

City of North Vancouver Child Care Strategy: Engagement Summary

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List of Acronyms

CAC	Community Amenity Contribution
CCRR	Child Care Resources and Referrals
CNV	City of North Vancouver
DNV	District of North Vancouver
EA	Electronic Arts
ECE	Early Child Education
EDI	Early Development Instrument
ICBC	Insurance Corporation of British Columbia
NFP	Not-For-Profit
NS	North Shore
NSNH	North Shore Neighbourhood House
NV	North Vancouver
RFP	Request for Proposal
SPARC	Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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Executive Summary

The City of North Vancouver has been engaging in the development of a Child Care Strategy. This process has included various forms of public engagement with key stakeholders, families and community members to understand the child care needs in the community. This report summarizes the input from these consultation meetings, which will inform the final design and development of the new Child Care Strategy for the City of North Vancouver.

In phase 1 of the strategy development, two (2) initial engagement meetings helped scope the Needs Analysis Report and the strategy more broadly: a focus group with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee in November 2017 (5 attendees) and a meeting with City staff in December 2017 (5 attendees).

In February and March 2018, the City of North Vancouver (CNV), in collaboration with the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC), organized and conducted a series of consultation meetings about child care in the CNV. Child care providers, parents, community members and other stakeholders were invited to explore the gaps, challenges, opportunities and prospects regarding child care in the City of North Vancouver.

The four (4) meetings were part of phase 2 of the strategy development and were held on February 26, March 1 and March 6 2018 at the City of North Vancouver Public Library. The three (3) main purposes of these meetings were:

- To share what the CNV has learned about child care needs so far;
- To discuss participants' perspectives and experiences to further develop the understanding about child care needs in the community; and,
- To solicit information and discussion that informs the development of the CNV's Child Care Strategy.

18 staff from stakeholder agencies, 13 parents and community members and 22 child care providers took part in the meetings, for a total of 53 participants in phase 2.

The engagement process was designed to solicit information on the current child care practices in the City of North Vancouver as well as opportunities and aspirations for the future of child care in the community. While the discussion questions differed slightly from one stakeholder group to another, overall the questions sought to identify the specific gaps and opportunities in the current landscape of child care in the CNV, as well as possible directions for the future. Participants were also asked to reflect on the main findings of the Needs Assessment Report, which the CNV and SPARC produced in February 2018. The discussion questions were broad enough to solicit a wide range of input while being attentive to relevant factors such as: stakeholder engagement; investment opportunities including resources, spaces and technologies; policy and regulatory frameworks; coordination and partnership opportunities; demographic and socio-economic factors such as cultural diversity and inclusion; facilities; and staff.

The recommendations that emerged from the engagement that can help inform the Child Care Strategy's design and development are:

- Be attentive to the socio-economic, cultural diversity and infrastructure development of CNV including demographic trends to design a broad, actionable, equitable and all-inclusive strategy across CNV;
- Seek out informational and technical support from all stakeholders in every aspect of the strategy design process;
- Secure sustained political and financial commitment from leaders and decision-makers at all levels;
- Consider how the current cost of housing impacts child care demand projections and attracting and retaining qualified child care staff;
- Communicate and collaborate across DNV and CNV borders to leverage the fact that the child care landscape appears to be very similar in both communities;
- Explore best practices, approaches, innovations and models from other cities and communities within BC, other provinces, Canada and neighbouring states in the US (e.g., City of Vancouver, Richmond, London Ontario, Toronto, Seattle);
- Strengthen partnerships and coordination among all the stakeholders involved in completing and implementing the new Child Care Strategy;
- Optimize the opportunities and prospects to develop a strategy for all age groups and categories of children (i.e., infant/toddler, under 5, 6-12, including in-school and out-of-school services and including those across all age groups with special needs);
- Give special consideration to the impacts of education, training, deployment, wages and benefits in the development and retention mechanisms for child care workers;
- Consider diverse child care options that work for parents, guardians, families, single parents, full-time, part-time, day-time and shift workers and those who are unemployed;
- Explore the availability and better use of schools, their facilities and playgrounds to integrate before and after school child care;
- Be attentive to licensing, regulatory and quality assurance systems to ensure:
 - Proper child care is delivered to enhance healthy physical, emotional and psycho-social child development; and,
 - Qualified staff are hired to provide child care and supervise children.
- Scope out opportunities for the government and other donor agencies to fund or subsidize child care related resources for low income families, for-profit and not-for-profit care providers, and ECE students and workers; and,
- Continue to develop and prioritize policies for child care facilities to be delivered by the City.

