Child Care in Victoria

City of Victoria Child Care Solutions Working Group

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- Island Health
- Fernwood NRG
- Burnside Gorge Community Centre
- Oaklands Community Centre
- Vic West Community Centre
- Victoria Chamber of Commerce
- Child Care Resource and Referral Centre
- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association

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01 Executive Summary

With growing waitlists and child care shortages across the province, there is a need for a comprehensive and strategic approach to child care.

Understanding and improving the state of child care is a provincial priority with multiple sources of funding available for municipal child care needs assessments and capital space creation programs. Child Care in Victoria is the result of a successful application to the Community Child Care Planning Program. The Report was informed through a regional licensed and license-not-required child care inventory, community profile and policy analysis, and a robust engagement process that included both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The following report highlights the project findings after engaging with parents, caregivers, child care providers, and other stakeholders through surveys, focus groups and key informant interviews. A licensed child care inventory was developed to understand the current child care supply, while demand was understood through quantitative and qualitative engagement combined with City of Victoria child population projections and benchmark space creation targets provided by the Ministry of Children & Family Development.

This study outlines the current child care situation within the City of Victoria only and provides information regarding gaps, needs and targets for child care space creation. The Report includes direction regarding recommendations for partners to address the identified gaps.

This study catalogued a total of 2,817 licensed and license-not-required child care spaces across the City with a current gap of 4,233 child care spaces.

Current Child Care Spaces Gap

Ages 0 to 5	Ages 6 to 12
2,814 spaces	2,049 spaces

Over a 10-year horizon with an ideal scenario of 50% coverage for non-school-aged children (0 – 5) and 80% for school-aged children (6 – 12) the following annual space creation targets are needed:

Space Creation Targets per year

| Ages 0 to 5	Ages 6 to 12
28 spaces	128 spaces

As we look to increase the number of child care spaces within the City of Victoria over the next ten years, systemic child care challenges must also be considered; and a multi-dimensional approach is required to improve child care in throughout the region and not just within the City boundaries to create transformational change.

Our recommendations and actions are grounded on the province's goal to move towards Universal Child Care or improving access to affordable licensed care. We propose five main recommendation areas. With each recommendation, the Report has outlined actions, roles, timelines, outcomes, and measures of success to help move the region towards a more sustainable child care system.

Recommendations
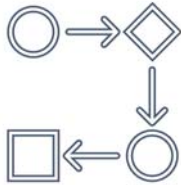
Process

Improve processes

Policy

Develop or refine plans and policies with child care in mind

Partnerships

Leverage partnerships to access funding to "unlock" underutilized assets or develop new ones

Advocacy

Advocate to higher levels of government for enhanced local funding

Education & Training

Reduce the knowledge gap for parents trying to access care and for providers looking to start-up or expand

02 Introduction

Overall family well-being includes the safety, health, and financial stability of all family members.

Access to quality, affordable child care is an important component of supporting families to be well. Recently, the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development introduced a program to better understand local child care needs and to develop new child care spaces in communities. Child Care in Victoria provides information about the child care needs within the City of Victoria. The inventory and Report identify space creation targets over the next 10 years and outline recommendations and actions to meet space creation needs. This work will be an important resource and advocacy tool to child care providers in the community and support the City's objective of improving access to affordable, community-based child care spaces. The information provided will assist the City and partners in advocating to the ministry justifying future space creation investments through the Child Care BC New Spaces Fund and the Community Child Care Space Creation program. As such, this work will inform future planning at a local, regional, and provincial level.

Findings of the engagement and analysis portions of this report show that there is a gap between the number and types of child care spaces available in the City of Victoria and what is needed by families. In particular, lone parent families may be struggling the most to find affordable child care options. Local providers are struggling to hire and retain the number of staff that are needed, due to the high cost of living with in the region. The challenges related to affordability and wages can be hard to address.

While an increasing number of parents cannot afford to pay more for child care, at the same time providers cannot necessarily charge parents more in order to raise wages to better attract and retain Early Childhood Educators. Given this issue, government subsidies are needed to fill the financial gap as there is little room for give and take between the two groups. Licensing and local government regulations may also be deterring the creation of additional child care spaces.

This situation has a range of impacts on families. The lack of spaces results in parents being unable to work, attend educational opportunities, and having to postpone going back to work after maternity leave. Families experience stress from having to rely on one income for longer than expected, and single parents are put in even more difficult situations. If parents have no other alternative, children may be put in less then ideal child care situations.

The Mayor's Child Care Solutions Working Group

At the heart, this Plan is a community driven initiative that began in the spring of 2017 with the Mayor's Child Care Solutions Working Group. Child care providers came to the Mayor asking for assistance in dealing with the child care crisis related to long waitlists, high costs, a shortage in licensed day cares and parents not being able to stay in the workforce. From its inception, the Working Group has been driven by the community with the Mayor and City staff providing support and playing a convening role in bringing all key stakeholders together. The Child Care Solutions Working Group is a coordinated approach to the child care crisis in the City of Victoria.

The collaborative efforts made by the City of Victoria through establishing the Working Group has already created a catalyst for action, which includes a plan to create close to 300 new spaces in the City over the next four years. Though this may meet immediate needs, a longer-term plan was needed, and Child Care in Victoria is meant to provide that guidance. Results of this plan will be monitored and evaluated through the Child Care Solutions Working Group.

03 State of Child Care in the Community

Minimum child care waitlist time is

1-2 years

In the City of Victoria

Top 3 Neighbourhoods with **highest unmet demand** (by %) for licensed childcare

🏠 Hillside/Quadra (73%)

🏠 Victoria West (65%)

🏠 James Bay (57%)

7,050
children aged 0 – 12 for only 2,817 child care spaces

*Excludes regional space impacts

Estimated gap of

4,233

child care spaces in the City

Neighbourhoods with roughly 250 or more spaces available:

Oaklands (531)
Fairfield (399)
Fernwood (257)
Downtown (262)
James Bay (250)

Top 3 Neighbourhoods with **highest unmet demand** (by population) for licensed childcare

Combined Area A* (843 spaces)

Hillside/Quadra (568 spaces)

Combined Area C** (569 spaces)

*Oaklands, Fernwood, North Jubilee and South Jubilee
** Fairfield, Rockland and Gonzales

Stakeholders within the community identified the following concerns regarding child care space utilization:

- Care providers struggle to recruit and retain staff and the cost of living is too high to continue paying staff low wages in order to keep child care fees low and accessible. Recruitment of staff is also a challenge due to a lack of qualified personnel.

- Start-up or expansion of child care centres is difficult due to the cumbersome nature of health and safety regulations, municipal policies, and the cost of space.

- Local government regulations and licensing requirements are felt to not be compatible and are unnecessarily onerous for child care providers.

04 Methodology

The Report was informed through a child care inventory, community profile analysis, policy analysis, and a robust engagement process that included both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The Childcare Solutions Working Group provided input and guidance throughout the project process.

Inventory

A number of sources were used to inform an inventory of child care spaces in the City of Victoria. Baseline data was provided by MCFD and represented provincial child care provider information as of January 2019 and reflected those receiving Childcare Operating Funding (CCOF) support from the Province of B.C. An online Child Care Provider survey also helped to inform the inventory.

Community Profile Analysis

To provide greater insight into the community and family makeup across the City of Victoria, an analysis of population data was conducted. Data was gathered from Statistics Canada and BC Stats. This data, combined with inventory data helped to define the gap in access to care and projected future need.[1]

Background Policy Research

Background research on relevant policies, plans, and bylaws was conducted for the City of Victoria. An analysis of Official Community Plans, Zoning Bylaws, and Business Licensing identified some processes and policies that may create barriers to the creation of licensed child care spaces in the City.

Child Care Providers Survey

An online Child Care Provider Survey was offered from December 9th to December 23rd, 2019. A total of 41 providers completed the survey. Most of the information collected was used to inform the inventory of child care spaces.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted with three groups in the City of Victoria. The goal of these focus groups was to connect with parents who may be identified as part of an underserved or inequitably supported parent population in the City. This includes women, new immigrants and refugees and Indigenous peoples. The same questions were posed at each Focus Group and aimed to understand what is working well and what challenges participants are experiencing. More detailed information was also provided with respect to experience with space, operating times, staff, supports, location, and financial challenges.

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[1] The gap in care refers to the number of children who would require care if ALL children within the region were to access licensed or registered, licensed-not-required

child care in the City of Victoria. It does not consider those who choose to opt out of care or those who would prefer alternate arrangements to licensed care.

One-on-one Interviews

To dive deeper into the experiences of those within the child care system, we conducted five one-on-one interviews. These interviews allowed us to understand the passion, stress, frustration, and other emotions experienced by those impacted by child care.

Child Care Workshops

On February 11, 2020, an action planning workshop was held with key stakeholders in the community. Participants received a presentation about of the draft findings of this report, including what was heard through community engagement activities and what gaps had been identified in child care spaces through data analysis. This was followed by an interactive action planning session where attendees provided key direction for actions moving forward which have informed the final section of this report.

05 Role of Community in Child Care

Both the private and non-profit sectors have a large role to play when it comes to child care space creation. Child care is provided by both for-profit and non-profit entities. The private sector for example includes landowners, developers, builders, child care providers who can help to support the creation of and run child care spaces. Together non-profits and private sector groups are partially responsible for the development, construction, and management of child care facilities and are key partners in tackling gaps in child care availability.

06 Role of Government in Child Care

All levels of government have a role to play in improving the availability and affordability of child care in the City of Victoria.

The provincial role effects child care through high level policies and funding. Local government can impact the availability of child care by allowing it as a permitted use in different zones within the municipality, and can apply restrictions and control parking, signage, and other factors which must be taken into consideration when opening and running a child care facility or child care in one's home.

Provincial Government

The Province of BC funds programs and supports for child care, as well as regulates child care through licencing. The Province recently developed programs to support Early Childhood Educator (ECE) training with bursaries, more training program spaces, subsidies for ECE worker wages, and child care fee subsidies. There has also been funding available recently to help fund child care planning and capital funding to construct new child care centres.

The Province does provide funding for supports available for children with special needs for behavioural challenges, currently through infant development programming. They are also responsible for setting out the regulations related to licensing child care facilities which is reviewed, approved, and monitored through local health authorities.

Licensing Requirements

An important aspect of any licensed child care option is ensuring compliance with the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* Child Care Licensing Regulation. This ensures that child care providers meet provincial government requirements for:

- Health and Safety
- Staffing Qualifications
- Staff-to-child ratios
- Space and Equipment
- Program Standards

The child care provider is typically the organization who works with the provincial government licensing officer to ensure all conditions are met. In expanding or creating new space, it is recommended that the licensing officer and child care provider work together from the start of the project to ensure that provider is aware of all of the necessary steps in order to have their facility approved.

Each age group that care is licensed for has separate requirements related to the categories identified above to ensure their safety. More information related to these requirements can be found in Appendix E of this document. The *Child Care Licensing Regulation* should be referred to at all times and is only presented in this report for information purposes:

http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/332_2007

Child care providers must apply for a license to operate through the local health authority, Island Health. They will ensure that all provincial requirements are met prior to granting the provider a license to operate. Island Health has a guide posted on their website that outlines all of the necessary steps associated with applying for a child care licence within their jurisdiction:

https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-services/community-care-facilities-licensing/child-care-licensing

It is strongly recommended that child care providers connect with their local health authority early on, to establish a relationship and ensure that they understand all the regulatory requirements needed to become a licensed child care facility.

Local Government

Child care facilities accommodating eight children or less are not regulated by the City of Victoria Zoning Bylaws. However, if a new building is proposed, or an existing building will be physically altered (internally or externally) to accommodate such a facility, then other Permits, such as Development Permits, Development Variance Permits and Building Permits, may be required.

For child care facilities accommodating more than eight children, the City's Zoning Bylaw regulations are applicable. In the City of Victoria, childcare is a permitted use in many zones (see below), however, there are some zones where such a use is not permitted or is permitted with specific restrictions. Before seeking to open a child care facility, it is important that the operator contacts the City at an early stage to determine whether the facility they wish to open is permitted at their property and to determine permitting requirements.

If the Zoning Bylaw does not permit a child care facility at the subject property, then a Rezoning Application is required. Rezoning Applications

are considered by City Council following a Public Hearing, however, before applying to the City, the applicant must meet with the Neighbourhood Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) to present the proposal and gather community feedback. Once it is formally submitted to the City, an application may take 6-8 months to process and application fees will be approximately $4,000.00 or greater, depending on the specifics of the project.

If a Development Permit or Development Variance Permit is also required, then this incurs permitting costs (the fee will depend on the specifics of the project and whether variances from the Zoning Bylaw are proposed).

If required, obtaining Council approvals has a timeline and cost implication for operators seeking to open a child care facility. It is also necessary that a business license is acquired before operations commence. These are to be obtained from the municipality on a yearly basis at a cost of $100.

Plan, Bylaw, and Policy Review

Local plans, bylaws and policies can impact a community's ability to not only meet child care space needs, but also to appropriately locate child care facilities. The following City of Victoria documents were reviewed as part of the gap analysis process, and key points from relevant policies are highlighted below.

Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) defines child care as, "Community Care Facilitates" that provide care to dependent people in child day care, child/youth residential and adult residential settings. The OCP includes several policy statements that indicate the City's desire to support well-located and appropriately affordable child care options within the community:

In Chapter 15, Community Well-being:

15.8. Encourage the development of quality, accessible, affordable daycare, including preschool, our-of-school care and elder care daycare spaces, to support families and employers by:

> 15.8.1. Considering the provision of non-profit daycare space as an amenity in new residential, mixed-use and commercial developments to be secured through an agreement;

> 15.8.2. Encouraging new child care and eldercare spaces through the city.

In Chapter 6, Land Management and Development:

6.4. Parks, schools, public facilities and utilities, public assembly, community services, pathways, open space, urban food production, institutional and recreational uses are permitted in all designations as determined in accordance with zoning.

