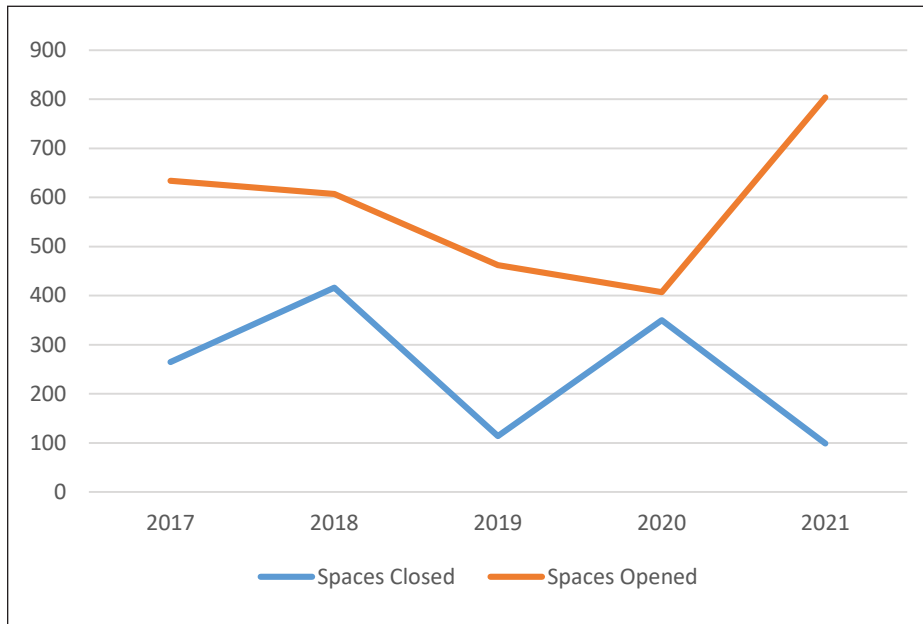
⁸ Note: Does not include family child care, multi-age care, in-home care, occasional care or preschool programs.

While 2021 saw an overall increase in the number of licensed child care spaces, there were also closures of programs in Richmond (Table 3). A total of 7 facilities closed in 2021 resulting in a loss of 99 licensed child care spaces. Among these spaces, 34 spaces were licensed as Group Care (30 Months to School Age) and 35 spaces were licensed as Group Care (School Age). However, 2021 also saw a total of 28 new facilities open, adding 804 new licensed child care spaces to the supply in Richmond. The majority of new spaces were Group Care (30 Months to School Age) (366) and Group Care (Under 36 Months) (280). In 2021, there was the greatest increase in the total number of licensed child care spaces in recent years (Figure 4). Combined with the lowest number of spaces lost, the total number of child care spaces in Richmond is the highest seen within the city to date.

Table 3: Licensed Child Care Spaces and Facility Closures and Openings in 2021

Type of Care	Licensed Child Care Spaces - Closed	Licensed Child Care Facilities - Closed	Licensed Child Care Spaces - Open	Licensed Child Care Facilities - Open
Group Care - Under 36 Months	0	0	280	8
Group Care - 30 Months to School Age	34	2	366	9
Group Care - School Age	35	1	70	2
Family Child Care	14	2	26	4
In-home Multi-age Care	8	1	16	2
Multi-age Care	8	1	8	1
Preschool	0	0	38	2
Occasional Care	0	0	0	0
Total	99	7	804	28

Figure 4: Number of Licensed Spaces that Opened and Closed from 2017–2021

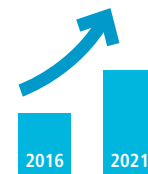


2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan

The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan* (the Plan), which was adopted by City Council on April 12, 2021, offers valuable insight on municipal initiatives and outlines a concrete framework to expand and enhance child care choices in Richmond. The Plan builds on and complements the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*. Through research and consultation, the Plan provides a snapshot of the current state of child care in Richmond and assesses the opportunities and challenges to better meet the child care needs of families.

