

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 12, 2023
 To: Julie Edney, Sustainable Planning & Community Development, City of Victoria
 From: Sarah Ravlic, Social Health and Wellbeing Planner, Urban Matters CCC
 Subject: City of Victoria Child Care Plan Update – Demographic Data and Projections of Need

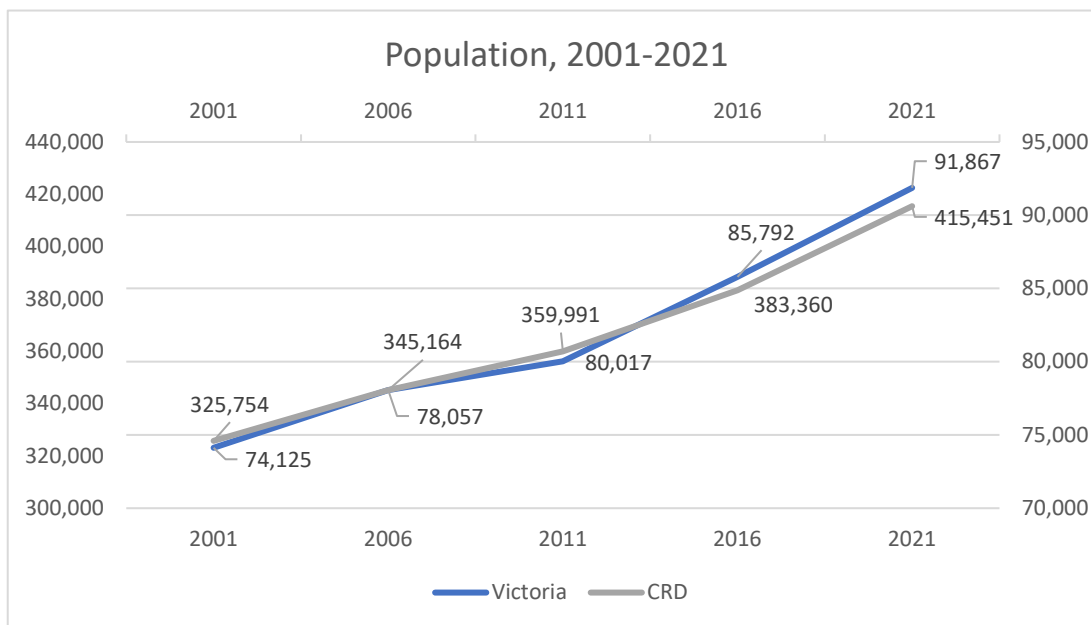
Introduction

The following memorandum provides an update to demographic information and projections of need related to child care spaces within the City of Victoria. This update is based on newly available data from the 2021 census and information on child care spaces current to June 2022 provided by the Victoria Child Care Resource & Referral Program.

Population Growth 2001 – 2021¹

The City of Victoria's population grew 24% (17,742) from 74,125 in 2001 to 91,867 in 2021. During the same timeline, the CRD's population increased 28%. Between 2016 and 2021, Victoria's population grew by 6,075 individuals, or 7%. This is a similar rate of growth as what was seen between 2011 and 2016.

Figure 1: Population, 2001 to 2021



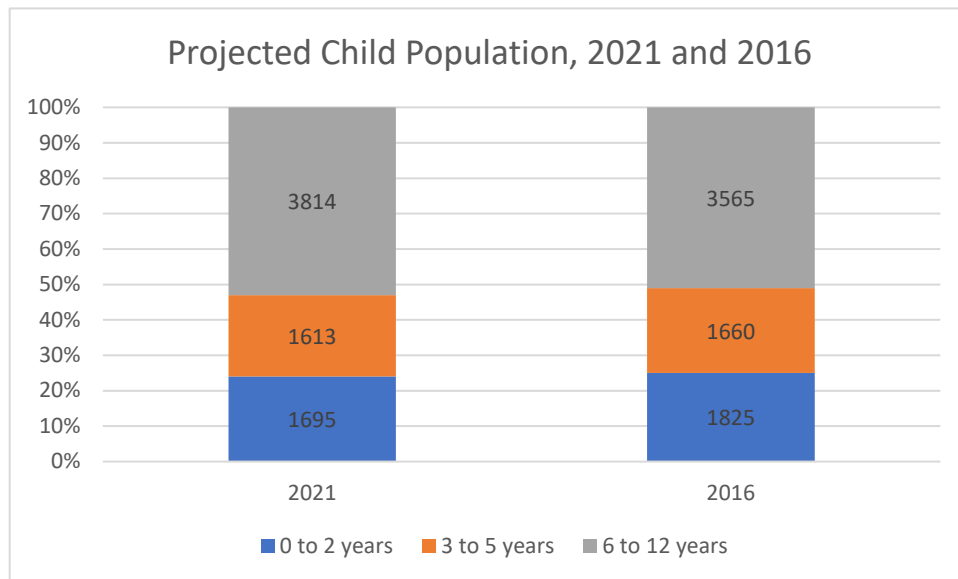
¹ Unless otherwise stated, all data is from the 2021 Statistics Canada Census.