It is noted that while these policies apply to all urban place designations, that Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, which provides more specific guidelines for each of the various "Urban Place Designations", does not specifically address child care or community services. While the intent is clear to staff, it may be useful to state the City's support more clearly for community services in locations throughout the City, for the casual reader.

Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy (2019)

The current Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy (2019) provides guidance on the types of community amenities that might be accepted when a rezoning is considered. This policy looks to prioritize affordable housing as the primary amenity considered, and also considers cash-in-lieu contributions which may be directed to the Housing Reserve Fund, Downtown Core Area Public Realm Improvement Fund and Local Amenities Fund. The policy applies to developments which contain strata residential projects, and to major redevelopments.

Because of the desire for prioritizing affordable housing, given a limited potential for public benefits resulting from development, other amenities such as child care spaces were not specifically addressed in the policy. As a guiding policy, it does not bind applicants or Council as to what amenities may be voluntarily offered or considered but provides strong guidance for planners and applicants. OCP Policy 15.8.1. supports the consideration of child care space as an amenity. However, economic analysis which informed the Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy shows that there is limited additional potential for community amenity contribution beyond desired affordable housing objectives.

Downtown Core Area Plan (2011)

The Downtown core Area Plan includes goals as well as potential policies and actions to create a broader range and easy to access community services, such as child care facilities. The plan also states that to accomplish this the City will need to engage with community partners to encourage the provision of child care facilities due to the increased demand from the local workforce.

Other Local Area Plans

The City has a number of Local Area and Neighbourhood Plans which, while not adopted as official policy documents, are used to provide more detail than the OCP to guide staff recommendations on rezoning, as well as neighbourhood association expectations. Updates to most plans are anticipated in the next 2 years and OCP policies 6.4 and 15.8 (mentioned above) take precedence as they are adopted in the OCP bylaw. Some local area plans do reference child care (for example, the Gonzales plan allows for "kindergartens" throughout), but even recent plans may be silent on this use.

Community Facilities and Real Estate Planning

The City has seven community centres and three senior centres, operated by non-profit societies, which deliver community and recreational programming. Many are owned by the, and may be maintained by, the City. Further, all receive operating funds from the City (which generally comprises a small but valuable share of total operating expenses.) Most community centres operate non-profit child care programs, among other community service offerings, and may have potential to expand offerings if space were available, subject to other constraints outlined in this report (e.g. availability of staffing).

Zoning Bylaws

Zoning Bylaw 2018 (18-072) applies to the downtown area of Victoria (specifically Old Town and the Central Business District). Child care is permitted in all zones in this area (under the defined permitted use "care facility").

The rest of the City is governed by Zoning Regulation Bylaw 80-169 which has been in place since 1981. Under this Bylaw, daycares are permitted in most commercial and mixed-use commercial/residential zones under the "professional services" (or similar) use. In residential areas daycares are permitted in house conversations, under the defined use "Kindergarten", subject to compliance with applicable house conversion regulations. There are also several site-specific zones across the City which allow for daycares although some of these zones are subject to a maximum capacity (i.e. the daycare cannot accommodate more than the specified number of children).

As outlined above, child care facilities accommodating eight children or less are not subject to City Zoning Regulations as Section 20 of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act exempts the operator from seeking municipal zoning approval in such cases.

If an operator wishes to open a daycare accommodating more than eight children in a zone that does not permit the use being proposed, then a Rezoning Application is required. If the zone does permit the proposed use but the proposal does not or cannot meet the other regulations outlined in the Zoning Bylaw (for example, Parking requirements), then a variance may be required.

Development Cost Charge Bylaw

The Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw (17-020) is applied to new developments in the city in order to help with improvements to transportation, water, sewer, storm drainage and parkland to accommodate growth. If a child care provider was to develop a facility, it is unclear if child care facilities are considered institutional or commercial. Furthermore, there are currently no DCC exemptions for developers that include child care as part of their development. A DCC exemption for the provision of child care could incentive developers and create more child care spaces in larger residential and commercial developments.

07 Gap Analysis

The child care spaces gap analysis is based on comparisons between the City of Victoria community profile and the child care spaces inventory. The community profile represents the population and demographic details of the City of Victoria. The inventory data represents the known number of child care spaces, which is also broken down by type.

Community Profile[2]

Population Growth: 2001 To 2016

The City of Victoria's population grew 16% (11,667) from 74,125 in 2001 to 85,792 in 2016. During the same timeline, the CRD's population increased 18%. Most of Victoria's growth occurred between 2011 and 2016 when the population increased by 5,775 (8%) individuals.

Figure 1: Population, 2001 to 2016

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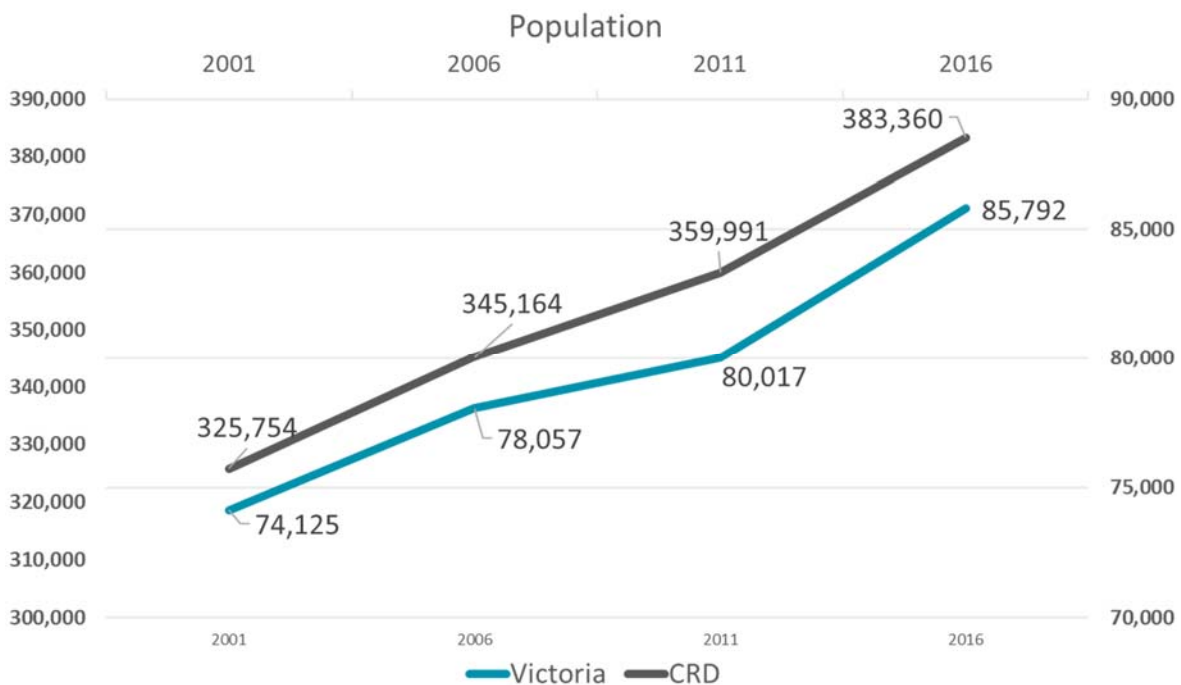
[2] Unless otherwise stated, all data is from the 2016 Statistics Canada Census.

Child Population, 2016

In 2016, there were 7,050 children in the City of Victoria; 26% (1,825 children) were 0 to 2 years of age; 24% (1,660 children) were 3 to 5 years of age; and 51% (3,565 children) were 6 to 12 years of age.
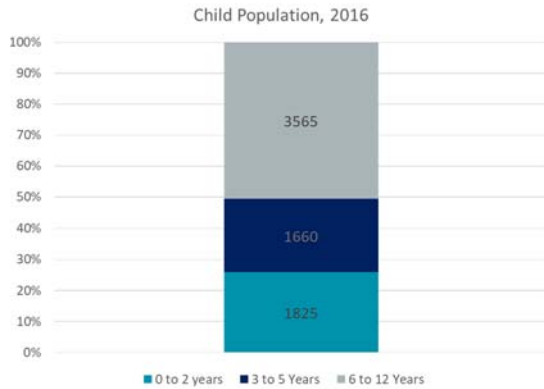
Figure 2: Child Population, 2016

Population by Registered or Indigenous Status, 2011

In 2011, Aboriginal youth comprised 8% (795) of the total population under the age of 19 in the City of Victoria.

Figure 3: Population by Registered or Treaty Indian Status, 2011

Population by Age, Primary, 2006 To 2016

In 2016, the City of Victoria had 10,705 individuals who were under the age of 19.

- 2,940 (27%) are 0 to 4 years old
- 2,630 (25%) are 5 to 9 years old
- 2,370 (22%) are 10 to 14 years old
- 2,765 (26%) are 15 to 19 years old

From 2011 to 2016 the age category '5 to 9' saw the largest increase of 14%. However, the largest category as of 2016 is those aged '0 to 4 years', which is the only category to grow steadily since 2006. Other categories decreased from 2006 to 2011 with only the age group '5 to 9 years' increasing in 2016 to above 2006 numbers.

Figure 4: Population by Age, 2006 to 2016
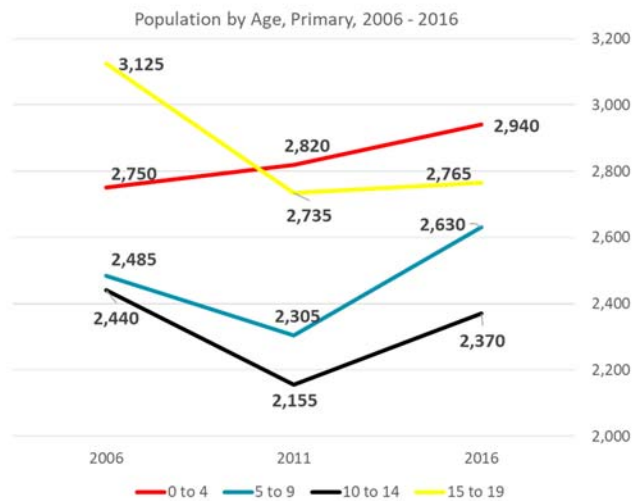
Household Families

In 2016, there were 8,585 households with children, which was a 4% (295 households) increase from 2011. The number of couples with children grew by 12% (545), which was a larger increase than lone parent families (1%, 50) between 2011 and 2016. Divided by type, 5,195 were couple households with children and 3,370 were lone parent households.

Of the 5,195 couple households with children.

- 2,725 (53%) of the couple households had one child;
- 1,970 (38%) had two-children; and
- 505 (10%) had three-children or more.

In comparison, of the 3,370 (39%) lone parent families

- 2,500 (74%) of lone parent households had one child;
- 725 (22%) had two-children; and
- 155 (5%) had three-children or more

Figure 5: Census Families in Private Households, 2011 versus 2016

Couple Households with Children, 2011-2016

Couples with Children	5,195 / 4,650
1 Child	2,725 / 2,500
2 Children	1,970 / 1,690
3 or More Children	505 / 460

■ Victoria 2016 ■ Victoria 2011

Lone Parent Households, 2011-2016

Lone Parent Families	3,370 / 3,420
1 Child	2,500 / 2,485
2 Children	725 / 755
3 or More Children	155 / 175

■ Victoria 2016 ■ Victoria 2011
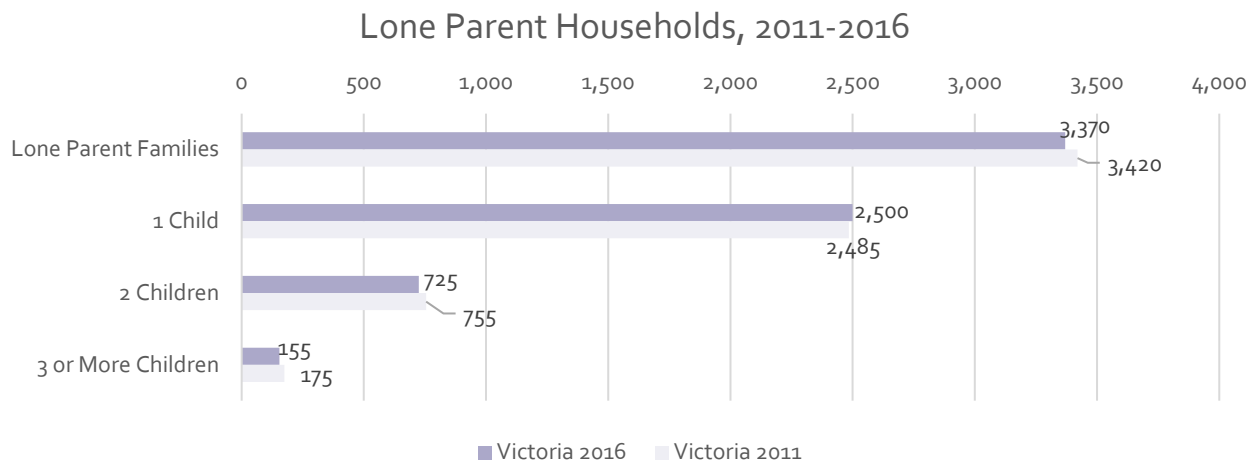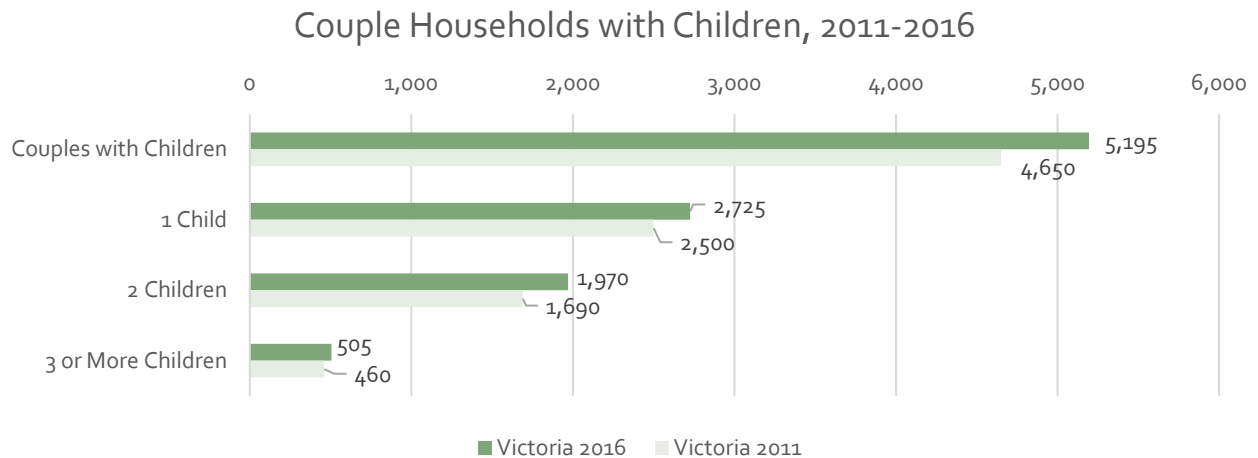
Economic Family Median Total (Before Tax) Income, 2016

The total median income for economic family's in the City of Victoria's was 13% ($12,427) less than that of the CRD's. In both census areas, couple families with children had the highest median income. Within the City, couple families with children made 116% more than lone parent families, and 27% more than couples without children.