The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan* proposes child care space creation targets to address these needs:

- A net increase of 3,688 spaces by 2031 to achieve targets in relation to the projected population of:
 - 25 spaces per 100 children under 36 months;
 - 55 spaces per 100 children aged 30 months to school age; and
 - 25 spaces per 100 school aged children.
- Child care spaces for school age children that are on-site or within walking distance for all elementary schools in Richmond, both public and independent, by 2031.
- A focus on three areas of flexible, licensed child care to meet the needs of families who require part-time or intermittent child care or who seek care during non-traditional hours due to employment.



The supply of child care spaces in Richmond **INCREASED 33%** from 2016 to 2021.

The Plan outlines a total of 35 actions for further exploration and implementation in order to create additional child care spaces in Richmond over the next ten years. These actions combined form a framework to further support the development of additional child care spaces in Richmond in City-owned, not-for-profit and private facilities. Outcomes from these actions will also support an increase in quality child care options for families while contributing to a stronger and more sustainable system of early learning and care.

The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan* outlines a target to increase licensed child care spaces in Richmond by 3,688 spaces between 2021 and 2031. This includes a target of 563 new Group Care (Under 36 Months) spaces, 1,087 new Group Care (30 Months to School Age), 1,974 new Group Care (School Age) spaces and 64 additional spaces through other types of care including Occasional Care, Child Minding and Multi-Age Overnight Care. Data on licensed child care spaces previously outlined, indicates that significant progress has already been made to achieve these targets, as outlined below.

Table 4: 2031 Licensed Child Care Space Targets compared to 2021 Supply

Type of Care	2031 Target	2021 Supply	Target Met (%)
Group Care - Under 36 Months	1,774	1,495	84%
Group Care - 30 Months to School Age	3,937	3,210	82%
Group Care - School Age	3,791	1,814	48%
Occasional Care	58	26	45%
Licensed Child Minding	24	0	0%
Multi-Age Child Care - Overnight Care	8	0	0%
Total*	10,710	7,710	72%

*Includes all types of child care, including licensed preschool, multi-age care, in-home multi-age care and family child care.

Progress

The *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* was adopted by City Council on July 24, 2017 and outlines 32 recommended actions to accomplish throughout the five-year period. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of accomplishments that have occurred since the publication of the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy–2020 Update* in early 2021.

2021 Significant Achievements

In 2021, significant advancements and achievements occurred within the City's child care portfolio, including:

- The Sprouts Early Childhood Development (ECD) Hub was completed and transferred to the City of Richmond in 2021 as the first City-owned ECD Hub in Richmond. The Sprouts ECD Hub, located at 3368 Carscallen Road, was secured as a community amenity contribution from Pinnacle Living (Capstan Village) Lands Inc. as part of a mixed-use development. This facility is operated by the YMCA of Greater Vancouver and includes approximately 2,285 sq. m. (24,597 sq. ft.) of indoor and outdoor space over three levels, including spaces for licensed child care programs and wrap-around family services. Sprouts ECD Hub provides a total of 92 child care spaces in four licensed child care programs.
- The Seedlings Early Childhood Development (ECD) Hub completed construction and was transferred to the City in late 2021. The Seedlings ECD Hub, located at 6380 No. 3 Road, was secured as a community amenity contribution from Keltic (Brighthouse) Development Ltd. as part of a mixed-use development. This facility will provide up to 107 spaces of licensed child care and will be operated by the Richmond Society for Community Living (RSCL). In addition to licensed child care programs, this facility includes multipurpose and office space for the delivery of family strengthening and support programs by non-profit organizations in Richmond.
- The 2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan which provides child care space creation targets over the next 10 years was completed and adopted by City Council on April 12, 2021. This plan also includes actions to meet these targets.