Projected Child Population, 2021

The following data is based on BC Stats Population Estimates and Projects for the Community Health Service Areas of Downtown Victoria/Vic West, James Bay/Fairfield, and Oaklands/Fernwood. These numbers represent projections of anticipated child population (0 to 12 years) for 2021.

It is projected that as of 2021, there were 7122 children aged 0 to 12 in the City of Victoria; 24% (1,695 children) were 0 to 2 years of age; 23% (1,613 children) were 3 to 5 years of age; and 54% (3,814 children) were 6 to 12 years of age.² Projections for 2021 indicate a slight increase in the number of children aged 0 to 2 years and a small decrease in the children aged 6 to 12 years, as compared to 2016 projections.

Figures 2: Projected Child Population, 2021 and 2016

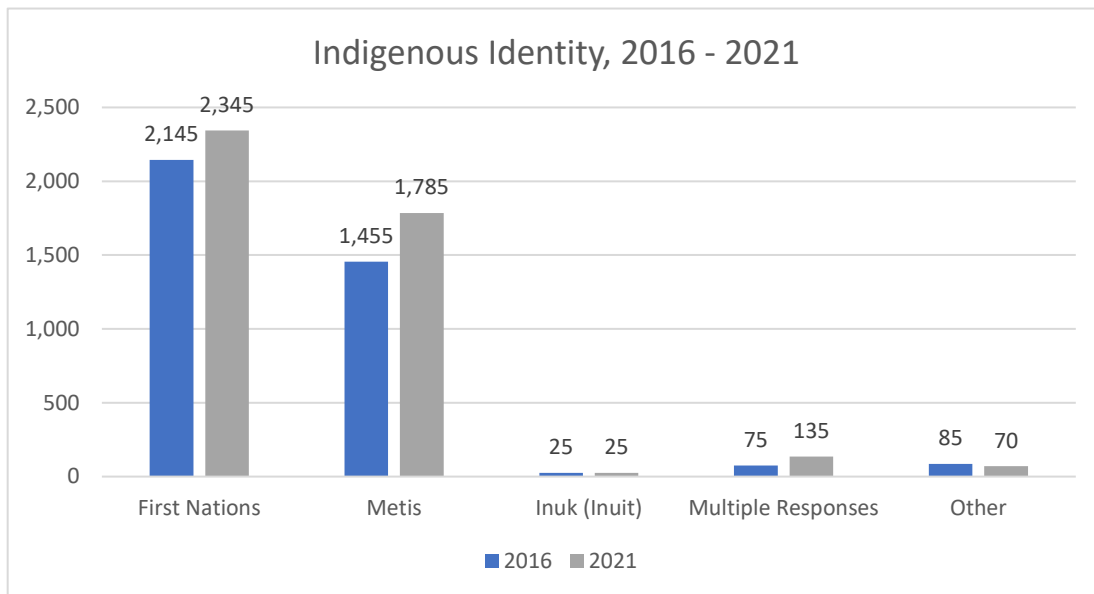


Indigenous Population

The number of individuals with Indigenous identity increased between 2016 and 2021, with a total of 4,360 individuals. This increase was proportional to that of the overall population of the City of Victoria, with Indigenous persons representing approximately 4.7% of the City’s population.