Figure 6: Economic Family Median Total (Before Tax) Income, 2016
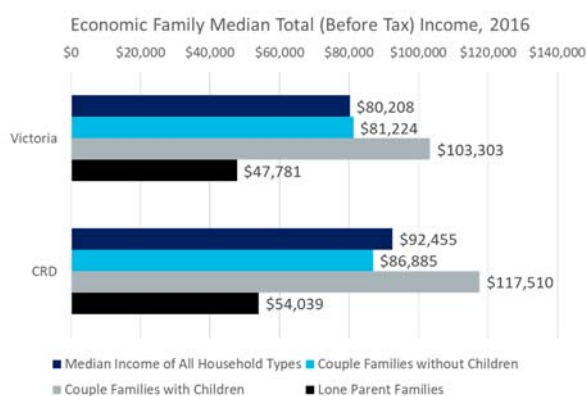
Households Spending More Than 30% Of Income on Shelter Costs, 2016

In Victoria, there were 45,670 households (37%) that faced affordability issues. Of these, 18,045 (22%) were owner households and 27,710 (46%) were renter households. In comparison, 28% of CRD households are facing affordability issues.

Figure 7: Households Spending 30% or More of Income on Shelter Costs, 2016
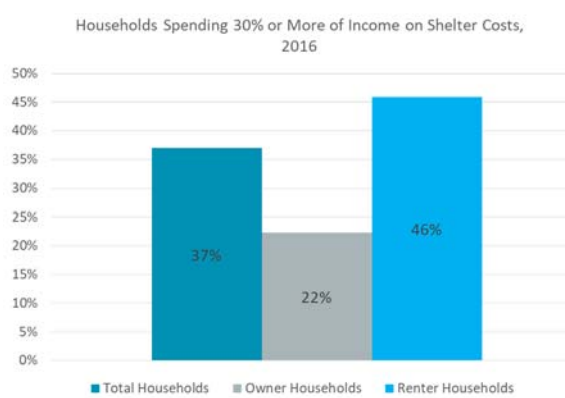
Furthermore, there were 1,075 renter households with children that spent over 30% of their income on rent and utilities. More specifically, half of single parent households (648) spend over 30% of income on rent and utilities. Broken down further:

- 53% (90) male single parent households will spend at least 30% of income on rent and utilities and 29% (49) will spend more than 50%;
- 50% (558) female single parent households have affordability challenges and 18% (200) have severe affordability challenges;
- 27% (427) of couple households have affordability challenges and 11% (174) have severe affordability challenges;
- Female single parent households have the smallest median income of $33,117 followed by their male counterparts at $39,869; and
- Couple households with children have the highest median income of $71,080 while 27% experience unaffordable housing[3].

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[3] Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing & BC Non-Profit Housing Association. Rental Housing Index of Canada. Retrieved on 2020-02-06 from http://rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#intro

Key Takeaways

Data indicates that renter households and single parents may be struggling the most to access affordable childcare options. Renter households tend to have lower incomes, while a greater proportion of that income is spent on the cost of housing. This leave little in the way of financial resources that can be used to access other necessities, including child care.

Victoria's demographics may also indicate that we have higher demand for child care spaces than may be typical across other communities. There are many professional families where both parents may want to return to work at the end of parental leave, as well as many lone-parent families and families with lower incomes who require a return to work. One in three families with children in Victoria are lone-parent families who on average receive a significantly smaller income thank coupled families, this makes them particularly vulnerable and speaks to a greater need for affordable childcare options.

- In 2016, the population in the City of Victoria was 85,792 with 7,050 (8%) being children aged 0 to 12. Of those children, 565 (8%) identify as Aboriginal.
- There are 8,585 (2016) households with children in Victoria. Of the 8,585 households with children 2,870 (33%) are renter households[4]. 5,195 (61%) are couples with children and 3,370 (39%) are lone parent families. Most couple families (2,725) and lone parents (2,500) have one child.

- 1,075 (13%) of the renter households with children spend over 30% of their income on rent and utilities. Furthermore, 50% (648) of single parent households spend over 30% of their income on rent and utilities. Moreover, couple family households make 116% more than lone parent households, which indicates that lone parent households are more likely to have affordability challenges. Indicators of affordability challenge for lone parent households are also seen when we consider that half of lone parent families spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs compared to 27% of couples with kids.
- Female led lone parent households with children have the smallest median income ($33,117) of all of the household with children categories.

Victoria As A Commuter City

The City of Victoria is a major regional employment centre with tens of thousands of workers commuting daily into the downtown core as well as surrounding neighbourhoods. Because of this, there is likely a greater need to provide child care spaces within the City, beyond what is identified through current population numbers, although the COVID-19 pandemic may have altered this situation. Engagement activities indicate that parents prefer child care that is conveniently located close to their work.

The Go Victoria Mobility Profile, completed in April of 2019, indicates that more than half (56%) of jobs are filled by people who live

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[4] Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing & BC Non-Profit Housing Association. Rental Housing Index of

Canada. Retrieved on 2020-02-06 from http://rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#intro

outside of the City.[5] Every day, almost 40,000 people commute into Victoria for work, and nearly 15,000 Victoria residents commute out of the city. That means we have almost three times the number of people coming in as leaving for work each day.

The child care provider survey that was undertaken as part of this project asked providers to describe the commute that parents do in order to drop off their children. Many child care providers reported families commuting from a wide range of locations. It was most commonly noted that parents who lived in the Westshore, Saanich, Sidney, or Sooke worked in Victoria and commuted to have child care closer to their work. The communities in the region are conducting a separate child care needs assessment and once completed the two should be compared for understanding further impacts across the communities reflecting the information received from child care providers.

Specific Child Care Needs and Challenges

Quality child care takes many different forms for different families and needs vary. Several specific child care needs and challenges were identified through engagement activities with both parents and care providers:

There are few options available for parents who are shift workers: The majority of child care providers in the City are open from 7:30am to 5:30pm. There is very little or no care available to parents who work night shifts, weekends or have adjusted working schedules. Of the child care providers who were surveyed half indicated that they provided care during school closures (50%), a quarter provided drop-in care, and a small portion reported providing

extended hours after 7:00pm (3%), on-call care (3%), or weekend care (3%).

Waitlists of one to two years are common for many child care providers. This means that parents have to compromise on location, quality, and type of child care that their children receive.

The availability of specialized programming for special needs (one-on-one support) is limited: Care for special needs children requires attention. A lack of training, funding, and family supports mean there remains a critical need to improve understanding and education for children with special needs. Some care centres offer daily one-on-one services with children with higher needs, which provides consistency and safety, and referrals to Queen Alexandra Hospital. Similar to these practices, providing improved support to care providers and families, is important to ensure the best outcome for the child.

Access to low or no cost child care (that is also inclusive and high quality) is very limited: Costs remain a major barrier for parents to accessing child care. Additional costs, like late fees, charges for holidays, and finding extra care over holidays are an extra burden. For some families, available subsidies do not cover enough of these costs. Greater advocacy for expanding current $10 a day programs in the City would greatly benefit many families and improve their access to care.

Single parents may be struggling the most: Single parents in the City have a much lower income than coupled parent households. As such, their may be greater pressure for these parents to begin working again as soon as possible. They also have a greater need for more affordable childcare options, particularly if they are looking for care for more than one

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[5] Source: City of Victoria. Go Victoria Mobility Draft. Retrieved on 2020-06-24 from https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Documents/

DRAFT%20Go%20Victoria%20Mobility%20Profile_20190408.pdf

child. The financial pressures and needs for support are much greater for single parents.

A lack of child care spaces is forcing parents to compromise: Parents are increasingly having to make compromises or plan further ahead to find child care due to a lack of space. The experience of panic and powerlessness has led to parents taking their children to potentially unsafe private homes. Innovative responses, such as focus on specialized care centres or amalgamating pre-school and daycare, are potential responses to alleviate parents' concerns and address the child care shortage.

More culturally diverse and innovative programming options are needed: There are opportunities to provide more diverse educational opportunities and second language education for children. It is important for parents to access child care centres that support cultural education and programming, especially for Indigenous and immigrant families. Engaging elders and wisdom keepers to provide indigenous learning and instill family values in classrooms has been a valuable service for some providers who focus on this type of care.

Barriers to child care are nuanced and affect a diversity of families: Various physical and cultural barriers prevent parents to access child care, including language and transportation. Many immigrant families acutely experience these barriers since parents may not be able to access or drive a vehicle and do not speak English as a mother tongue. Improving and assisting with transportation services, like public transit, to welcome more children and families is a valuable consideration for child care access.

Funding opportunities limit options for parents: There needs to be a shift in perspectives on how child care is funded. Grants to parents, such as the adult upgrading grant, are only accessible while in class. Parents feel that more funding opportunities to support

transitions from special programs into the workforce and for providers to care for children with special needs. Employment support programs have a limit on their funding that risk running out before parents can secure child care. In other cases, jobs are available to parents using employment services and they are unable to accept them due to lack of child care. These factors greatly contribute for the ability parents to balance their profession and their child's wellbeing.

Newcomer families face unique challenges to access Child care: Newcomers are faced with several barriers to accessing child care. Immigrant parents who are non-native English speakers are often forced to forgo pursuing jobs, training, or language skills due to child care costs. Supports needed for immigrant families include services in closer proximity, better transportation options, translation support, and improved/expanded support networks.

Key Challenges Faced by Care Providers

Engagement with child care providers highlighted the following challenges for the provision of care:

According to child care providers, the most common challenge they face is a lack of qualified staff. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of providers who completed a survey indicated that this was a challenge for them. Many reasons for this were cited, including difficulty offering competitive wages for staff. Over half of child care providers attributed staff turnover to the inability to pay a higher wage (62%). Additionally, it was noted by 42% of child care providers that employees were leaving the field to pursue other work. Other reasons (42%) that were provided for staff turnover included:

- The cost of living is too high to continue paying staff low wages in order to keep child care fees low and accessible.

- Lack of ECE substitutes and lack of additional staff.
- Inability to offer full time hours in preschool programs.
- Severely underpaid staff and the need to set a minimum wage of $25 an hour for ECE staff.
- Staff are enrolled as students and move on to other jobs when studies are complete.
- Staff move to higher paying positions.
- Staff can not afford to upgrade their qualifications (e.g. there is a surplus of ECEAs and a shortage of ECEs.)
- Government controlled fee increases do not allow for annual pay increases for staff.
- If the government controls fee increases, staff should have access to government benefits.

The additional following challenges were also identified:

- Providers find that limits related to age ratios leave child care spaces unfilled (especially limit of four children under four years old).
- Long hours are required from staff and there is additional work outside of operating hours that needs to be completed. This can lead to burnout.
- Staff replacements and temporary positions (especially back up for sick days) are difficult to find.
- Municipal zoning restrictions on child care locations and sizes make it difficult to meet demand.
- It is difficult to find qualified staff for specific care needs, including under 36-month care, children with undiagnosed needs.

- Operating and improvement costs (high rental and renovation costs) are prohibitive.

Child care providers noted important challenges in the initial stages of creating child care centres. Four important barriers were reiterated over 32 comments from child care providers:

- Local government regulations and licensing requirements are not compatible and are unnecessarily onerous for child care providers.
- There is a lack of support from municipal staff and licensing staff to help child care providers navigate regulations and understand what is required of them.
- Costs associated to finding child care spaces, and funding necessary improvements are high.
- Recruitment of staff is an issue due to a lack of qualified individuals.

Child care providers were asked if there were any ways in which local jurisdictions (City of Victoria) could provide support that would have helped reduce the barriers identified concerning the initial stages of creating child care centres. The solutions that were identified sought to solve the previous barriers mentioned and focused around the same four themes.

- Local government regulations and licensing requirements should be streamlined to relieve pressure on child care providers.
- There is a need to improve support and service from municipal staff and licensing staff to ensure timely approvals and to facilitate licensing and permitting processes that child care providers are not accustom to.

- More funding is needed to provide accessible child care while paying staff a living wage.
- Staff wages and incentives need to be increased to retain child care workers.

Child care providers were asked if there were any ways in which local jurisdictions (City of Victoria) could provide support in the operational needs of child care providers. It was noted that all and any support was needed and appreciated from the City.

The solutions that were identified focused around four themes.

- Providers need support in the recruitment and retention of staff through incentives and wages.
- Reduce government regulation.
- Funding training opportunities and support child care providers to accommodate high demand.
- Improved support for securing spaces and supporting expansions.

08 Child Care Space Inventory

Number of Child Care Spaces, 2019

In total, there are 2,817 child care spaces in the City of Victoria. Group Child Care spaces are the most abundant option (2,337; 83%), which includes 1,263 (45%) group school age spaces, 805 (29%) group 30-month to school age spaces, and 269 (10%) group birth to 36-months spaces. The second largest category of child care spaces is licensed preschool spaces (227) followed by family child care spaces (131), multi-age child care spaces (90), and then in-home multi-age child care spaces (32).