Introduction and Background

In 2009, a Child Care Policy and Plan was adopted to provide an overall framework and specific actions to guide and support child care facilities in the City of North Vancouver. In 2017, the City conducted a Child Care Needs Assessment among key stakeholders. Building on this work, the City has been undertaking several preparatory activities since late 2017 to create a new Child Care Strategy for the City of North Vancouver.

The development of the new Child Care Strategy has been organized in a multi-phased approach. The first phase started with a Needs Assessment and Analysis, which included gathering information about the profile of child populations in the area (i.e., ages and trends); existing child care programs (i.e., types of programs, capacities, neighborhood distribution, and waitlists); and childhood vulnerabilities as measured by the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and other socio-economic demographic information. A survey of parents, guardians and child care providers was also conducted in November 2017 and the results of the survey informed the Needs Assessment and Analysis Report.

As the Needs Analysis Report was being developed, two (2) initial engagement meetings helped scope the report and the strategy more broadly: a focus group with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee in November 2017 (5 attendees) and a meeting with City staff in December 2017 (5 attendees).

In the second phase, the CNV in collaboration with SPARC BC organized and conducted a series of consultation meetings about child care in the CNV. Child care providers, parents, community members and other stakeholders were invited to explore the gaps, challenges, opportunities and prospects regarding child care in the City of North Vancouver.

The four (4) consultation meetings were held on February 26, March 1 and March 6 2018 at the City of North Vancouver Public Library. The three (3) main purposes of these engagement opportunities were:

- To share what the CNV has learned about child care needs so far;
- To discuss participants' perspectives and experiences to further develop the understanding about child care needs in the community; and,
- To solicit information and discussion that informs the development of the CNV's Child Care Strategy.

18 staff from stakeholder agencies, 13 parents and community members and 22 child care providers took part in the meetings, for a total of 53 participants in phase 2.

The rest of this report is divided into three (3) broad sections: in section 1 we share the summary of the meetings with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee and City staff. In Section 2 we highlight the discussion questions used during the consultation meetings in phase 2 and further describe the context for the Child Care Strategy's design and development. Finally, section 3 presents an aggregated summary of the phase 2 engagement responses and reflections.

1. Phase 1 Stakeholder Meeting Summaries

1.1 North Shore Child Care Planning Committee Focus Group Summary

In November 2017, the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee participated in a focus group to understand the current strengths, challenges, opportunities, potential difficulties and specific suggestions regarding providing child care in the City of North Vancouver. Five (5) of the eleven (11) organizations represented on the committee attended. The following summarizes the key points:

Strengths:

- The City uses bonus zoning and collects money from development for child care;
- The City partners with various child care agencies and organizations that collectively have an ability and willingness to work together; there is a very positive network; and,
- Strong, positive relationship between CNV and Vancouver Coastal Health Child Care Licensing.

Challenges:

- The community amenity contributions (CACs) are not specifically allocated for child care and child care can 'compete' with the provision of other amenities that are also needed and essential in our community;
- The cost of real estate is prohibitive for provision of child care. This affects the feasibility of starting and operating child care; and,
- The majority of spaces in the City of North Vancouver are operated by for-profit child cares.

Opportunities:

- Commitment and forthcoming provincial policy for universal child care;
- Keep families in the City of North Vancouver by supporting their families' needs with an adequate supply and high quality child care; and,
- Money for development of child care facilities through development. Over time the city has less single family and more diverse housing, creating more development and amenity opportunities.

Potential difficulties:

- Adequate work force for provision of child care services;
- "Corporate" large format commercial child cares, and concerns with quality. These concerns could be mitigated by the rollout of the provincial universal child care program; and,
- School class size and capacity of schools for child care in school buildings and on school properties. As a community we need to be open and exploratory to what is possible, to meet the community's strong value and need for child care. If not, our families will move away.

Suggestions for the City of North Vancouver:

- Develop schools as community hubs;
- Present an action-oriented plan to Council;
- Develop child care within new development opportunities;
- Could child care be specifically located and linked with major transit hubs, e.g. sea bus?; and,
- Link child care strategies with affordable housing strategies since they are related and connected in many ways.