² Percentage may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Figure 3: Indigenous Identity, 2016 - 2021



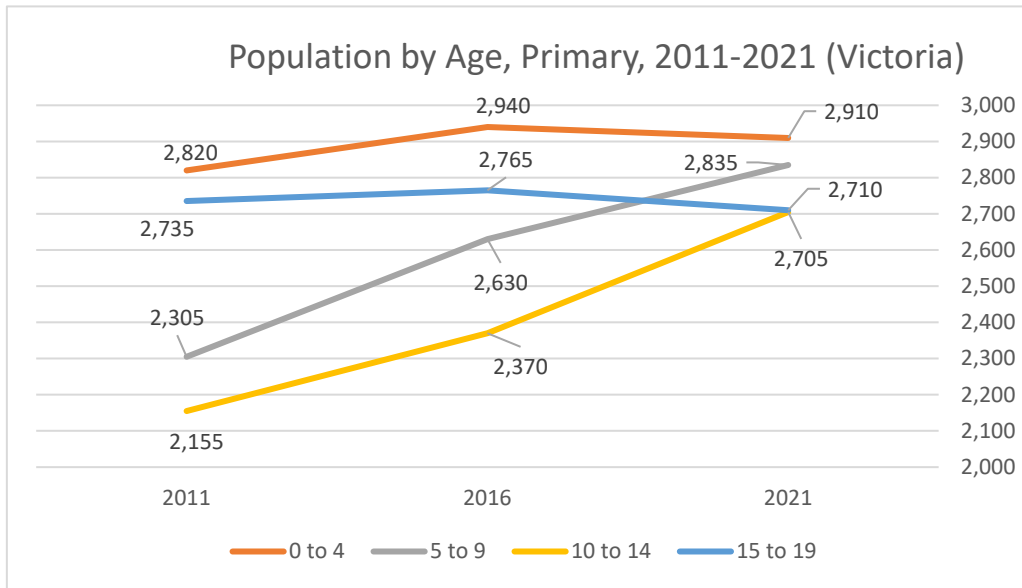
Population by Age, Primary, 2011 to 2021

In 2021, the City of Victoria had 11,160 individuals who were under the age of 19. An increase of 455 individuals or 4% from 2016. In total the total proportion of the population ages 0 -14 years in the City of Victoria was 9.2%

- 2,910 (26%) are 0 to 4 years old
- 2,835 (25%) are 5 to 9 years old
- 2,705 (24%) are 10 to 14 years old
- 2,710 (24%) are 15 to 19 years old

From 2016 to 2021 the age category '10 to 14' saw the largest increase of 26%. The largest category overall, as of 2021, is those aged '0 to 4 years'. However, there was a decrease of just 1% in the population aged '0 to 4 years' between 2016 and 2021.

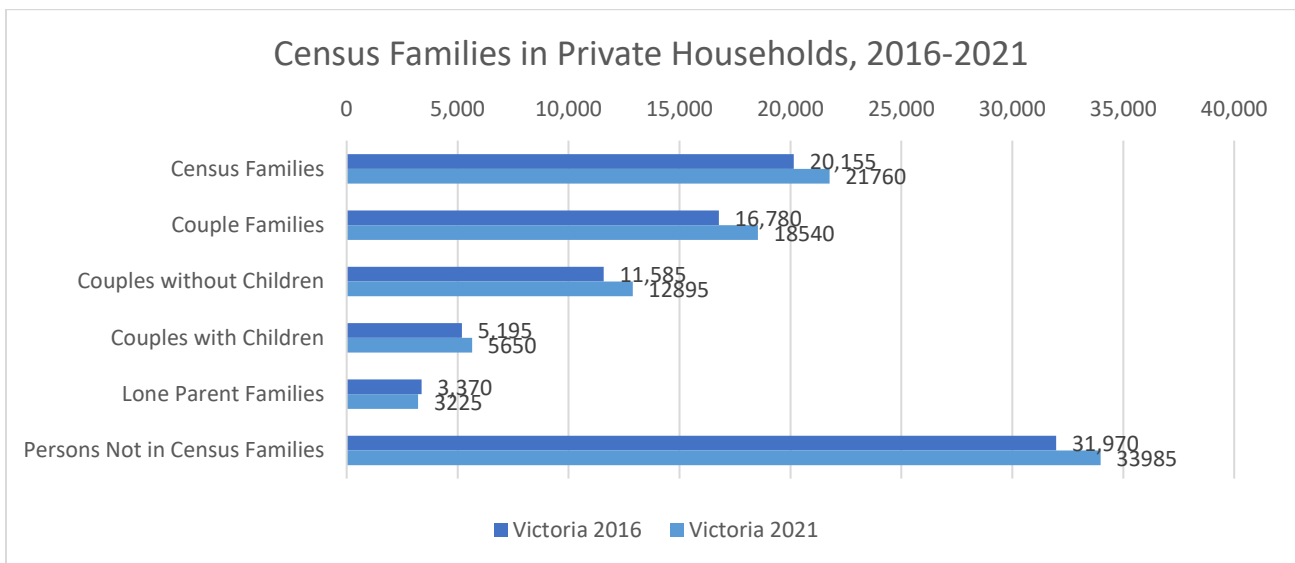
Figure 4: Population by Age, 2011 to 2021