1 Strategic Direction #1: Policy and Planning

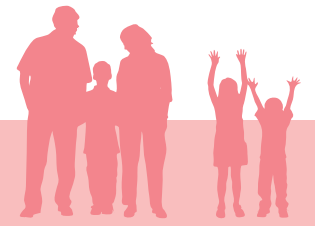


Why Is this important?

The City's role in child care policy and planning is to support the development and ongoing provision of an adequate supply of local, licensed child care spaces to meet the needs of resident and employment populations. This entails conducting periodic child care needs assessments and monitoring data sources to analyze trends and child care space needs and availability within the Richmond community. The City's role also involves the administration of the City's Child Care Grant Program and support to the Child Care Development Advisory Committee.

Highlighted Achievements

- In 2021, the City's Child Care Development Reserve received approximately \$23,000 in developer amenity and voluntary contributions. These funds are used to assist in the creation of new child care spaces in Richmond by supporting the development of new City-owned child care facilities and developing resources to support innovation and best practice in the design of City-owned child care facilities. In addition, the Child Care Development Reserve supports the maintenance and enhancement of child care within the city by providing grants to non-profit societies through the Child Care Capital Grant Program.
- The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan* was published in 2021 and provides an updated profile on children's demographic trends and licensed child care spaces in the city. This project was supported by a \$25,000 Child Care Planning Grant from the Union of BC Municipalities. This Plan provides child care space creation targets over the next 10 years, as well as outlines 35 actions to meet these targets. These actions form a framework to further support the development of additional child care spaces in Richmond in City-owned, not-for-profit and private facilities. Outcomes from these actions will also support an increase in quality child care options for families while contributing to a stronger and more sustainable system of early learning and care.
- A review of the Official Community Plan (OCP) was completed in order to identify areas that could further support the provision of licensed child care in Richmond. This review included examining land use, bylaws and zoning requirements for child care. Information from this review will be used to inform the next OCP update.



2 Strategic Direction #2: Creating and Supporting Spaces

Why is this important?

The City supports the creation of child care spaces by accepting voluntary contributions from developers in the form of built child care facilities or cash-in-lieu contributions to the City’s Child Care Statutory Reserves. As of 2020, the City currently manages and maintains ten existing City-owned child care facilities and is in the process of developing an additional City-owned child care facility and two Early Childhood Development Hubs. There are also dedicated City resources to help develop, maintain and support the child care system in Richmond.

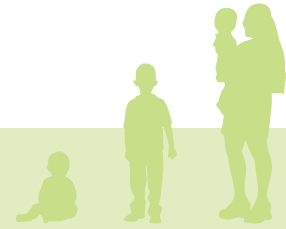
In 2021
\$45,519
FOR
CAPITAL
EXPENSES and
\$1,500 **FOR**
PROFESSIONAL AND
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
 was approved through the
 child care grant program.



Highlighted Achievements

- Hummingbird Child Care Centre, the child care facility secured as a community amenity contribution in the River Green development continued to be constructed. This 37 space facility will be operated by the YMCA of Greater Vancouver. This City-owned child care facility is expected to be completed in 2022.
- The 2021 City of Richmond Child Care Grants were approved and a total of \$47,019 was awarded to seven organizations including:
 - \$45,519 in Capital Grants to provide necessary capital items such as playground renovations; and
 - \$1,500 in Professional and Program Development Grants to provide workshops, conferences and to support development of a ‘Community of Practice.’
- Collaboration and coordination continued with the Richmond School District and resulted in additional opportunities to co-locate child care with schools through the sharing of information regarding Provincial Funding Programs and data on child care needs in Richmond. The School District accessed the Province of BC’s Childcare BC Funding Programs to create 42 child care spaces at F.A. Tomsett Elementary School, scheduled for completion in early 2022, and recently opened 27 child care spaces at R.J. Tait Elementary School in September 2021.





3 Strategic Direction #3: Advocacy

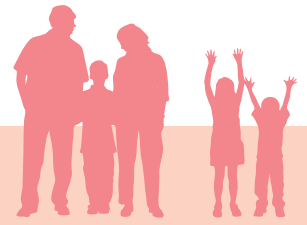
Why is this important?