1.2 City Staff Meeting Summary

In December 2017, staff from the City of North Vancouver participated in a meeting to identify the existing aspects of planning and policy that might intersect with the emerging Child Care Strategy and Action Plan and discuss staff needs and hopes for what the Strategy and Action Plan could help them address in their day to day work. Five (5) staff members participated in the meeting. The following notes summarize the key areas and questions that staff hope the strategy will address:

- Position the strategy to leverage provincial investment in child care;
- Engender active partnerships with the School District, Recreation Commission, Squamish Nation, Economic Partnership;
- Understand and address the planning barriers to producing child care spaces (e.g., zoning);
- Be mindful of gender impacts of child care, the needs of women and single parents;
- Address the needs of children with special needs and developmental disabilities;
- Understand the role of child care affordability in accessing child care and the national trends of employers providing child care;
- Meet child care needs of specific neighbourhoods (e.g., Moodyville, Ridgeway and 3rd Ave.) and prioritize child care as a needed amenity in central Lonsdale;
- Consider design guidelines for child care spaces (e.g., City of Vancouver) and an understanding of whether such guidelines might produce fewer spaces;
- Consider collaborative approaches such as child care at Lions Gate Hospital;
- There is a demand for more child care facilities in City parks, and child care facilities use parks heavily. Soliciting park design ideas from child care providers would be useful;
- Find out whether the City provide low/no cost rental space for non-profit child care (looking at the City's stock of land and whether it is appropriate for child care), or ask developers to provide child care space (e.g., in the podium of a condo building), or both;
- Understand the efficiencies and opportunities to create larger scale child care facilities in the future;
- Set targets for child care spaces (e.g., keep pace with population growth, close the gap between need and availability at a certain rate);
- Explore a quality assurance role for the City of North Vancouver (similar to City of Toronto model);
- Contemplate including City performance indicators of progress, as compared to other municipalities, into the strategy; and,
- Consider pursuing a costed strategy for the City to facilitate implementation.

2. Asking the Questions and Setting the Context for Phase 2

When designing the discussion questions for each consultation meeting in phase 2, it was important to ensure that the questions were both broad enough to solicit a wide range of perspectives, and specific enough to zone in on the particular factors that impact the provision of child care services in the CNV.

For the stakeholders and child care providers' consultation meetings, four discussion questions were posed:

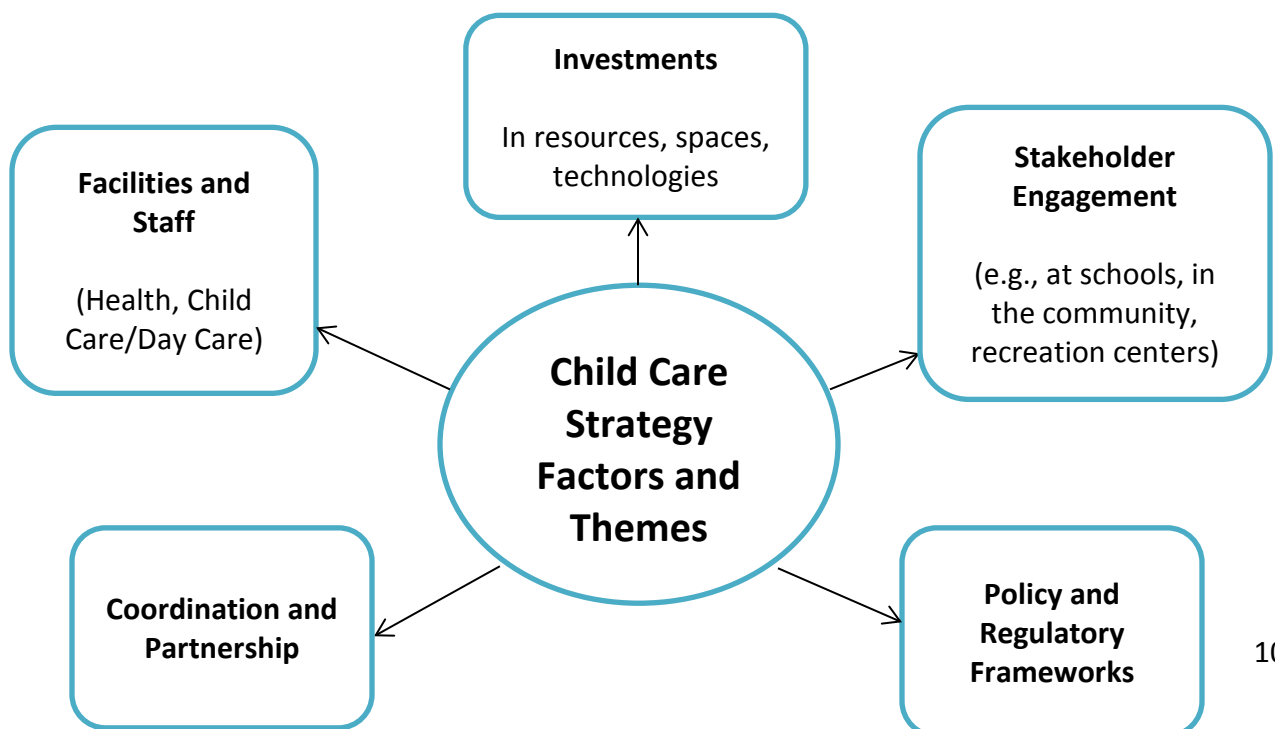
- What strikes you as noteworthy, surprising, or missing from the needs assessment report summary?
- What do you see as the major gap and issues with child care provision/strategy in the CNV?
- What opportunities does the CNV Child Care Strategy bring to your work in providing child care?
- How should our community plan new child care spaces across neighborhoods in the CNV in terms of location and design?