Household Families

In 2021, there were 8,875 census family households with children. This is an increase of 3.4% (310 households) since 2016. Divided by type, in 2021 there were 5650 couple households with children and 3225 lone-parent households. The number of households led by lone parents decreased by 4.3% (145 households) while couple households with children increased by 8.8% (455 households) between 2016 and 2021. The average number of children in a census family household with children in 2021 was 1.5. Average household size for couples with children was 3.7 while the average family size of one-parent economic families was 2.4.

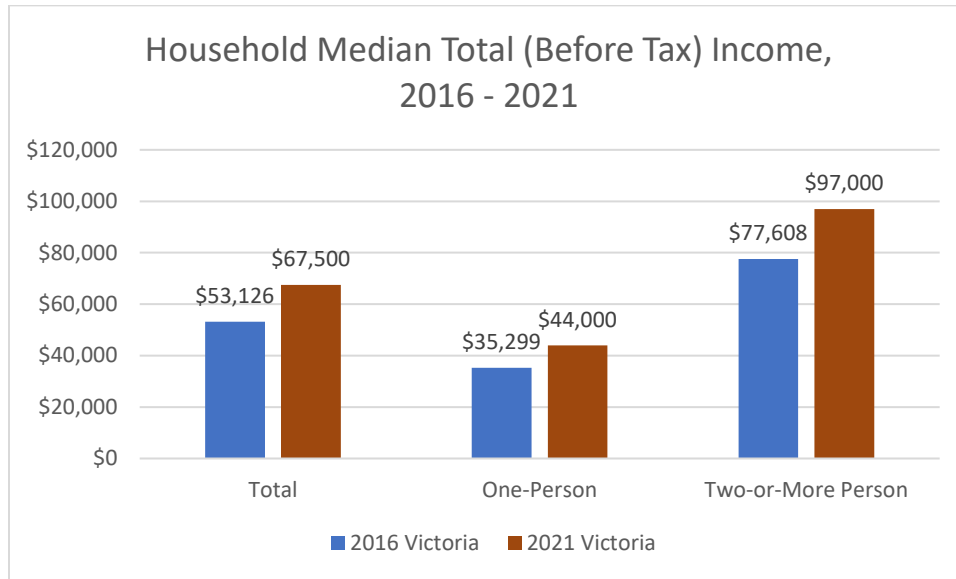
Figure 5: Census Families in Private Households, 2016-2021



Economic Family Median Total (before tax) Income, 2021

The household median total income in the City of Victoria increased by 27% (\$14,374) between 2016 and 2021 (2015 and 2020 tax years respectively).