The City advocates on behalf of its residents to address the needs of Richmond's resident and employee population. Facilitating quality, accessible, and affordable child care is within the mandate of senior levels of government, and the actions below address advocacy items that the City can undertake.

Highlighted Achievements

- Through the *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan*, the City identified additional advocacy actions to be undertaken in the upcoming ten years to facilitate the creation of additional child care spaces in Richmond. This includes advocating to the Federal Government for additional commitments to child care through a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework for Canada. In addition, an action is identified in the plan to request the Provincial Government to consider the impact of school capacity considerations on the provision of child care in schools and look at adaptations within the Child Care Licensing Regulation to permit the licensing of outdoor child care programs.





4 Strategic Direction #4: Accessibility and Inclusion

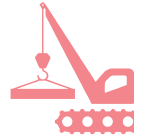
Why is this important?

The City works to create an inclusive environment for all residents, in partnership with community organizations. Improving access to information about child care, supporting family services for newcomer families, and enhancing services for children with diverse needs are all important areas that the City strives to strengthen.

Highlighted Achievements

- The *Richmond Child Care Design Guidelines* ('the Design Guidelines') provides best-practice design standards to inform the creation of City-owned child care facilities in Richmond. This resource document is also used by developers, architects and child care operators in the community. The Design Guidelines underwent a review in 2021 in order to update information to reflect learnings and new design standards. An updated document will articulate current best practices in child care design and will be published in early 2022.

The updated 2022 Child Care Design Guidelines will provide technical guidance for the design of all **FUTURE CITY-OWNED CHILD CARE FACILITIES**





5 Strategic Direction #5: Collaboration and Partnership

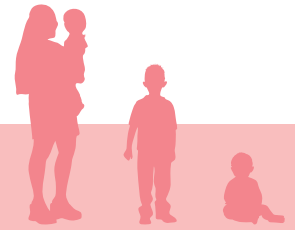


Why is this important?

The City of Richmond engages in and seeks partnerships and collaboration with others to advance its child care strategy. The City continues to identify potential opportunities to work with community partners to remain well informed and prepared to respond to funding opportunities and policy changes.

Highlighted Achievements

- In 2021, the Richmond Child Care Development Advisory Committee (CCDAC) provided continued support to City staff and City Council, delivering valuable advice on child care planning and service delivery in Richmond. The CCDAC was established to provide City Council with advice regarding the planning, development, support and promotion of quality, affordable and accessible child care in Richmond. Members of the CCDAC provided feedback on the three City-owned child care development projects under construction in 2021, including Sprouts Early Childhood Development Hub, Seedlings Early Childhood Development Hub and Hummingbird Child Care Centre. The CCDAC also reviewed and monitored several changes to child care legislation and funding programs initiated by senior levels of government to support child care initiatives.
- In 2021, the Richmond Child Care Development Advisory Committee and the City planned and hosted an online professional development workshop for Child Care Month, titled 'Not Just Surviving – But Thriving – In These Exceptional Times', presented by Dr. Vanessa Lapointe. This event provided professional development and shared best practice research for early childhood educators, child care providers and parents. Approximately 40 individuals participated in this workshop. All participants reported learning new and valuable information and 69% said that they found an online platform and mode of delivery easy to use.
- As part of the 2021 Child Care Month activities, the Child Care Development Advisory Committee and the City hosted a children's art exhibition. A call for art submissions was sent to child care programs in Richmond and approximately 15 submissions were received. The submissions were displayed at the Richmond Cultural Centre throughout the month of May.



6 Strategic Direction #6: Research, Promotion and Marketing

Why is this important?

The City conducts research on child care trends, creates tools to assist the public with finding child care resources, prepares publications to help potential child care operators create child care space, and promotes access to resources within the community.