Similar but slightly modified questions were posed to parents and community members:

- What strikes you as noteworthy, surprising, or missing from the needs assessment report summary?
- What do you see as the major gaps in the delivery of child care services/needs in the CNV?
- What would make child care services better for families in the CNV?
- How do you think locations for new child care spaces should be prioritized?

Figure 1 shows the broad range of themes and factors that emerged during the discussions. These factors help set the context for the design and development of the Child Care Strategy.

Figure 1. The Context for the Child Care Strategy Design and Development



3. Phase 2 Summary of Responses, Issues and Reflections

The following summary combines the data results for the three groups of respondents (i.e., child care providers, parents/community members and the staff of key stakeholder groups and agencies). The analysis is presented in four sections as follows:

- Section 3.1: Reflections and Issues Concerning the Needs Assessment Summary Report;
- Section 3.2: Results of Sessions with Child Care Providers;
- Section 3.3: Results of Sessions with Parents and Community Members; and,
- Section 3.4: Results of Interviews with Staff of Key Stakeholder Groups and Agencies.

3.1 Reflections and Issues Concerning the Needs Assessment Summary Report

Child care providers, parents and community members, and staff of stakeholder agencies shared the following issues that they considered noteworthy, surprising or missing from the previous Needs Assessment Summary Report presented to them at the beginning of each meeting.

Reflections on the Needs Assessment Report – At A Glance

Overall, respondents agreed that space is an issue: there is a lack of affordable rental space for child care, and strict licensing requirements complicate the process of offering child care at home. Out of school care is in crisis, with huge demand and low supply for before and after school options. Finding and retaining qualified staff is a challenge, as wages are low and the cost of living in the area is high, meaning people must commute from farther away to work in the City of North Vancouver. Despite this, child care providers report that they spend most of their budget on wages. There is an interest in understanding population projections for the area, as well as existing gaps for neighbourhoods that need more child care services and funding opportunities for child care providers. Finally, jurisdictional boundaries between the City and District of North Vancouver can make navigating licensing and bylaws more challenging for providers.

Table 1. Reflections and Issues on the Needs Assessment Summary Report

Respondents	Noteworthy/surprising/missing issues
Child care providers	Space: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally, there is a lack of space availability;• Long waiting times, often years, for space(s) to become available;• Re-zoning for home space is a big issue (public hearing process is problematic);• There is no space to rent in North Vancouver (real estate agents cannot find anything);