It is important to note that during the engagement process we heard from both the Child Care Working Group and interviews with child care providers, that the identified child care space capacity might not be representative of real capacity. There may be limitations for child care facilities to run at full capacity because of an inability to attract and retain qualified staff as the result of the high cost of living in the region.

Figure 8: Number of Child Care Spaces, 2019
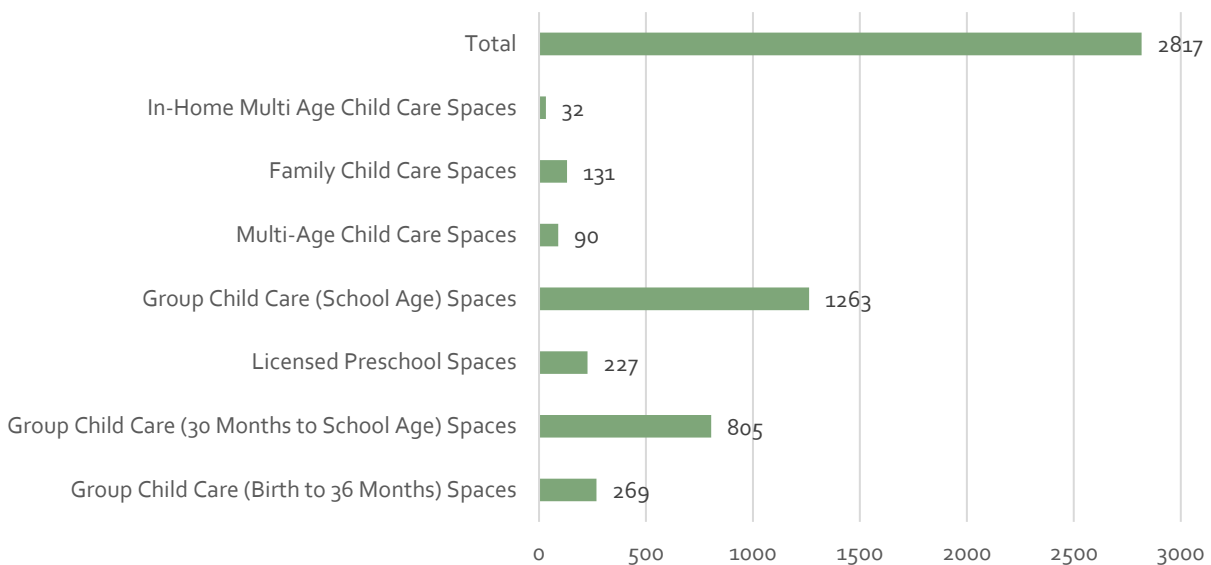
Changes in Child Care Capacity, 2014 To 2019

From 2014 to 2019 there were 614 total spaces created, while 394 spaces were lost in the City of Victoria; a net gain of 220. Four categories of child care experienced a net increase: group day care under 36-months (128); group day care 30-months to school age (139); family 304 (14); and child minding 308 (1). Four other categories saw a net decrease: Registered Licensed Not Required (RLNR) (18); in home multi-age (8); out of school care (28); and group multi age child care (8). No changes were seen for preschools spaces.

Total Number of Child Care Spaces Gained or Lost, 2014 to 2019

Total	220
Group Day Care (under 36 months)	128
Group Day Care (30 months to school age)	139
Group Multi-Age Child Care	-8
Preschool	0
Family	14
Out of School Care	-28
In Home Multi-Age	-8
Child Minding (Occassional Child Care)	1
Registered Licence Not Required	-18
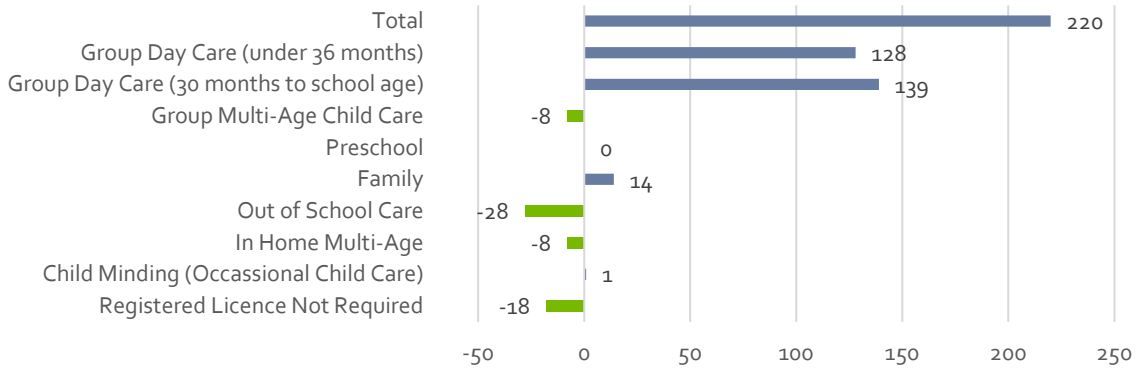
Shown on a timeline, the 2014 to 2019 changes in capacity illustrate a marked drop in capacity from November 2017 to March 2019, which was offset by an even larger spike in total capacity added in the same time period. During the engagement process the Child Care Solutions Working Group noted that the drop in capacity may have been a result of changes in affordability in the region which was, and still is, challenging for providers and staff.

Figure 10: Trendline of Capacity Added and Lost, 2014 to 2019

Trendline of Capacity Added and Lost, 2014 to 2019

— Total Capacity Added   — Total Capacity Lost
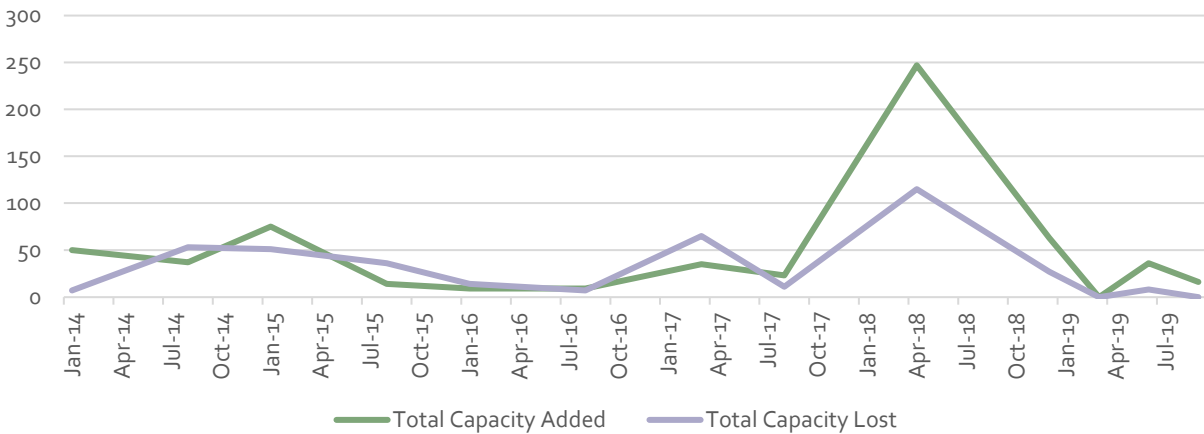
Child Care Spaces Gap

In the City of Victoria, there are 7,050 (2016) children aged 0 to 12 and total of 2,817 child care spaces. Therefore, a gap of 4,233 (60%)[6] child care spaces exists within the City of Victoria. As noted, the child care space gap could be larger given the unknown numbers of child care providers that cannot operate at full capacity due to staffing shortages. Broken down by age there are:

- 3,565 children aged 6 to 12 with 1,484 spaces, leaving a gap of 2,049 (57%);
- 1,660 children aged 3 to 5 with 1,032 spaces, leaving a gap of 628 (38%); and
- 1,825 children aged 0 to 2 with 269 child care spaces, leaving a gap of 1,556 (85%).

The number of spaces is insufficient to meet the potential demand for child care.

Figure 11: Child Care Spaces Gap
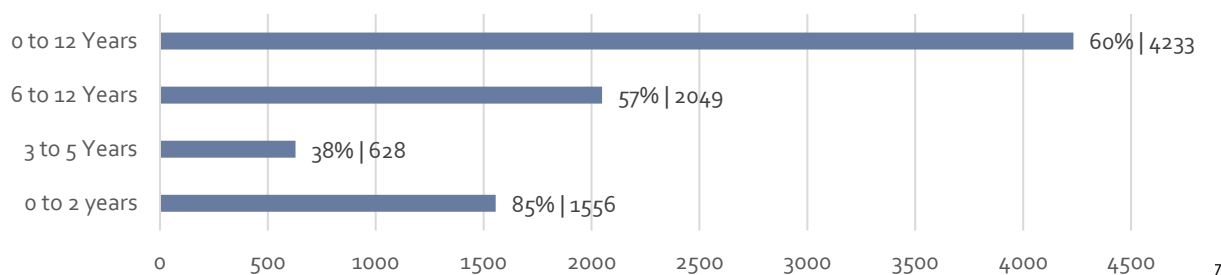
Child Care Neighbourhood Maps

The following table uses Statistics Canada Census Tracts (2016) data and geospatial data of child care space locations to create a neighbourhood gap analysis. Some neighbourhoods were combined into larger areas because census tract boundaries differ from neighbourhood boundaries. Furthermore, the child population in the table includes those aged 0 – 9 while the child care gap analysis above includes 0 – 12. The difference is due to what was available from the census tract data sets.

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[6] Note that Child care Spaces are up to 2019 where population is up to 2016 as this was the last census year.

[7] The following assumptions were made to calculate the child care spaces gap. Given these assumptions the gaps represent rough estimates and should not be considered to be exact.

- All children require child care, which may not be true for families with a stay at home parents.
- Statistics Canada Census Data for the population did not include a breakdown by age. Therefore, population age breakdowns do not align with the age criteria, which mean that number of spaces cannot be accurately allocated across age groups.
- Ages 0 to 2 are covered by group child care (Birth to 36 Month) spaces.
- Ages 3 to 5 are covered by group child care (30 Months to School Age) spaces and licensed preschool spaces.
- Ages 6 to 12 are covered by the remaining child care spaces types. These spaces include multi-age child care spaces, which could be allocated to other age groups. However, the average allocation is not known. For simplicity, all spaces were allocated to this age group.

Table 1 summarizes the number of providers, number of spaces, child population, and child care gap. However, it should be stated that due to long waitlists and limited availability of child care spaces, parents place children in spaces as they become available, which could be in any neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhoods in order of child care gap from smallest to largest is:

- Combined Area A (Oaklands, Fernwood, North Jubilee, and South Jubilee) with 1,745 children aged 0-9, 848 child care spaces, and a gap of 897 (51%);
- Hillside/Quadra has 800 children, 214 spaces, and a gap of 586 (73%);
- Combined Area C (Fairfield, Rockland, and Gonzales) has 1,220 children, 651 spaces, and a gap of 569 (47%);
- Victoria West has 540 children, 184 spaces, and a gap of 356 (65%);
- James Bay has 580 children, 248 spaces, and a gap of 332 (57%);
- Burnside has 340 children, 219 spaces, and a gap of 121 (36%);
- Combined Area B (Downtown, North Park, and Harris Green) has 345 children, 310 spaces, and a gap of 35 (10%).

The top 3 neighbourhoods with the highest unmet demand (by %) for licensed child care spaces are Hillside/Quadra, Victoria West, and James Bay; while highest unmet demand (by child population) are Combined Area A, Hillside/Quadra, and Combined Area C.

There are 5 neighbourhoods with roughly 250 or more spaces available: Oaklands (531), Fairfield (399), Fernwood (257), Downtown (262), and James Bay (250). The remaining have less than 250 spaces: Burnside (219), Hillside/Quadra (214), Victoria West (184), Gonzales (146), Rockland (106), North Park (48), South Jubilee (40), North Jubilee (20), and Harris Green (0).

Table 1: Neighbourhood Child Care Gap from Largest to Smallest

Child Care			Child Population			
Neighbourhood	# Of Providers	# Of Spaces	Children Aged 0-4	Children Aged 5-9	Children Aged 0-9	Child Care Gap
Oaklands	21	531				
Fernwood	9	257				
North Jubilee	1	20				
South Jubilee	3	40				
Total **for Combined Area A**	34	848	905	840	1745	**897 (51%)**
Downtown	6	262				
North Park	2	48				
Harris Green	0	0				
Total **for Combined Area B**	8	310	220	125	345	**35 (10%)**

Child Care			Child Population			
Neighbourhood	# Of Providers	# Of Spaces	Children Aged 0-4	Children Aged 5-9	Children Aged 0-9	Child Care Gap
Fairfield	9	399				
Rockland	4	106				
Gonzales	4	146				
Total **for Combined Area C**	17	651	570	650	1220	**569 (47%o**
Burnside	3	219	200	140	340	**121 (36%)**
Hillside/Quadra	12	214	440	360	800	**586 (73%)**
James Bay	9	248	310	270	580	**332 (57%)**
Victoria West	7	184	300	240	540	**356 (65%)**

Child Care Locations 0 -9

Children Age 0-9
- 0-200
- 200-300
- 300-400
- 400+

Group Child Care (Birth to 36 Months) Spaces
- Birth to 36 Months Only
- + Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- + GCC 30 Months to School Age
- + GCC 30 Months to School Age and GCC School Age Spaces

Licensed Preschool Spaces
- Licensed Preschool Spaces Only
- + Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces

Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) Spaces
- (30 Months to School Age) Only
- + Licensed Preschool Spaces
- + Licensed Preschool Spaces and GCC School Age Spaces
- + Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) Spaces, Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces

Other Child Care Spaces
- Family Child Care Spaces
- Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces
- In-Home Multi Age Child Care Spaces
- Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- Unknown

Number of Child Care Spaces
- 0-10
- 10-25
- 25-50
- 50 +

*Multiple child care centers at one location

The accuracy & completeness of information shown on this drawing is not guaranteed. It will be the responsibility of the user of the information shown on this drawing to locate & establish the precise location of all existing information whether shown or not.