Highlighted Achievements

- The City undertook a review and dissemination of research in the child care sector relating to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and families. This information was compiled from various organizations and published reports and used internally to support community organizations delivering child care services across Richmond. Updated information on COVID-19 safety plans in child care was disseminated to child care providers, the Child Care Development Advisory Committee and community organizations as it became available. In addition, City staff monitored funding opportunities to support child care programs during the pandemic in order to provide child care operators with this information.
- Materials to support child care operators in creating child care spaces were reviewed and updated in collaboration with Vancouver Coastal Health, Child Care Licensing and Richmond Fire Rescue. This included convening meetings with internal City departments to review the process for creating child care spaces and outlining future updates of the 'Creating Child Care Spaces in Richmond' brochure. This City brochure supports child care operators in navigating the process for opening or renovating a child care program in Richmond and the updated content is expected to be released in 2022.





7 Strategic Direction #7: Monitoring and Renewal

Why is this important?

With changing demographics and the evolution of the child care landscape in Richmond, the City will continue to monitor and renew its policies and strategies with key data and research. The following actions discuss approaches for planning the next Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy as well as research work that benefits and advances the City's child care work.

Highlighted Achievements

- The *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan*, completed in 2021, informs the City's ongoing work to support the child care sector and outlines actions that the City and its community and public partners, including the Richmond School District and Vancouver Coastal Health, can undertake to enhance sector stability and increase child care spaces. Evaluation and monitoring are key actions in the plan and specifically include monitoring child care need and availability across Richmond and continued monitoring of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on child care enrollment, workforce changes and the stability of the child care sector.
- Work on the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* will be complete in 2022 and a new 10 year Child Care Strategy for Richmond will be developed. At the end of 2022, a final report will be produced highlighting the progress made during the current strategy's five year term. Preparation also began for the next child care needs assessment. A new Strategy will be completed in 2023.



Next Steps

The City of Richmond's *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* outlines long and short-term actions to support the development of a comprehensive child care system in Richmond. This report provides information on the City's progress in meeting all strategic actions since the Strategy was adopted in July 2017. The City continues to implement actions outlined in the Strategy and in the *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan*. Significant progress has been made in 2021 to increase child care spaces in the community. Currently in Richmond, the demand for child care continues to exceed the supply with child care spaces available for only 33% of children across all types of licensed child care.

In 2022, the City will:

- Continue implementation of the ongoing and long-term actions in the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*;
- Continue implementation of actions identified in *2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan*; and
- Begin preparation for an updated 10 year Child Care Strategy for 2023–2033.

The advancement of recommended actions within the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy* will continue to be monitored and highlighted in the update for 2022, detailing the progress made on all strategic actions as the final update to the *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy*.



Conclusion

The *2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy—2021 Update* celebrates and features the significant achievements the City of Richmond has made in the expansion and enhancement of child care in the past year. It confirms the City’s ongoing commitment to working in partnership with key stakeholders to establish a comprehensive child care system.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created circumstances never previously experienced in our present-day society. It has raised the profile of the child care sector as a critical and essential service for the community while also highlighting the vulnerability and fragility of the current model of child care delivery in the province.

In the upcoming year, the City and its key stakeholders will continue to demonstrate innovative and creative approaches to create and promote high-quality child care to further the vision, “to continue to be a municipal leader in fostering the conditions for a comprehensive child care system in Richmond.”