Respondents	Noteworthy/surprising/missing issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbours are preventing family based daycares and providers cannot find space outside of their homes; • Affordability of space, if it does become available, is a challenge; • Spaces are often shared with other services or programs, compromising services (i.e., trucking toys in and out); and, • Schools are moving out of providing potential spaces for day care. <p>Regulations/Licensing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing is too restrictive. <p>Education and Staffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space is big issue but staffing is even more challenging; • It's very difficult to find qualified staff; • Educational requirements are high (i.e., ECE certification); and, • Child care can be provided by experienced staff but who do not have ECE?
Parents and community members	<p>Regulations/Licensing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing regulations and requirements are barriers; and, • Change in city bylaws (e.g., some child care providers are losing spaces due to not meeting bylaw requirements). <p>Demographics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic projections would be useful (i.e., popular neighbourhoods of Lower Lonsdale and impacts on child care needs).
Staff of stakeholder groups and agencies	<p>Accessibility of services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of school care is in crisis – as needed as infant and toddler care; • Older kids don't necessarily like being in a formal child care setting; • Kindergarten to grade 3-4 age group has particular needs (i.e., can't send them home with a key, whereas older children's parents will try to have them go to activities after school that kids can walk to but not always available); • North Shore Neighbourhood House programs often act as a "child care" proxy because parents can't find a formal setting for child care or it's too expensive; and, • Are the alternatives to school aged after school care safe? This is a fear. <p>Mapping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping licensed child care programs that are needed close to elementary schools are would be helpful to address these gaps by helping the City focus on licensing approvals in those areas, particularly for after school care. <p>Investments, Staffing and Wages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients interested in starting child care businesses experience challenges (84% of child care facilities struggling to fill positions);

Respondents	Noteworthy/surprising/missing issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shortage of teachers in BC and BC's limited teacher qualification recognition seems to be pushing ECE 4-year graduates toward teaching rather than remaining in the child care profession; and, • Difficulties in getting staff due to lack of recognized education and low pay. <p>Projections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections/demographics need more work (i.e., this information should not only base on city planning work or statistics); and, • How does cost of housing impact demand projections? <p>Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificiality of borders (DNV vs. CNV) is a challenge – how to account for those jurisdictional changes when meeting needs? • DNV has a needs assessment from late 2016 and the child care landscape appears to be similar in the two communities. <p>Funding opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the province's desire and promises to make changes, how do those fit in to this planning process? • CCRR phone call looked at placing funding in current spaces to make them more affordable, and also look at how to enhance education and wage for child care workers; and, • City of Vancouver has calculator to project demand for child care, no other community seems to have tool to predict demand. Could CNV develop something for our context?

3.2 Results of Sessions with Child Care Providers

Child care providers from the City of North Vancouver were brought together and attended a meeting on March 6, 2018. The following tables summarize the main discussion points.

Input from Meeting with Child Care Providers – At a Glance

For child care providers, staffing is the biggest issue: there is a shortage of qualified ECE staff and wages and benefits are low and hours are irregular. Many licensing requirements and policies seem out of date or too inflexible for providers; providing outdoor play space to meet licensing requirements is particularly challenging. Affordability for both families and care providers is also a challenge. There is a call for a universal child care system. Perhaps this will enable providers to stop spending time lobbying for their needs, and be able to devote their focus solely on providing care instead (i.e., like teachers, who can focus on teaching).

There are opportunities for more collaboration with the School District and other partners and an interest in seeing the City take on a stronger advocacy role with the province. Different providers have different perspectives on whether for-profit or not-for-profit, and residential or commercial child care spaces should be prioritized. In terms of locating new child care facilities, providers are interested in collaborations with institutions like hospitals, recreation centres and seniors' centres; prioritizing spaces near parks and transit hubs; and using existing spaces in creative ways.