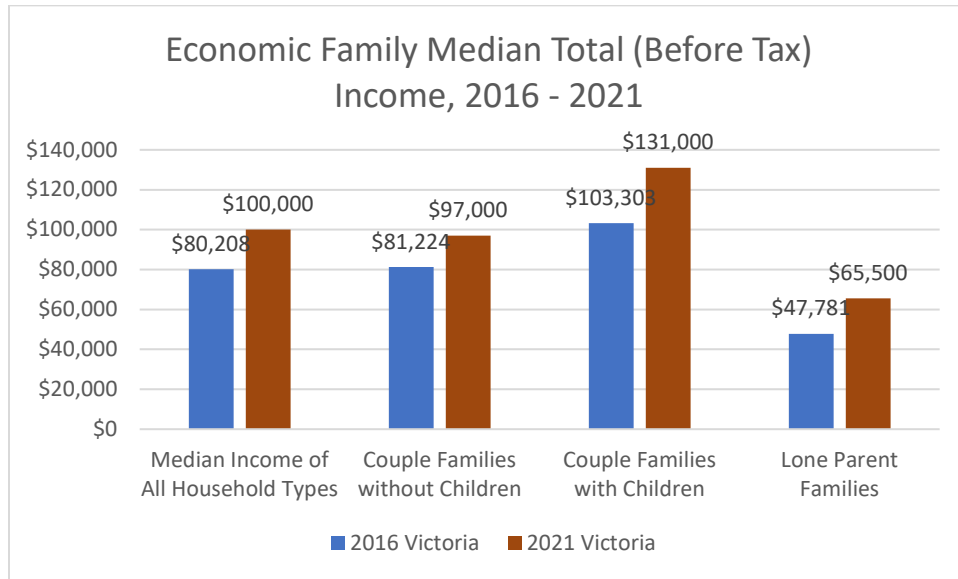
Figure 6: Household Median Total (Before Tax) Income, 2016-2021



The total income of economic families also increased between 2016 and 2021. The overall median total (before tax) income of all household types of economic families increased by 25% (\$19,792). There remains a difference in income between couple families with children and lone parent families. In 2016, couple families made 116% more than lone parent families and 27% more than couples without children. In 2021, couple families with children had incomes double (100% more) that of lone parent families, and 35% more than couples without children. Lone parent households had the highest increase in median income with a 37% (\$17,71) growth rate. Couples with children were the next highest at 27% (\$27,697) while couples without children increased 19% (\$15,776). Lone parent families still have the lowest median income.

It is important to note when reviewing 2021 census data related to income that many households may have been receiving income related to federal pandemic relief programs (CERB, GST top-ups and an increase in the Canada Child Benefit amount for example). These benefits had varying impacts on household incomes and increases in income experienced in 2020 may have only been temporary.

Figure 7: Economic Family Median Total (Before Tax) Income, 2016-2021



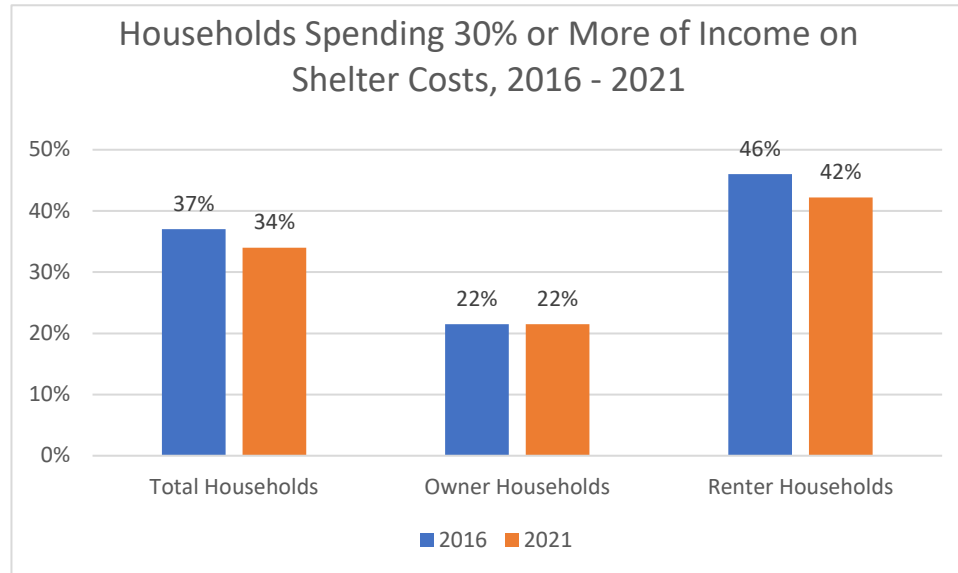
Households Spending More Than 30% of Income on Shelter Costs

The total number of households spending 30% or more of their income on shelter decreased between 2016 and 2021, from 46% to 42%. The proportion of owners spending 30% or more remained the same (22%), while the proportion of renters decreased slightly from 37% to 34%.