Appendix A

Status Update: 2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment And Strategy Strategic Directions And Actions

Short term: 1–3 years

Long term: 4–5 years

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
Policy and Planning	1. Review Richmond’s child care space needs and update child care space targets by Planning Area, utilizing the 2016 Long-form Canada Census data for the City and its planning areas. (Short term) KEY PRIORITY	Completed
	2. Review the current status of existing child care spaces in Richmond. Working with assistance from the City’s Planning staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Undertake a review of areas in the city with the capacity for more intense redevelopment or that may be subject to land use changes (e.g. industrial “let go” areas) to understand if there are any potential impacts to maintaining existing child care spaces. b. Consult with the School District about school enrolment changes and facility redevelopment that may affect use of school properties for licensed child care spaces and other child and family development programs. (Short term) KEY PRIORITY 	Completed
	3. Review and seek direction on amendments to the City’s Official Community Plan to determine if any amendments are required to sections addressing child care (e.g. sizes for child care facilities serving a range of age groups, calculations for cash contributions). (Long term)	In progress Anticipated to complete in 2022
	4. Conduct a review to ensure that the Child Care Grant Program is meeting the non-profit child care operator’s needs (e.g. timing, number of grant cycles per year, budget). (Short term)	Completed
	5. Review internal City mechanisms for maintaining and coordinating City-owned child care facility improvements (e.g. ongoing maintenance of facilities, operating budget impact estimators, minor and major capital improvements). (Short term)	Completed
	6. Review and update the Terms of Reference for the Child Care Development Advisory Committee (CCDAC) to ensure the committee is fulfilling its role and mandate. (Short term)	Completed

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
Creating and Supporting Spaces	7. Continue to secure community amenity contributions through rezoning processes, focusing on the creation of early childhood development hubs. (Long term) KEY PRIORITY	Ongoing
	8. Work with other City of Richmond departments to plan, secure and build child care spaces co-located with other community facilities. (Long term)	Significant progress made
	9. Review the Child Care Statutory Reserve Fund policy to consider how fund contributions could be apportioned to the Child Care Development Reserve Fund and the Child Care Operating Reserve Fund (e.g. 70% for Capital and 30% for Operating as opposed to the current split of 90% for Capital and 10% for Operating). (Short term) KEY PRIORITY	Completed
	10. Explore mechanisms to increase City staff resources to advance the City’s child care priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide additional staff resources (e.g. Planner 1 – Child Care in Community Social Development) to support continued implementation of the Child Care Policy and fulfill the recommendations presented in this report; and b. Support the development of facilities secured as community amenity contributions by ensuring there is an integrated City department approach applied to working with developers providing these amenities. (Short term) KEY PRIORITY 	Completed Significant progress made
	11. Continue to manage and maintain existing and future City-owned child care facilities to ensure both the City and non-profit operators are fulfilling their lease obligations, leases are up to date, and facilities are well maintained. (Long term)	Significant progress made
	12. Pursue partnerships and funding opportunities with senior levels of government for capital investment to assist with the creation of City-owned child care spaces in Richmond. (Long term)	In process
	13. Work with Community Associations to learn about child care needs in the neighbourhoods they serve and how they can build capacity to meet these needs. (Long term)	Ongoing