Data Sources:
- Data provided by City of Victoria
Data BC
Urban Systems Ltd

Coordinate System:
NAD83 CSRS UTM zone 10N

Project #:	1328.0079.01
Author:	BB
Checked:	
Status:	**Draft**
Revision:	A
Date:	2020 / 2 / 4

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Child Care Locations 0 -4

Child Care Locations 4-9

Children Age 5-9
- 0-75
- 75-150
- 150-200
- 200 +

Group Child Care (Birth to 36 Months) Spaces
- Birth to 36 Months Only
- + Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- + GCC 30 Months to School Age
- + GCC 30 Months to School Age and GCC School Age Spaces

Licensed Preschool Spaces
- Licensed Preschool Spaces Only
- + Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces

Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) Spaces
- (30 Months to School Age) Only
- + Licensed Preschool Spaces
- + Licensed Preschool Spaces and GCC School Age Spaces
- + Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) Spaces, Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces

Other Child Care Spaces
- Family Child Care Spaces
- Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces
- In-Home Multi Age Child Care Spaces
- Multi-Age Child Care Spaces
- Unknown

Number of Child Care Spaces
- 0-10
- 10-25
- 25-50
- 50 +

*Multiple child care centers at one location

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Author:	BB
Checked:	
Status:	Draft
Revision:	A
Date:	2020 / 2 / 11

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09 Child Care Demand & Space Creation Targets

City of Victoria licensed space creation targets are based on population projections from BC Statistics and the current child care inventory. To align with census age data, targets are separated into 0 – 5 and 6 – 12 age categories. For each age group, the following space creation targets were determined:

1. Total spaces needed to maintain the City's current access rate

2. Total spaces needed to meet to maintain the City's target access rate

A note on targets: We have reviewed best practice information available from comparable jurisdictions to establish targets based on child care coverage. Notably in 2002, all European Union member states committed to having space coverage for 90% of children from when they turn three to when they go to school and for 33% of children under the age of three (known as the "Barcelona targets"). One of the explicit goals of these targets, which had been met by seven countries by 2011, is to "remove disincentives to female labour force participation."[8]

Because the City of Victoria is a commuter City that requires a higher access rate than other communities may and given that child care space waiting lists are on average one to two years long in the City, a greater number of child care spaces may be needed for those under

three than just what is identified by population growth and common best practices. Community engagement activities also indicated that a much higher access rate is needed than what is currently available. We have proposed a 50% access rate for children aged 0 – 5 and 80% access rate for children aged 6 – 12. Reaching these access rate goals may not be achievable over the short-term and the City should consider setting a yearly target (for example increasing access by 15% each year) in order to improve access rates over time.

Tables 7 and 8 summarizes the average annual space creation targets for the City of Victoria for ages 0 – 5 and 6 - 12 over a 10-year horizon.

It should be noted that space creation is reliant on the support and funding from the province.

Current Child Care Access Rate

The current child care access rate (number of spaces per 100 children) was determined from child population data and the number of spaces for a given age category. Categories of care and age categories were grouped based on non-school-aged children (0 – 5 years) and school aged children (6 – 12 years). Multi-age, in-home multi-age and family child care spaces were split evenly between the 0 – 5 and 6 – 12 age categories, respectively.

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[8] Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Child Care Desert in Canada. Retrieved 2020-06-24 https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploa

ds/publications/National%20Office/2018/06/Child%20Care%20Deserts.pdf

The current child care access rate in the City of Victoria is summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 2: Current Child Care Access Rate

	Child Population (2016)	Number of Spaces (2019)	Access Rate (spaces per 100 children)
0 – 5 years	3,485	1,301	37.3
6 – 12 years	3,565	1,484	41.6

Space Creation Targets: Ages 0 to 5

Table 3 City of Victoria space creation targets: Ages 0 to 5

Year	Total Children	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (37.3)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Access Rate of 50 (or 50% coverage)
2019	3,538	1,320	1,769
2020	3,470	1,294	1,735
2022	3,375	1,259	1,688
2025	3,316	1,237	1,658
2030	3,162	1,179	1,581

To meet a target of 1,581 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, Victoria will need an average of 28 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Space Creation Targets: Ages 6 to 12

*Table 4: City of Victoria space creation targets: Ages 6 to 12*

Year	Total Children	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (41.6)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Access Rate of 80 (or 80% coverage)
2019	3,656	1,521	2,925
2020	3,717	1,546	2,974
2022	3,777	1,571	3,022
2025	3,719	1,547	2,975
2030	3,449	1,435	2,759

To meet a target of 2,759 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, Victoria will need an average of 128 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

010 Recommendations

The recommendations set out in this plan are grounded in the province's goal to move towards Universal Child Care. They encourage licensed child care that offers inclusive and culturally appropriate programming and programming for children with diverse needs.

As identified throughout this report, the state of child care in the City of Victoria is impacted by many factors that pose complex challenges. These require a multi-dimensional approach to improving child care in the region and to creating transformational change. They also require a shared responsibility for implementation. As such, we propose five main recommendation areas that will help to move the Victoria towards sustainable child care:
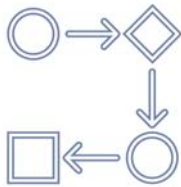
1. Process

Improve municipal processes

2. Policy

Develop or refine local government plans and policies with child care in mind

3. Partnerships

Leverage partnerships to access funding to "unlock" underutilized assets or develop new ones
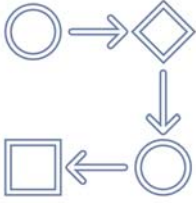
4. Advocacy

Advocate to higher levels of government for enhanced local funding

5. Education & Training

Reduce the knowledge gap for parents trying to access care and for providers looking to start-up or expand

1. Process

Making regulatory processes easy to understand and navigate is a meaningful way to lower barriers to the creation of more licensed spaces.

The key recommendations are:

1.1 Streamline local government regulatory processes (business licensing and zoning) and work with licensing to improve application and referral steps.

1.2 Implement child care planning best practices and maintain access rate and child care need data overtime.

2. Policy

For the state of child care to improve, it must continue to be a political priority. Policies must then reflect this priority and serve as the basis guide future investment and planning. This requires aligning existing policies that already prioritize child care and building child care considerations where its necessary to increase access to care. This alignment will depend on reviewing existing policies, identifying where child care space creation considerations can be incorporated, and continuing to cultivate the political will to follow through.

The key recommendations are:

2.1 Embed child care planning into community planning activities.

2.2 Improve regulatory tools to help facilitate the construction of new child care centres.

2.3 Create incentives for the creation of child care spaces in new developments.

3. Partnerships

There is already an abundance of assets that exist within the region. Local government, schools, child care providers, parents and caregivers are all invested in improving access to child care in the city of Victoria. Leveraging existing assets and creating or strengthening partnerships is a way to build community resilience around this issue.

The following recommendations highlight how partnerships can enable child care space creation:

3.1 Build to future capacity through strengthening partnerships with other agencies and Municipalities

3.2 Demonstrate leadership in child care provisioning
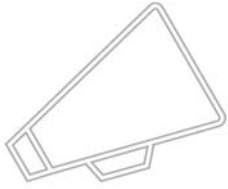
4. Advocacy

The perspectives heard through engagement highlighted many issues that need to be considered to improve the state of child care in the region. Beyond space creation, advocacy that emphasizes the need for improved working conditions and the need to address the unequitable impacts of child care challenges are key to improving child care access.

The key recommendations are:

4.1 Advocate for changes to the School Act to better support child care space creation in the province

4.2 Advocate to Senior government for additional capital funding for child care projects

4.3 Support and encourage employers to share responsibility for child care within their communities

4.4 Address gaps in equity and promote poverty reduction

4.5 Advocate for child care as a social determinant of health

5. Education and Training

Supporting this streamlined process also requires lowering the knowledge gap that surrounds it – particularity for start-up and expansion of child care spaces. Education and training are vital to capacity building and ensuring that those who play a vital role in the child care system know how to navigate and improve it.

The key recommendations include:

5.1 Develop child care start-up workshops and guidebooks

5.2 Support enhanced training for local ECE's

011   Conclusion

Community members should have access to affordable child care close to where they live or work, no matter where this is. This is not the case for far too many of Victoria's families. Improving equitable access to child care will require addressing the price and the availability of licensed spaces with both for-profit and non-profit child care providers. This is of course more difficult to accomplish where child care is offered in a purely market-driven way; in these scenarios it is easy to end up with very low access rates.[9] Smart public policy is essential to ensuring more equitable outcomes for child care access. The City of Victoria and its community partners must continue to work collectively to address these child care gaps. Much good progress has been made in recent years and the recommendations in this Report should serve as a useful tool to continue to support ongoing work and to better understand changing needs over time.

It is very important to note that space creation is reliant on the support and funding from the Province. The information provided within this document can help local governments and their partners to advocate to the ministry and justify future space creation investments through the Child Care BC New Spaces Fund and the Community Child Care Space Creation program.

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[9] Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Child Care Desert in Canada. Retrieved 2020-06-24 https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2018/06/Child%20Care%20Deserts.pdf

Appendix A - Engagement Summary

The section provides a summary of information gathered through the surveys, focus groups, and interviews.
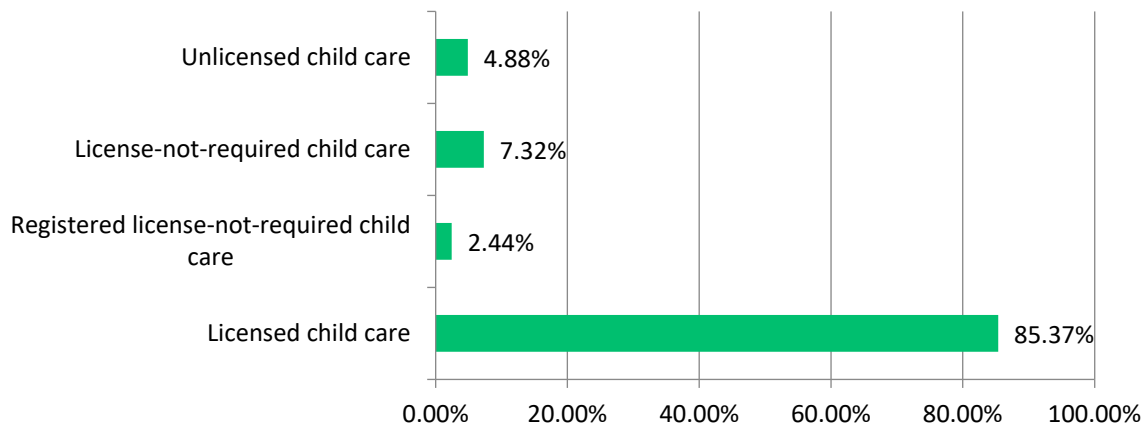
Child Care Provider Survey Summary

The online child care provider survey received forty-one (41) responses from providers throughout the community. The survey was administered online through survey monkey between December 9th, 2019 and December 23, 2019 and was distributed through internal networks and channels of the Victoria Child Care Working Group. Some of the child care facilities that responded have been in operation for 3 months and some for 60 years, and the experiences of these providers were varied. In some cases, respondents were asked to select multiple responses, or were able to skip questions. For these reasons, percentages may not add to one-hundred per cent.

General Information and Licensing

Most child care providers that responded were licensed child care providers (85%). The remainder did not require licenses (7%), were unlicensed (5%), and a small portion were registered with licenses not required (2%).

What type of child care provider are you?

Many child care providers that took the survey operated out of a house (49%), or a privately owned building (22%). Other child care providers operated out of publicly owned assets (5%), spaces that were co-located with a family service organization or recreation facility (5%), communal space (2%), public school (2%), church (2%), or none of the above (12%).

Hours of Operation

The majority of child care providers are open at 7:30am or 8:00am, and close between 4:30pm and 5:30pm. Half of the respondents provided care during school closures (50%), a quarter provided drop-in care, and a small portion reported providing extended hours after 7:00pm (3%), on-call care (3%), or weekend care (3%).

Number of Children

The following table describes the number of children in child care programs reported by child care providers that responded to the survey.

The most commonly reported number of full-time and part-time children in child care programs is between one and five children.

*Table 5. Number of Children in Child Care Programs*

Type of Child Care	One - Five		Six - Ten		Eleven - Fifteen		Sixteen - Twenty		21+	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time
Licensed group child care (0-18 months)	1	1	3	1	0	0	2	0	2	0
Licensed group child care (19-36 months)	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	0
Licensed group child care (30 months – school age)	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	1	2
Licensed preschool	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Licensed group child care (school age)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2
Family child care	7	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Licensed multi-age child care	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In-home multi-age child care	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registered license-not-required care	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unregistered license-not-required care	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Waitlists

Of the 41 child care providers that responded to the survey, 70% keep a waitlist and 25% did not. The other providers had other ways of keeping in touch with parents. Of the respondents that did not use a waitlist (25%), 9 providers felt waitlists were too cumbersome to manage, and 2 used a referral system only.

Waitlists range from a list of 3 children to up to 125, depending on the child care provider. The average waitlist is 39 children. Most of the waitlists that are maintained have no cap (89%) and the same proportion of providers charge no fee to be entered on a waitlist (89%).