Across Canada, fewer households lived in unaffordable housing in 2021, despite rising shelter costs. COVID-19 support programs provided relief for many households, helping them weather the rising housing costs and other financial hardships. “According to the 2020 Canadian Income Survey, government transfers cushioned the significant losses in market income that many Canadians suffered from the pandemic-related economic shutdowns. More households

reported that it was easy or very easy for them to meet their financial needs over the past 12 months in 2021 (5.8 million or 39.0%) than in 2018 (5.4 million or 37.0%).”³

Figure 8: Households Spending 30% or More on Shelter Costs, 2016 - 2021

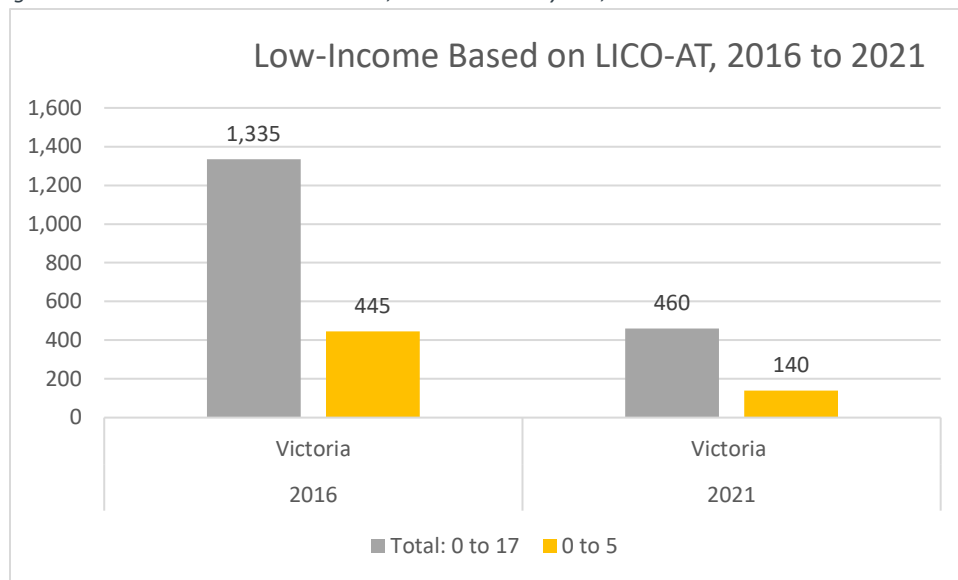


Low-Income Based on LICO-AT

The prevalence of Low-Income Based on LICO-AT in the City of Victoria decreased between 2016 and 2021. In 2016, the prevalence was 14% overall, with 14.4% of children aged 0-17 living in low-income households. In 2021 the prevalence was 4.6% in the same age group. This represents a decrease of 875 persons between the ages of 0-17 living in low-income households. The number of children aged 0-5 in low-income households decreased by 305 persons. Again, it is important to note that pandemic relief programs likely contributed to the significant decline in the number of households with children identified as low-income in the 2021 census.

³ Statistics Canada (July 21, 2022). Housing challenges remain for vulnerable populations in 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220721/dq220721b-eng.htm>

Figure 9: Low-income Based on LICO-AT, Children 0 – 17 years, 2016 to 2021



Key points from household economics

- Incomes of households in Victoria may be increasing.
- The gap in income between lone parent families and couples with children is closing, while the gap between couples with and without children is widening.
- Lone parent families' incomes increased the most proportionately, however they still have the lowest median incomes, making half of couple households (with or without children) and much of this increase may be due to temporary COVID pandemic relief programs, which households are now no longer receiving.
- Low-income prevalence and total numbers decreased.