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
<p>Advocacy</p>	<p>14. Send a letter to the Federal Government to indicate the City of Richmond’s support for the development and implementation of a meaningful, appropriately funded Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework for Canada. (Short term)</p>	<p>Delayed due to COVID-19</p> <p>Anticipated to complete in 2022</p>
	<p>15. Send letters to the Provincial Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expressing City Council’s endorsement of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan; b. Requesting that the City of Richmond be consulted about the creation and implementation of a future Provincial child care plan; and c. Recommending wage enhancements for Early Childhood Educators to attract qualified staff and to support both existing and new child care spaces (e.g. increases to the Child Care Operating Fund Program). (Short term) 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
	<p>16. Send a letter to the Provincial Government requesting that the benefit rates and eligibility provisions for the Child Care Subsidy be reviewed and increased (e.g. expanded coverage for median or moderate income families). (Short term)</p>	<p>Completed</p>
	<p>17. Send a letter to the Provincial Government requesting that they review and increase funding for Early Childhood Intervention Services in accordance with the #KidsCantWait Campaign. (Short term)</p>	<p>Completed</p>
	<p>18. Continue to monitor funding and grant opportunities along with future actions planned by senior levels of government regarding child care initiatives to maximize opportunities to enhance affordable, accessible and quality care in Richmond. (Short term)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
Accessibility and Inclusion	19. Collaborate with Vancouver Coastal Health, the Richmond School District, other schools in Richmond (e.g. private, francophone), Richmond Child Care Resource and Referral, Richmond Children First, the City of Richmond Child Care Development Advisory Committee, the Intercultural Advisory Committee, Community Associations, child care providers, and other appropriate parties to improve availability of information to Richmond families on child care and family-related resources. (Short term)	Significant progress made
	20. Consult with the City of Richmond’s Accessibility and Inclusion section, the Intercultural Advisory Committee, and multicultural and immigrant serving organizations to determine ways to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improve the dissemination of information on child care to newcomers; and b. Establish ongoing communication channels to enable the City to keep abreast of the needs of and challenges facing recent immigrants regarding child care. (Short term) 	Delayed due to COVID-19 Anticipated to complete in 2022 Anticipated to complete in 2022
	21. Work with the City departments and sections, as well as external organizations who focus on accessibility issues to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Incorporate barrier-free design into new City-owned early childhood development hubs and child care facilities; and b. Explore innovations in child care facility design for both indoor and outdoor areas that would enhance the inclusion of children who require extra supports. (Long term) 	Significant progress made Significant progress made

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
Collaboration and Partnership	22. Continue to support the work of the City’s Child Care Development Advisory Committee with the view of building the capacity of the child care sector and parents understanding of child care options. (Short term)	Ongoing
	23. Facilitate and promote the delivery of professional development training for those employed in the delivery of licensed child care programs with the goal of maintaining and enhancing the quality of programs offered in Richmond. (Long term)	Ongoing
	24. Continue to consult with representatives from senior levels of government, other municipalities, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Children First, United Way of the Lower Mainland, the UBC Human Early Learning Partnership and the First Call – BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition to ensure that the City is well informed about latest trends, research and advocacy efforts concerning child care matters. (Short term)	Significant Progress Made
	25. Build and foster relationships with senior levels of government to ensure the City is consulted on federal and provincial policy changes. (Short term)	Ongoing
	26. Seek new partnerships around the delivery of child care services. (Long term)	Ongoing
	27. Host one inter-municipal roundtable workshop to share information and best practices in child care policy, facility development, grants administration and successful advocacy approaches to senior levels of government. (Short term)	Completed

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Status
Research, Promotion and Marketing	28. Regularly update the City's child care website to provide information on current civic initiatives related to child care and links to useful resources that build awareness and educate the community. (Short term)	Ongoing
	29. Monitor and share the latest trends in child care research and best practices in the delivery of quality child care programs with the City's Child Care Development Advisory Committee, Community Associations, Richmond Children First, Richmond Child Care Resource and Referral Centre, Vancouver Coastal Health, child care providers, and other community agencies and organizations. (Long term)	Ongoing
	30. Continue to develop child care educational resources and further expand the complement of promotional vehicles such as social media to share information about child care with parents and child care providers. (Short term)	Ongoing
Monitoring and Renewal	31. Update City policies plans and publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to work with the City's Planning Department and other related Departments to update City policies that reference child care; and b. Continue to work with City staff and consultants to undertake research and update City publications and working documents (e.g. Terms of Reference for rezoning reports, City of Richmond Child Care Design Guidelines for City-owned buildings, and checklists related to development processes). (Short term) 	Ongoing Ongoing
	32. In planning for the next Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Commence the next child care needs assessment and strategy work in late 2022. Begin the survey work and community engagement process, prior to the release of the 2021 Canada Census, and incorporate demographic information for Richmond geographies when it becomes available in 2023. b. Seek information and assistance from Richmond Multicultural Community Services Society, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., and other newcomer-serving organizations regarding approaches for increasing the interest and involvement of the recent immigrant community in the next child care needs assessment community engagement process. (Long term) 	In process Anticipated to begin in 2022



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