Table 2: Major Gaps and Issues with Child Care in the City of North Vancouver

Theme	Gaps and Issues
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing is a crisis – there is a shortage of qualified ECE staff in North Vancouver; • Staffing changes on a daily/monthly basis leads to inconsistent care provision; parents do not rely on the child care providers and go elsewhere; • Some staff are not willing to work at child care facilities in homes but would in a commercial facility; • Providers cannot offer full days of work for caregivers, making it challenging to find and retain staff; • Wage differences across different providers; • Low wages and benefit packages contribute to a high attrition rate; • ECE and infant/toddler work is usually full-time, providing benefits and therefore more opportunity to retain staff; • Some staff have qualifications but no hands-on experience, whereas employers want them to have experience – this cycle is hard to break; • Some ECE students can't study part-time and also handle working with children – stretched too thin; • There is a perceived lack of dedication to the profession; • Renewal of accreditation for child care staff is costly; • Lack of respect and recognition from parents and the community (i.e., “just being a babysitter syndrome”); and, • Language barriers are a challenge, with some staff needing better English proficiency to be able to work as child care provider and communicate with parents.
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing requirements are too limiting and some requirements seem outdated (e.g., square footage per child, safety area requirements, and outdoor space requirements); • Process and approval of licensing depends on the Licensing Officer (i.e., some are fully by the book while others are more trusting/flexible, creating room for interpretation of the rules); • University and college ECE programs are 4 years, a huge investment of time and money that can be a barrier for those who need to work in the child care field; • No universal child care system in place – such a system is needed; • Child care is not treated the same as the school system so providers spend time advocating for funding, policy change, etc. instead of simply providing care; • The current licensing regulation does not allow infant/toddler caregivers to leave even for breaks, which is hard on staff; and, • Generally there is a lack of adequate break time for staff – people are on call 24/7 without a break.

Theme	Gaps and Issues
Spaces and Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggest gap is 'before and after school' spaces for school aged children: lots of elementary schools are not served; those that are served like Ridgeway don't have enough spaces to meet the need; Queen Mary school is bursting at the seams and can't provide child care even if facilities exist because there is lack of space due to changes to classroom ratio; portables could be an option but take away from needed outdoor play space as well; • Some playgrounds do not meet licensing requirements (e.g., 230 West Keith Road school playground), meaning public spaces can't be used; • Lack of proper play space for younger kids in particular; • If there is a lack of space, older and younger kids who are part of a program cannot mix easily. Alternately, school aged kids may attend child care for other age groups due to lack of spaces; • Lack of appropriate spaces can lead to bullying across age groups; • Some parents/families come from outside of catchment areas, making it difficult for local families to find affordable child care. Some neighbours feel unpleasant about families from other areas to the extent of saying "we don't want you here"; • Issues in residential child care locations include neighbour complaints that a house is only being used for child care, traffic issues, noise complaints, etc., pitting neighbours against each other; • For child care in multi-use spaces, there is no storage to put anything away, leading to extra work to come in and set up/take down space. This leads to either paying people for 4-5 hours but only giving care for 3 hours and stretching budgets, or providers putting in unpaid time, or budget going to other services (e.g., cleaning); and, • Expanding child care spaces often means looking at sharing spaces and this comes with cost and other related issues as mentioned above.
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care is much too expensive, particularly for parents with low or middle incomes; and, • Child care for infants and toddlers is especially costly for both providers and parents.
Operational and Administrative Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences in hours of operation across child care providers are hard to navigate; • Hours of operation are often inflexible; each parent/family's needs are different, which entails the need for setting different schedules (e.g., accommodate shift work schedules); • Some parents want the child care facility to be open from 6am-6pm (for example), which means finding staff who are able to work extended hours – this is hard to find; and, • Providing a child care service is not a profitable business.
Political Will, Advocacy and Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of political commitment/support from others, though CNV is a strong ally to child care providers.

Theme	Gaps and Issues
Coordination and Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no coordination between schools and school districts to address lack of spaces. For example, there is no coordination between schools and the school district to make use of closed schools to be child care facilities. This is a missed opportunity.

Table 3: Opportunities and Prospects for the City of North Vancouver

Theme	Prospects and Opportunities
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a list of on-call accredited ECE staff and a notification process to help providers reduce staff shortages and fill gaps that are created with staff absenteeism in facilities; and, Pay living wage for providers to help retain staff and keep services affordable.
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avail tenders to operate child care spaces for the for-profit providers as it is with the not-for-profit sector to help expand child care offerings (e.g., one for-profit provider is looking to expand from Maple Ridge to North Vancouver); Expand opportunities for residential home-based child care, including more spaces; Reduce rental prices for commercial child care spaces, with the City of NV subsidizing rental fees; Consider different zoning processes to facilitate opening child care services (e.g., currently industrial zoning in CNV does not allow for child care); and, Reconsider the rental payment process for schools (i.e., when schools are closed for two months).
Spaces and Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the prospect for using existing school spaces for child care; Explore opportunities to use spaces near parks in the City as part of an agreement to deliver child care services; Ensure that child care providers dedicate adequate parking space for staff, parents coming and going; Incorporate stroller parking into new child care space design; Consider traffic mitigation plans when building new child care spaces; Encourage employers to provide onsite child care through zoning, building and parking requirements, and staff approval processes that are conducive to child care facility development (e.g., Telus building as a high density development operator has child care spaces for families); Prioritize new child care spaces near transit lines and new developments; and, Review and clarify building permit requirements and guidelines to clarify space needs upfront during the building stage (e.g., ensure there is a washroom for every 10 kids).
Operational and Administrative Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find ways of keeping the business/services consistent in the face of fluctuating demand.