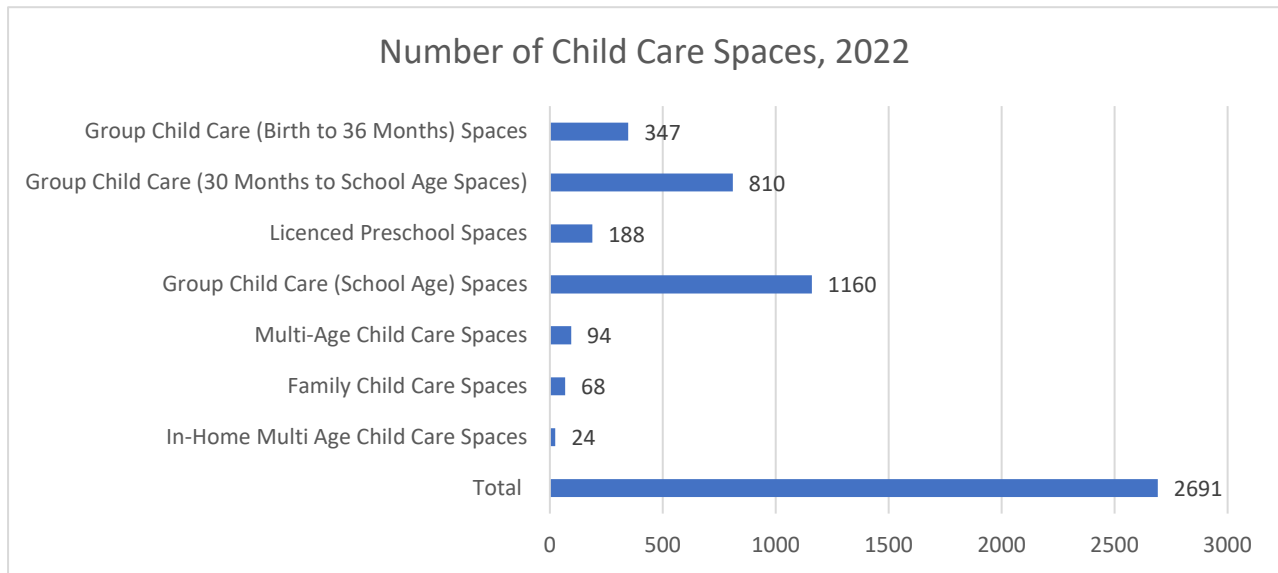
Child Care Space Inventory

Number of Child Care Spaces, 2022

In total, there were 2,691 child care spaces in the City of Victoria in June 2022. Group Child Care spaces were the most abundant option 2,317 (86%), which included 1160 (43%) group school age spaces, 810 (30%) group 30-month to school age spaces, and 347 (13%) group birth to 36-months spaces. The second largest category of child care spaces was licensed preschool spaces (188) followed by multi-age child care spaces (94), family child care spaces (68), and then in-home multi-age child care spaces (24).

It is important to note that during engagement process undertaken in 2020 for the original Child Care Plan, 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. We do not know how this, and other factors, have influenced the real availability of child care spaces in the time between 2020 and 2022.

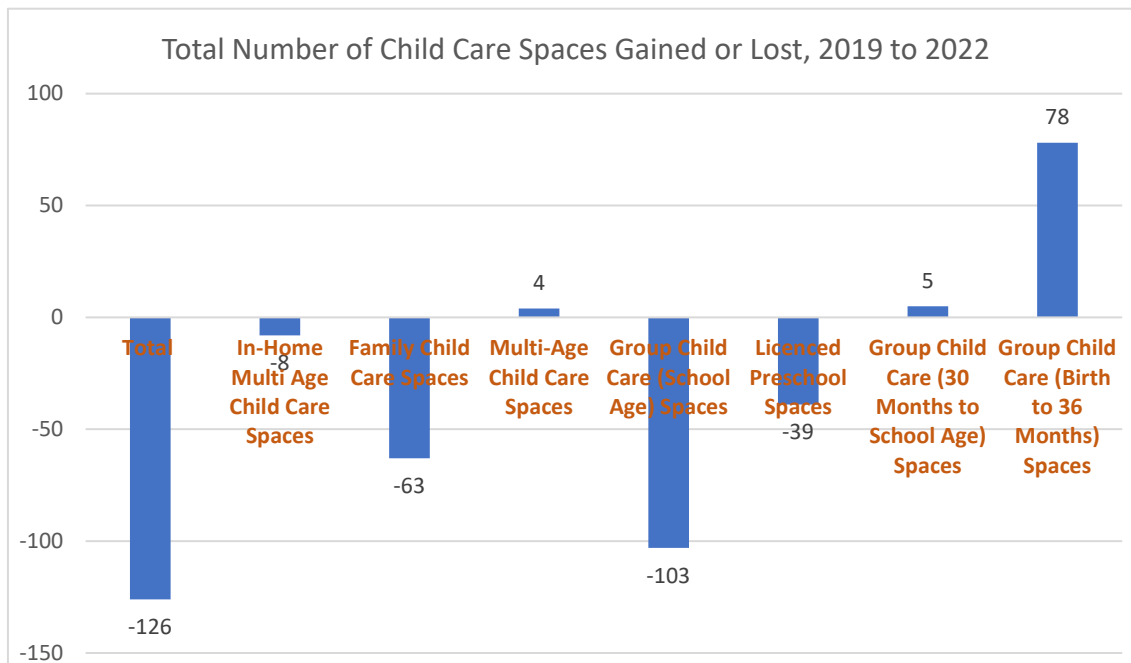
Figure 10: Number of Child Care Spaces, 2022