If you have a waitlist, what is the average waitlist time for a single child?
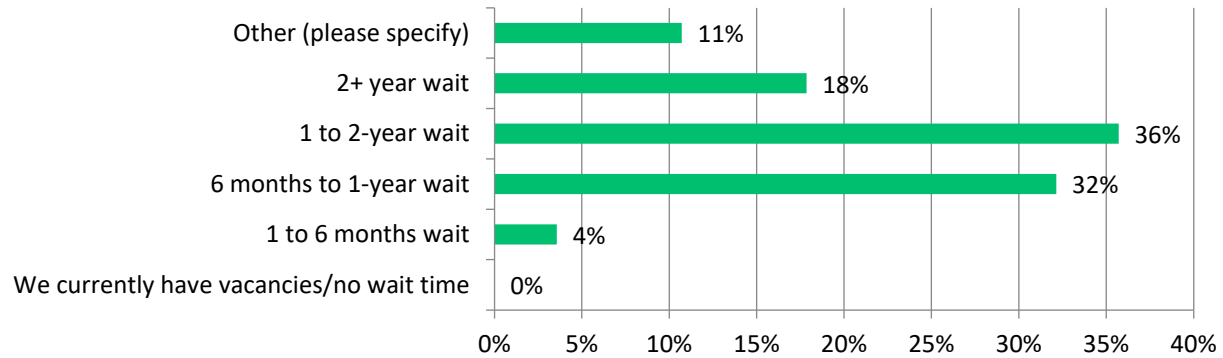

The most common wait time (amongst providers that have a waitlist) is 1 to 2 years (36%). Almost a third of providers with waitlists have wait times between 6 months to 1 year (32%). Many child cares had longer wait times of 2 years or more (18%); and one child care had short wait times of 1 to 6 months.

Access to Services

Of the providers that responded to the survey, 10 child cares provided school pick up and/or drop off from local schools (25%). In all cases, providers said that the majority of parents access the child care via driving (100%). Over half of child care providers noted that parents and children walk (59%) and cycle (56%) to their child care.

Most child care providers said that parents typically had a 10 to 25 minutes commute (78%). Providers noted that many parents have a short commute of less than 10 minutes (37%), and a slightly longer commute of 25 to 45 minutes (24%).

What is the typical commute time for parents:
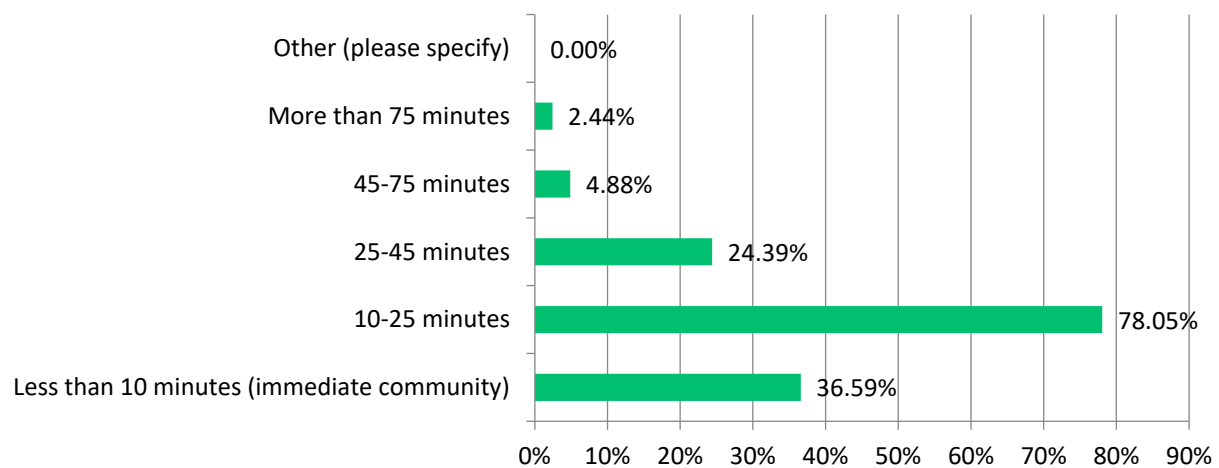
* Percentages may not add to 100%, as respondents were able to select all that apply.

When asked to describe the commute that parents do in order to drop off their children, many child care providers reported family's community from a wide range of locations. It was most commonly noted that parents who lived in the Westshore, Saanich, Sidney, or Sooke worked in Victoria and commuted to have child care closer to their work. However, many child care providers also noted that all of the families that use their services live in the immediate area.

Cost of Child Care

The following table describes the costs of Child Care, as reported by child care providers that responded to the survey. The following values are the monthly costs for child care per part-time and full-time child, before subsidy (Affordable Child Care Benefit).

Table 6. Cost of Child Care

Child Care Costs	$0		$1 - $120		$121 - $350		$351 - $900		$901 - $1,500	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Licensed group child care (0-18 months)	2	1	0	2	0	0	2	3	8	1
Licensed group child care (19-36 months)	3	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	9	1
Licensed group child care (30 months-school age)	1	1	0	2	1	2	6	2	9	1
Licensed preschool	2	1	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0
Licensed group child care (school age)	1	0	0	1	2	3	5	0	0	0
Licensed multi-age child care	2	1	0	2	0	1	4	0	4	1
Registered license-not-required care	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
Unregistered license-not-required care	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Population served

When asked to identify and describe the family types and characteristics of those who access the provider's child care services, providers reported a wide range of family types, including: dual income, single-parent, minority, special needs, grandparent-led, low-income, refugee, military, children with support workers, and Indigenous families. Additionally, many of the providers noted that their child care facility has a wide diversity of families from differing backgrounds. According to child care providers, the needs and priorities for these families include:

- Quality child care that is reliable and consistent
- Low/no cost child care (that is also inclusive and high quality)
- Extended hours and hours that work with family schedules (9 to 10 hours of care per day, 5 days a week)
- Qualified caregivers and trusting relationships (background checks)
- Co-operative parent participation
- Specialized programming for special needs (one-on-one support)

- A supportive environment for children (loving and safe environment that provides for child's needs, emotionally, educationally, etc.)
- Child care located near their homes and/or on commuting route

Fees

Almost all child care providers that responded to the survey accept subsidies for child care fees (Affordable Child Care Benefit) (95%). A small proportion of child care providers provide reduced fees for additional siblings (15%).

Staff

When asked how many staff members are employed, answers from child care providers ranged from 1 to 71 staff members. The average number of staff was 10.

More than half of child care providers responded that they employed staff that were certified in Early Childhood Education (ECE) (56%). Under half of providers noted that there are staff that are certified as ECE – Assistants (46%). Other levels of training amongst child care provider staff include: ECE – Infant Toddler (37%), ECE – Special Needs/Inclusive Practices (27%), no training (27%), or some other form of training[10] (27%).

Which Early Childhood Education (ECE) certifications do you and/or your staff have?
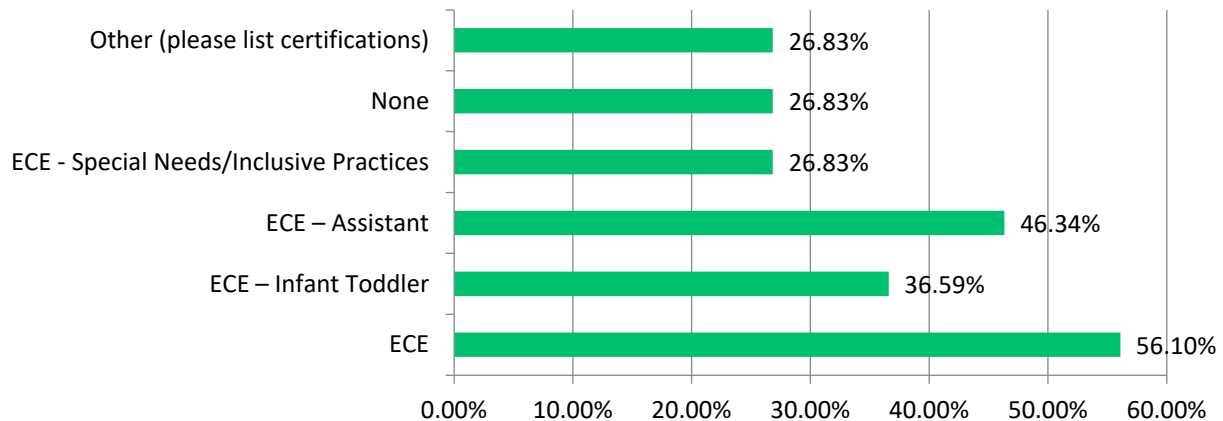
* Percentages may not add to 100%, as respondents were able to select all that apply.

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[10] Other forms of training included: Responsible Adult Course, Montessori Early Primary Diploma, Montessori Early Primary Teacher Certificate, Bachelor's degrees (Psychology, Social Work, etc.), ECE Japanese, Child care certificates from Mexico, Outdoor Play Training Certificate, Good Beginnings, Child and Youth Care degree, and First Aid.
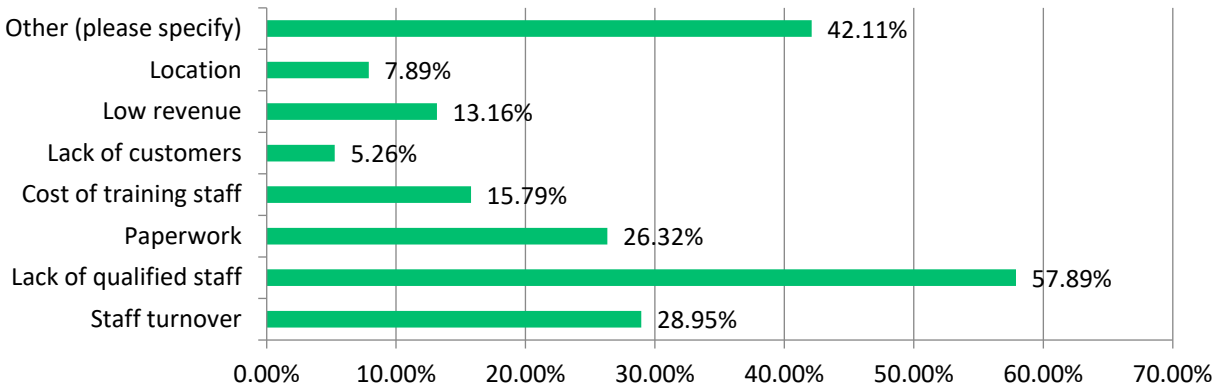
According to child care providers, the most common challenge faced is the lack of qualified staff (58%). The second most cited challenge area was the "other" category (42%), which included various challenges, including:

- Difficulty offering competitive wages for staff.
- Limits on ratios leave child care spaces that remain unfilled (especially limit of four children under four years old). There is a lack of children between the ages of three to five years old to fill remaining spaces.
- Long hours are required from staff and there is additional work outside of operating hours that needs to be completed.
- Staff replacements and temporary positions (especially back up for sick days) are difficult to find.
- Limited response received from Out of School Care Leader Job postings, and difficulty hiring School Aged Care staff for only part-time (3 hours) work.
- Municipal zoning restrictions on child care locations and sizes.
- Qualified staff for specific care needs, including under 36-month care, children with undiagnosed needs.
- Operating and improvement costs (high rental and renovation costs).

"I am licensed to care for seven children, but only four [children] under four [years old]. Many of my clients move to all day preschool programs for their two-and-a-half- to four-year olds and I can only replace them with one-year olds, so I am consistently under enrolled. If the limits could be five [children] under three [years old], with a maximum of seven children, including the over three-year olds, I could always fill my licensed spaces and provide care for more families."

Other challenges that were identified by child care providers include staff turnover (29%), paperwork (26%), cost of training staff (16%), low revenue (13%), location (8%), and lack of customers (5%).

What are the top three challenges you face in child care?

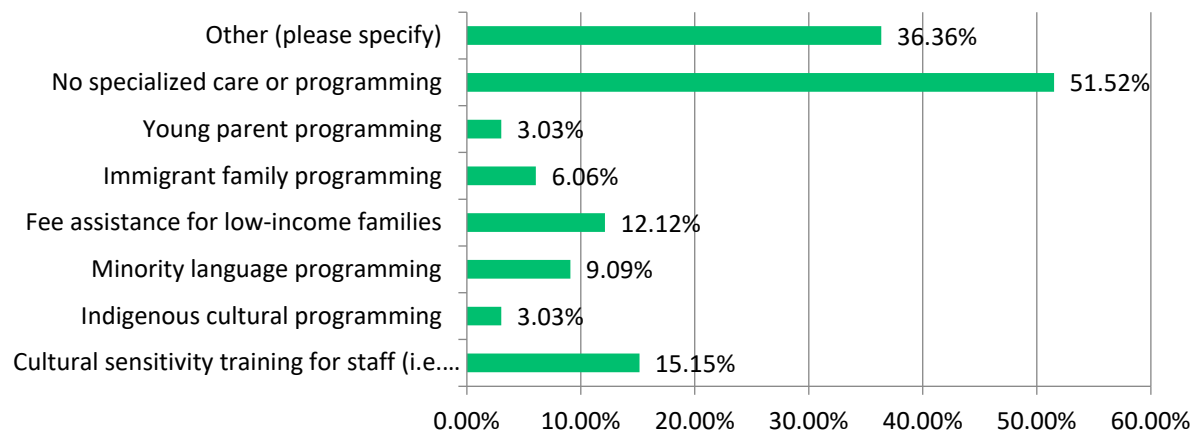| Challenge	Percentage
Other (please specify)	42.11%
Location	7.89%
Low revenue	13.16%
Lack of customers	5.26%
Cost of training staff	15.79%
Paperwork	26.32%
Lack of qualified staff	57.89%
Staff turnover	28.95%

* Percentages may not add to 100%, as respondents were encouraged to select three choices.

Over half of child care providers attributed staff turnover to the inability to pay a higher wage (62%). Additionally, it was noted by 42% of child care providers that employees were leaving the field to pursue other work. Other reasons (42%) that were provided for staff turnover included:

- The cost of living is too high to continue paying staff low wages in order to keep child care fees low and accessible.
- Lack of ECE substitutes and lack of additional staff.
- Inability to offer full time hours in preschool programs.
- Severely underpaid staff and the need to set a minimum wage of $25 an hour for ECE staff.
- Staff are enrolled as students and move on to other jobs when studies are complete.
- Staff move to higher paying positions.
- Staff can not afford to upgrade their qualifications (e.g. there is a surplus of ECEAs and a shortage of ECEs.)
- Government controlled fee increases do not allow for annual pay increases for staff.
- If the government controls fee increases, staff should have access to government benefits.