Changes in Child Care Capacity, 2019 to 2022

From 2019 to 2022 there was a net loss of 126 child care spaces in the City of Victoria (down from 2817 spaces in 2019 to 2691 spaces in June 2022). The largest loss of spaces was in the Group Child Care (School Age) category (103), followed by Family Child Care Spaces (63) and Licensed Preschool Spaces (39). The number of Group Child Care (Birth to 36 Months) Spaces saw the largest increase (78), while there were minor increases in the number of spaces for Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) (5), and Multi-Age Child Care Spaces (4).

Figure 11: Changes in Child Care Space Capacity, 2019 to 2022



Child care Spaces Gap, 2022⁴

In the City of Victoria, there was projected to be 7122 (2021) children aged 0 to 12 and a total of 2691 child care spaces. Therefore, a gap of 4,431 (62%) child care spaces may exist within the City of Victoria if the intention was to make a space available for every child. 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.

Gap Analysis

The updated child care spaces gap analysis is based on comparisons between BC Stats Population Estimates and Projections for the Community Health Service Areas of Downtown Victoria/Vic West, James Bay/Fairfield, and Oaklands/Fernwood and the child care spaces inventory provided by the Victoria Child Care Resource & Referral Program in June of 2022. The community profile represents the projected child population and demographic details of the City of Victoria. The inventory data represents the known number of **licensed** child care spaces, which is also broken down by type.

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.

The current child care access rate in the City of Victoria is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Current Child Care Access Rate⁵

	Child Population (2021)	Number of Spaces (2022)	Access Rate (spaces per 100 children)
0 – 5 years	3,308	1,438	43.5
6 – 12 years	3,814	1,253	32.9

Space Creation Targets

A note on targets: Best practice information was reviewed for 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

⁴ Note that child Care spaces represent spaces available as of June 2022, while population includes only up to May 2021 when the last census was completed.

⁵ 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 caregiver.
- 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 space types. These spaces include multi-age child care spaces, which could be allocated to other age groups. However, the average allocation is not known.

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.”⁶

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. The City is proposing 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 10% each year) in order to improve access rates over time.

Tables 2 and 3 summarize 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

Space Creation Targets: Ages 0 to 5

Table 2: City of Victoria space creation targets: Ages 0 to 5

Year	Total Children	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (43.5)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Access Rate of 50 (or 50% coverage)
2021	3,308	1,439	1,654
2022	3,257	1,417	1,629
2023	3,203	1,393	1,602
2025	3,140	1,366	1,570
2030	2,881	1,253	1,441

To meet a target of 1,441 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, Victoria will need a total of three new spaces over the next 9 years.

Space Creation Targets: Ages 6 to 12

Table 3: City of Victoria space creation targets: Ages 6 to 12

Year	Total Children	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (32.9)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Access Rate of 80 (or 80% coverage)
2021	3,814	1,255	3,051
2022	3,925	1,291	3,140
2023	3,974	1,307	3,179
2025	3,894	1,281	3,115
2030	3,537	1,164	2,830

⁶ 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>

To meet a target of 2,830 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, Victoria will need an average of 175 new spaces per year over the next 9 years.