Do you provide any specialized care or programming?
(Check all that apply)

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	36.36%
No specialized care or programming	51.52%
Young parent programming	3.03%
Immigrant family programming	6.06%
Fee assistance for low-income families	12.12%
Minority language programming	9.09%
Indigenous cultural programming	3.03%
Cultural sensitivity training for staff (i.e....	15.15%

(Bar chart x-axis: 0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00% 60.00%)

* Percentages may not add to 100%, as respondents were encouraged to select three choices.

The majority of child care providers reported that they do not provide any specialized care or programming (52%). However, some providers identified the following programming:

- Cultural sensitivity training for staff (15%)
- Fee assistance for low-income families (12%)
- Minority language programming (9%)
- Immigrant family programming (6%)
- Young parent programming (3%)
- Indigenous cultural programming (3%)
- Best babies programming
- Nobody's Perfect Parenting program
- Professional development workshops for staff
- Nature programs and kindergarten readiness programming
- Outdoor Play training
- Music and multi-sport programming
- Children with support needs, individual and small group programs

Most Child care providers have training opportunities for staff (69%) and provide time and/or payment for staff to seek out education and training opportunities (62%). Providers described some of the opportunities as the following:

- Professional development training and workshops
- Individual support for education and training
- Workshops at CCRR
- Funding towards IT training
- Loans for ECE courses
- Online course (Reggio Emilia / Montessori studies)

- Training opportunities offered by other centres or organizations as it relates to working with school aged children (e.g. Queen Alexandra Positive Behaviour Support training)
- First aid

For the most part, child care providers that do not provide staff training are sole operators that cannot take time off (close for the day) to take training, or a lack of funding.

Partnerships

Just over half of child care providers work with other agencies that provide child development services (53%), including:

- Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health: early Intervention, therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy, supported development
- Child Care Resource & Referral Centre (CCRR)
- Supported Child Development (SCD)
- Island Health Child Development services
- Colwood Women's institute
- Southern Vancouver Island Family Child Care Association (SVIFCCA)
- Conservatory of Music (weekly program)
- Victoria Gymnastics (weekly program)
- Various Autism Centre

Barriers in the Initial Stages of Creating Child Care Centres

Child care providers noted important challenges in the initial stages of creating child care centres. Four important barriers were reiterated over 32 comments from child care providers:

➢ Local government regulations and licensing requirements are not compatible and are unnecessarily onerous for child care providers.
➢ There is a lack of support from municipal staff and licensing staff.
➢ Costs associated to finding child care spaces, and funding necessary improvements are high.
➢ Recruitment of staff is an issue due to lack of qualified staff.

Municipal Support in the Initial Stages of Creating Child Care Centres

Child care providers were asked if there were any ways in which local jurisdictions (City of Victoria) could provide support that would have helped reduce the barriers identified concerning the initial stages of creating child care centres. The solutions that were identified sought to solve the previous barriers mentioned and focused around the same four themes.

1) Local government regulations and licensing requirements should be streamlined to relieve pressure on child care providers.
2) There is a need to improve support and service from municipal staff and licensing staff to ensure timely approvals and to facilitate licensing and permitting processes that child care providers are not accustom to.
3) More funding is needed to provide accessible child care while paying staff a living wage.
4) Staff wages and incentives need to be increased to retain child care workers.

Municipal Support in Operations of Child Care Centres

Child care providers were asked if there were any ways in which local jurisdictions (City of Victoria) could provide support in the operational needs of child care providers. It was noted that all and any support was needed and appreciated from the City. The solutions that were identified focused around four themes.

1) Providers need support in the recruitment and retention of staff through incentives and wages.
2) Reduce government regulation.
3) Funding training opportunities and support child care providers to accommodate high demand.
4) Improved support for securing spaces and supporting expansions.

Focus Groups

In order to connect with parents that represented a range of lived experiences, focus groups were organized in collaboration with a range of organizations around the city. The focus groups attended are the following:

- Bridges for Women (approximately 10 participants)
- Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (4 participants with a translator)
- Victoria First Nations Friendship Centre (approximately 12 participants with their children)

Feedback was gathered on a variety of themes as it pertained most to a given group of parents. This input has been organized below.

A Lack of Child Care Spaces is Forcing Parents to Compromise

Parents are increasingly having to make compromises or plan further ahead to find child care due to a lack of space. The experience of panic and powerlessness has led to parents taking their children to potentially unsafe private homes. Innovative responses, such as focus on specialized care centres or amalgamating pre-school and daycare, are potential responses to alleviate parents' concerns and address the child care shortage.

Quality Child Care Benefits Parents and Children

Quality child care take many different forms to families. Parents observed that their children benefitted greatly from care centres that strive to create a caring atmosphere where providers bond with children and can accommodates their needs. Providing balanced, nutritious meals is one example of a program that benefits children and alleviates stress for parents. This type of care establishes a strong foundation for children and contributes to parents building trusting relationships with child care providers.

"A lot of things being positive here are Indigenous ways of knowing, taking care of children as a community, and that's our philosophy."

–Anonymous, Victoria Native Friendship Centre

Innovative programming supports diverse educational opportunities

There are opportunities to provide more diverse educational opportunities and second language education for children. It is important for parents to access child care centres that support cultural education and programming, especially for Indigenous and immigrant families. Engaging elders and wisdom keepers to provide Indigenous learning and instill family values in classrooms has been a valuable service for some providers who focus on this type of care.

Information and Community resources

It was noted that the CCRR and word-of-mouth referrals are important sources of information concerning child care. When individuals are familiar with government funding options, day care subsidies are accessible to those who need them. Organizations like CCRR play an important role connecting people to resources.

Hours are not matching needs

Child care hours remain a challenge for parents, with most providers not able to completely accommodate parents' varying schedules. There are few after-hours or short-term child care options for parents doing shift work or schedules outside of a typical workday. While scheduled closures are necessary for staff; however, families have experienced challenges with both expected and unexpected closures.

Staff are essential and should be groomed for success

Well-trained staff are integral to providing successful child care. With greater understanding of special needs and allergies, education criteria for ECEs should be changing accordingly to prepare educators to appropriately address these barriers.

Barriers to Child care are nuanced and affect a diversity of families

Various physical and cultural barriers prevent parents to access child care, including language and transportation. Many immigrant families acutely experience these barriers since parents may not be able to access or drive a vehicle and do not speak English as a mother tongue. Improving and assisting with transportation services, like public transit, to welcome more children and families is a valuable consideration for child care access.

Location of Child care centers are not matching parents' needs

The location of available child care facilities is an important challenge. Providing opportunities for child care in locations that better match parents' needs is a key consideration for further action.

Barriers to in-home Child care are reducing the diversity and quantity of supply

There are notably few in-home child care options in Victoria. The City could help this type of care by creating more clear and simple regulations and providing more support from city staff. Parents felt that more opportunities for in-home child care could alleviate stress on existing

providers, allow parents to take care of their own children, and allow immigrant families to find employment and provide care suitable to their language and culture.

Special needs Child cares require more nuanced financial and educational support

Care for special needs children requires attention from parents' perspective. A lack of training, funding, and family supports mean there remains a critical need to improve understanding and education for children with special needs. Some care centres offer daily one-on-one services with children with higher needs, which provides consistency and safety, and referrals to Queen Alexandra. Similar to these practices, providing improved support to care providers and families, is important to ensure the best outcome for the child.

Lack of options for part-time Child care

Currently, there is a gap for families seeking part-time child care. Students, for example, only receive 2 to 3 hours of care are finding it difficult to focus on schoolwork and take exams. More part-time care would also help manage overflow when care centres experience sudden closures, However, care providers have expressed they prefer not to offer part-time care, so work remains to close this gap.

Funding opportunities limit options for parents

There needs to be a shift in perspectives on how child care is funded. Grants to parents, such as the adult upgrading grant, are only accessible while in class. Parents feel that more funding opportunities to support transitions from special programs into the workforce and for providers to care for children with special needs. Employment support programs have a limit on their funding that risk running out before parents can secure child care. In other cases, jobs are available to parents using employment services and they are unable to accept them due to lack of child care. These factors greatly contribute for the ability parents to balance their profession and their child's wellbeing.

Costs are prohibitive to accessing care

Costs remain a major barrier to accessing child care. Additional costs, like late fees, charges for holidays, and finding extra care over holidays are an extra burden. For some families, available subsidies do not cover enough of these costs.

Health in Child care

Parents have experienced little coverage if their child is injured or ill. Child care providers offering preventative measures against, like head checks for lice, reduce the likelihood of an outbreak. Keeping a child home might mean a loss of work and money for parents who may not be able to afford it.

Parents are looking for financial and educational support

Child care, and support in their early life, sets the foundation for a child's success. Income currently is a determinant of the level of child care that children have access to in their early life. The fact that this is tied to the income of parents directly limits the opportunities available to children. There is not enough education available for parents, caregivers, and child care providers on the neurological differences between children, particularly for parents with a history of trauma.

"I wish child care and income were separate issues"
– Anonymous, Women's Transition Centre

Community and connectivity facilitate Child care networks

Developing a community or network of people that speak a common language is important to building trusting relationships that can provide support to parents when needed. There are opportunities to build community support networks and friendships for parents through various organizations and partnerships. Improving partnerships between agencies will provide more opportunities for parents to support each other as an inter-dependent community.

Newcomer families face unique challenges to access Child care

Newcomers are faced with a number of barriers to accessing child care. Immigrant parents who are non-native English speakers are often forced to forgo pursuing jobs, training, or language skills due to child care costs. Supports needed for immigrant families include services in closer proximity, better transportation options, translation support, and improved/expanded support networks.

Partnerships create better Child care outcomes

Partnering with educational institutions, non-profits, and other organizations have positively impacted child care outcomes. Support from outside organizations for staff and parents fosters trust and provides additional tools to ensure high quality care. These networks are essential for their insights into issues of childhood development and cultural services, among others.

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Stakeholder interviews were held with representatives from five organizations across the City in order to gather more in-depth information about child care needs form the perspective of community leaders, child care providers, educators and employers Interviews were conducted with:

- Chamber of Commerce
- School District 61
- Cridge Centre for the Family
- Victoria Social Innovation Centre
- XaXe STELITKEL Child care Centre

The following is a summary of information gathered through these interviews.

Policy and Regulations

Parks can support child care by ensuring age appropriate play equipment

The City of Victoria can support the community by ensuring parks are licensed for all ages. If you have a child care provider in a homecare environment, they sometimes cannot be licensed for a park because the equipment is not age appropriate. There are a lot of specifics (i.e. space between slide and platform) that can influence this.

The City can also look at where child care facilities are and target parks in that area. For example, if a new building has childcare than a park in the area can be site specific to that childcare. That way the child care can license the park and not have to buy equipment on their site.

Funding

Education and Funding are the Key

Participants felt that education and financing are two of the main challenges in providing child care. Funding opportunities are available for parents and providers; however, the applications are time consuming.

Funding is critically needed to support child care demand, staff wages and housing. For example, a lack of affordable housing means ECEs cannot work in the field in BC. With additional funds providers could hire more students and being able to retain them once they have finished their courses and hire extra staff so current staff can complete training.

Support RFQs for additional ways to reduce operations and management costs

Funding can also be directed to operations, staffing, development, and space creation. But there is also need for capital (washrooms, washer/dryer, renovations, equipment, storage) that could be provided in a site specific and provider specific way.

Licensing

Licensing is seen as a huge barrier to child care providers

Currently, the licensing process is very onerous, taking 5 hours to assess the space and pulling staff away from their jobs. Licensing programs need to be revamped and Indigenized to understand that not everyone comes from a privilege life. There is a need to be more mindful of people coming from different ways of life, and how they are talking.

Licensing support and incentives are needed to increase child care spaces

There needs to be more support for licensing and greater incentives to increase child care spaces. For example, license-not-required should be allowed a higher number of children. But increasing the numbers of allowed children per license could negatively impact quality.

Regulatory Process

Local Government should take action to simplify regulations

It was felt that the City of Victoria needs to help people establish child cares – collaborate and figure out what they can do to support the process, possibly with tax breaks and incentives. Generally, the process to create spaces needs to be less daunting and costly without compromising safety. The City could create a development process that is simpler by permitting child cares in commercial building.

Currently, the time to review child care development applications is too long. Child care applications should be put at the top of the top of the pile since economically providers cannot wait for the development application to go through the City.

Regulation can support growing the Child care options

The City can actively support new child care spaces by evaluating how zoning and land use can support child care centres, notably through consistent policies and improved development processes. Improved regulation

Zoning, rezoning, and development approvals could allow for more creative space creation

Zoning, rezoning and development approvals could allow more creative creation of child care spaces, such as churches and basements. Creativity is needed because Victoria is getting built out and there isn't a lot of new land to put childcare on.

Fast tracking child care building permits

Currently building permits can take six months to get approved. Perhaps this process could be streamlined for child care space creation.

The City could update incentives for developers to include child care

Currently, developers can not propose the addition of child care and get relaxations regarding DCCs, CACs, parking, etc. Child care needs to be prioritized in development permits.

Partnerships

Partnership opportunities with Academic Institutions are key

Partnerships with academic institutions have allowed for practicum students to get education hours, change how a space could be run and integrating learning, ECE work and education. School District is also partnering with the VFNC, making sure that their programs are setup for success and ensure the curriculum is culturally sensitive and that teachers/educators are strong role models.

Partnerships allow for social development

Collaboration and partnership allow for social development to happen. The Greater Victoria Public Library, for example, is redefining its purpose towards more social services which could support day care providers or even lead to child care in libraries. Other resources like the CCRR should be given additional support to help establish child cares.

Partnership opportunities to support the creation of spaces

Partnerships with organizations including community colleges, the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children Health, First Nation organizations, recreation centres and neighbourhood associations could greatly benefit creating child care spaces and providing better quality care.

Partner with the School District #61

The School District represents the biggest partnership opportunity. They currently have a lot of momentum for creating child care spaces and could prove to be an essential component to addressing needs. The City could support them through advocacy, child care expertise, and engagement support to help reduce resistance and expand on the big picture.

Cost

Quality child care is limited by costs

The main challenge is the cost to provide quality child care (enriched experiences), which also requires good staff.

Waitlists, costs, and hours limit access to Child care

The main barriers to accessing child care for parents is waitlists and costs. Provincial government fee reductions and the new child care affordable benefit for toddlers and child care have been very positive.

Centres have different policies that require 2 – 3 months notice before parents can bring children to another centre. Most care centres only operate on weekdays so there is limited weekend and evening care, which is challenging for people in healthcare, service/tourist, and labour industries.

Families are facing an affordability crisis, which includes childcare

For families, there number one expense is often a mortgage and the second highest cost is childcare. The high cost of owning a home in Victoria and the lack of affordable childcare is seen as a deterrent for families to move to and work in the city.

Cultural Sensitivity

Developing cultural sensitivity

Cultural aptitude of child care providers is an issue and developing cultural appropriateness in child care practice needs to a priority to allow families to feel comfortable with care.

Wages

Staff wages need to reflect cost of living to encourage more people to join

One of the biggest attributes for a child care centre to develop their program is to have consistent staff, which is a limiting factor over space. Due to the high cost of living in the region, higher wages are needed to account for unaffordable housing market in Victoria.

ECEs need to get paid more

Early Childcare Educators need to be paid more. Higher wages would require government subsidies to attract and retain ECEs as parents have limited funds. This brings it back to public funding and the $10/day program.

Geography

Service mapping can identify geographic and demographic Child care gaps

As the government looks to support the development of services, geography is important. There needs to be attention on where services are in each region of Victoria since services should be close to the people who need them. Therefore, services need to be geographically and demographically balanced with a focus on attaining users.

Training

Support with better information and training

Community organizations and institutions can play an important role in improving child care for care centres and parents. To address staffing needs, provide more support for the community college program with training and placements. CCRR is another valuable resource that helps with affordable child care forms, placements and ensuring that information is available to parents. With greater resources, these organizations should continue to contribute to better child care outcomes.

ECEs need standardized qualifications across jurisdictions

Standardization of ECE across provinces and other countries would improve labour mobility.

More Workforce Development programs for ECEs and Responsible Adult programs

There needs to be more programming to train ECEs and Responsible Adults. They should also come with practicum opportunities to get experience before working.

Cost of Land

The shortfall in spaces is due to lack of land and unaffordable conditions

Spaces are limited because there is a lack of available land, and everything is very expensive. People interested in starting a facility struggle because the cost of land is prohibitive to doing so. Furthermore, developers and building owners are choosing tenants that can spend the most on rent, which is not always child care facilities. There is a need to find areas where facilities can be put.

Employers

Employers have had to adapt to parents

Employers have had to be more flexible to allow parents flexibility to access child care. However, they also see parents that stay at home or are unable to come back to work after maternity/paternity leave.

Workers are reducing hours and modifying shifts

Workers are reducing hours and modifying shifts to compensate for the lack of child care, adding to the shortage of labour at a time when we have the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

Employers and household incomes are impacted if parents stay home after maternity/paternity leave

Employees are seeing more parents staying home or who are unable to come back to work after maternity/paternity leave. If one parent must stay home that also impacts household incomes and affordability.

Education / Value

Valuing the educational role of Child care providers

In child care, we are only starting to appreciate child care as a profession and staff as quality care providers that shape children. People still look at child care as babysitting, whereas schoolteachers get more respect because they are seen as having a role in the children's learning. The first 3 to 5 years of age are critical formative years and are just as, if not more important than when they get into school. Along with better wages, professional recognition and respect are needed for child care providers.

> *"Education doesn't start at 5 years old, it starts when they are born."*

Special needs children require better education and support

There needs to be support for challenging and different behaviours. Many children come from vulnerable families without fully developed coping skills, so there is plenty of work in helping children be with other people. ECEs and parents need the education and support to help plan for and better support children. There remains a need to recognize the problem and connect with the parents.

Appendix B – Child Care Provider Survey Questions

Victoria Community Child Care Survey for Service Provider

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. What community is the service in?
3. How long have you been operating?
4. What type of child care provider are you?
   o Licensed child care
   o Registered license-not-required child care
   o License-not-required child care
   o In-Child's-Own-Home child care
   o Unlicensed child care
5. What type of building do you operate in?
   o Privately owned building
   o Publicly owned asset
   o House
   o Communal space
   o Public School
   o Church
   o Co-located with a family service organization or recreation facility
   o Co-located with another type of business (please specify)
   o Other:
6. What are your operating hours? (Time opened – time closed, i.e. 7:00 am – 7:00 pm)
   o Monday: _____
   o Tuesday: _____
   o Wednesday: _____
   o Thursday: _____
   o Friday: _____
   o Saturday: _____
   o Sunday: _____
7. Does the organization offer any of the following additional hours?
   o Extended (before 6:00 am)
   o Extended (after 7:00 pm)
   o Overnight care
   o Drop-in care
   o On-call care
   o Care on statutory holidays
   o Care during school closures
   o Weekend care

8. Please complete the following table to indicate the number of children currently in your programming:

	Number of full-time children	Number of part-time children
Licensed group child care (0-18 months)		
Licensed group child care (19-36 months)		
Licensed group child care (30 months – school age)		
Licensed preschool		
Licensed group child care (school age)		
Licensed multi-age child care		
Family child care		
In-home multi-age child care		
Registered license-not-required care		
Unregistered license-not-required care		

9. Do you carry a waitlist at your organization?
   o Yes
   o No
   o Other – please explain
10. If not, what are your reasons for not carrying a waitlist?
   o Too cumbersome to manage
   o Use a referral system only
   o Other – please explain
11. If you do have a waitlist, how many children are currently on it?
12. Is there a cap on the length of the waitlist?
13. Do you charge a fee to have children on your waitlist?
   o Yes
   o No
   o Other – please explain
14. If you have a waitlist, what is the average wait time for a single child?
   o We are not accepting children on a waitlist
   o We currently have vacancies/no wait time
   o 1 to 6 months wait
   o 6 months to 1-year wait
   o 1 to 2-year wait
   o 2+ year wait
15. Do you provide school pick-up and/or drop off?
   o Yes
   o No

- o If yes, please list the school(s) where pick-up and/or drop off is provided:
16. Complete the following fee schedule to identify your monthly child care cost per full-time child, before subsidy (Affordable Child Care Benefit)
    - o Licensed group child care (0-18 months)
    - o Licensed group child care (19-36 months)
    - o Licensed group child care (30 months-school age)
    - o Licensed preschool
    - o Licensed group child care (school age)
    - o Licensed multi-age child care
    - o Registered license-not-required care
    - o Unregistered license-not-required care
17. Complete the following fee schedule to identify your monthly child care cost per part-time child, before subsidy (Affordable Child Care Benefit).
    - o Licensed group child care (0-18 months):
    - o Licensed group child care (19-36 months):
    - o Licensed group child care (30 months-school age):
    - o Licensed preschool:
    - o Licensed group child care (school age):
    - o Licensed multi-age child care:
    - o Registered license-not-required care:
    - o Unregistered license-not-required care:
18. Please identify and describe the family types and characteristics of those who access your services (e.g. low-income families, single parent families, cultural minority families, children with disabilities, etc.)
19. Of those listed in the question above who are accessing your services, what do they identify as needs and priorities for their family (e.g. specialized programs for disabilities, cultural language programs, low or no cost child care, etc.)?
20. Do you reduce fees for additional siblings?
    - o Yes
    - o No
21. Do you accept subsidy (Affordable Child Care Benefit) for child care fees?
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o If no, please explain:
22. How many staff members does your organization have?
    - o Please describe
23. Do you, or your child minding staff, have Early Childhood Education (ECE) certifications?
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o A portion do
    - o If yes, please identify the type of ECE certifications held by staff:
        - o ECE
        - o ECE – Infant/toddler

- ECE – Assistant
- Responsible Adult

24. What are the top three challenges you face in operating your child care?
    a. staff turnover,
    b. lack of qualified staff,
    c. paperwork,
    d. cost of training staff,
    e. lack of customers,
    f. low revenue,
    g. location,
    h. other:_____

25. If you encounter staff turnover, what do you attribute that turnover to?
    a. Inability to pay a higher wage
    b. employee leaving the field to pursue other work
    c. employee
    d. other: _____

26. Do you provide any specialized care or programming? (Check all that apply)
    - Cultural sensitivity training for staff (i.e. understanding of minority cultural needs)
    - Indigenous cultural programming
    - Minority language programming
    - Fee assistance for low-income families
    - Immigrant family programming
    - Young parent programming
    - No specialized care or programming
    - Other (please describe):

27. Do you provide training opportunities for staff?
    - Yes
    - If so, please list the opportunities provided:
    - No

28. Do you work with other agencies that provide child development services?
    - Yes
    - If so, please list them:
    - No

29. In the initial stages of creating your child care centre, what barriers if any did you face (e.g. local government regulations, licensing regulations, location design barriers, staff recruitment, etc.)?

30. Are there any ways in which local jurisdictions can provide support to your centre that would have helped reduce your previous barriers?

31. Are there ways that local jurisdictions can support your child care now that you are operational (e.g. expansion opportunities, recruitment, etc.)?

32. Please add any additional comments

33. We encourage you to leave your email in case you would like to learn more about our findings:

Appendix C – Stakeholder Interview Questions

1. What is the name of your organization and your role in the community?

2. How long have you worked in your current role?

3. Do you believe there are service gaps for child care in the community? If yes, please explain:

4. In your experience what are the main challenges in providing child care?

5. What are the main factors contributing to the shortfall in spaces? Why?

6. What do you think is needed in the community to further support child care?

7. In your experience what are the main challenges in accessing child care?

8. Currently, are there limitations to the child care provided within the community? (Hours of operation, waitlists, finical etc.) If yes, please explain:

9. With regard to families with children in the community experiencing the child care shortfall, how might the community and City better support the creation of new spaces?

10. What role do you see for the local government in supporting child care?

11. What would make it easier to enhance existing child care spaces in Victoria?

12. What would make it easier to create more child care spaces in Victoria?

13. Are there partnership opportunities that may help support the creation of spaces in the community?

14. Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Appendix D – Focus Group Questions

1. Briefly describe your experience accessing child care?

    a. What has been positive?

    b. What has been negative?

2. What is it like looking for child care?

3. What are the challenges you experience when accessing child care?

4. How would you describe good quality child care?

5. What kinds of programs and services do you currently use?

6. What programs and services do you like or would like to see more of?

7. What kinds of compromises have you made to ensure your child has access to child care?

8. How do closures impact you?

9. Do you live close to child care programs?

Appendix E - Child Care Facility Requirements

Table 7 outlines the requirements applicable to all child care facilities, while Table 8 provides a breakdown of regulations pertaining to each type of child care facility.

Table 7: Universal Child care Facility Requirements in British Columbia.

Usable Floor Area	Bathrooms	Diaper Change Stations	Sleeping Area	Outdoor Area
3.7 sq. m., excluding hallways, built in storage areas, bathrooms, and fixed appliances	One toilet and wash basin for every 10 children or less must be on the same floor of the child care facility	Must be located outside of food preparation areas, next to: - covered container for soiled clothing - wash basin	Must be located away from any activity area	- Must have 6 square meters of outdoor play area for each child, or if providing more than one type of care, an outdoor play area that meets the requirement of the various groups care is being provided for - Must be enclosed to ensure that children are free of harm

Table 8: Provincial Regulations for Child Care Facilities in British Columbia by Type of Child Care.

Licensing	Child Care Type	Age	Maximum Group Size	Child-to-staff Ratio	Staff Qualifications	Setting
Yes	Under 3 years	From birth to 36 months	12 children	• 4 children: 1 Infant Toddler Educator (ITE) • 5-8 children: 1 ITE, 1 Early Childhood Educator (ECE) • 9-12 children: 1 ITE, 1 ECE, 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA)	• ITE: ~1300 hrs of training • ECE: ~900 hrs of training • ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre
	2.5 years to school age	From 30 months to Kindergarten age	25 children	• 1-8 children: 1 ECE • 9-16 children: 1 ECE, ECEA • 17-25 children: 1 ECE, 2 ECEAs	• ECE: ~900 hrs of training • ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre
	School age (before- and after-school care)	Kindergarten age and up	24 children from K and G1 OR G2 and older with no K or G1 children	• 1 adult for each 12 children from K and G1 • 1 adult for each 15 children from G2 and older	• 20 hours of child care training • Relevant work experience • Valid first aid certificate • Clear criminal record check	Community-based facility or centre
	Multi-age	From birth to 12 years	8 children	1 ECE for 8 children	ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training	Community-based facility or centre
	In-home multi-age child care	From birth to 12 years	8 children	1 ECE (who is also the licensee) for 8 children	ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training	In the provider's home
	Family child care	From birth to 12 years	7 children	1 adult for 7 children	• 20 hours of child care training • Relevant work experience • Valid first aid certificate • Clear criminal record check	In the provider's home
	Preschool	From 2.5 years to school age	20 children	• 1-10 children: 1 ECE • 11-20 children: 1 ECE and 1 ECEA	• ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training • ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre

Licensing	Child Care Type	Age	Maximum Group Size	Child-to-staff Ratio	Staff Qualifications	Setting
	Occasional child care	18 months old and up	16 children (if there are children under 36 months) or 20 children (if no children under 36 months)	• Every 4 children (if children under 36 months are present): 1 adult • Every 8 children (if no children under 36 months are present): 1 adult	• 20 hours of child care training • Relevant work experience • Valid first aid certificate • Clear criminal record check	Community-based facility or centre
No	Registered License-Not-Required	From birth to age 12	Two children or a sibling group who are not related to them	Every 2 children: 1 adult	• 20 hours of child care training • Relevant work experience • Valid first aid certificate • Clear criminal record check	In the provider's home
	Unregistered	From birth to any age	Two children or a sibling group who are not related to them	Every 2 children: 1 adult	No qualifications required	In the provider's home