Theme	Prospects and Opportunities
Political Will, Advocacy and Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for opportunities with the Provincial Government to support and increase the availability of spaces for current and future child care service providers; • Consider grants or funding opportunities for for-profit providers to provide child care; • Advocate for licensing requirements to allow outdoor play space to include public green space and parks, instead of requiring play space to be attached to the facility and fenced; and, • Bolster city-led advocacy in the development of guidelines and/or a strategy. For example, the cities of Vancouver and Richmond have specific guidelines on how to use commercial areas (i.e., close to schools and neighbourhoods, etc.) for child care but CNV doesn't have such guidelines yet so parents, providers and the community need to advocate instead.
Coordination and Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider models that combine child care with seniors residences (e.g., Seattle has this model); • Use Seniors Centers and Recreation Centers near child care facilities; • Standardize fire safety regulations to simplify safety procedures in child care spaces (currently there are different standards across municipalities); • Work with the local school board to simplify child care related partnerships and approvals; and, • Share park area spaces for child care services.

Suggestions for Locating New Child Care Spaces in the City of North Vancouver

Child care providers made the following suggestions when determining how and where to locate new child care spaces within the City of North Vancouver:

- Near parks and green areas/spaces;
- In or near shared spaces like libraries and other public buildings;
- In or near recreation centres and Seniors' centres;
- In hospitals;
- In community/building amenity rooms, party rooms and meeting rooms that are empty during office hours;
- In churches;
- In school gyms (particularly for before and after school care);
- Use land parcels that have a small building footprint and a larger unoccupied/undeveloped space;
- Consider the importance of outdoor play spaces vs. playing within buildings and whether indoor opportunities can be enough (e.g., in Toronto, indoor gyms that are big enough for physical activity are used for child care; spaces inside high rise buildings may be an option)
- Look to other jurisdictions' best practices (e.g., In the US, child care is often located close to schools so that older siblings are there to support the infant/toddlers); and,
- Explore how to use patios in residential strata buildings as outdoor play spaces.

Providers were also asked whether, in their experience, parents want child care to be close to their home or workplace. Providers' responses highlighted that while in years past, location of child care mattered more to families, now the priority is to find a space, period. Some providers shared that parents prefer for child care to be close to home to be able to pick up their children after rush hour.

During the discussion, the facilitator also asked providers, "what do you hear about parents' interests in having their employers provide daycare (e.g., Industry or hospital or school)? Do parents want employers to be involved?" Providers responded that parents have identified the following places as being ideal for child care:

- The Neighbourhood House close to ICBC;
- Centerview child care facility, which is by the hospital; and,
- Exploring the incorporation of child care in seniors' centres.

3.3 Results of Sessions with Parents and Community Members – Community Conversation on Child Care

Parents and community members from the City of North Vancouver were invited to attend a meeting on March 1, 2018. The following tables summarize the main discussion points.

Input from Community Conversation (community members) – At a Glance

Parents and community members are concerned with the lack of space for child care and the (un)affordability of existing options; the difficulty finding a desirable location for child care; before and after school care shortages; generally inflexible care hours; and policy barriers to providing more child care (e.g. potential to evolve partnership with the School District).

Opportunities include prioritizing child care spaces in new developments through CACs; prioritizing natural play spaces for outdoor play; including child care facilities in new schools/upgrades to schools and community buildings; increasing flexible hours child care options; improving the availability of information about child care on the City's website; and exploring services where child care providers pick up and drop off children at school.

Suggested location guidelines for new child care spaces include using parking garages, building rooftops and other original locations to build new child care spaces; including child care facilities in new community buildings; siting facilities near existing parks, in lower density neighbourhoods with fewer existing services, and near existing service hubs and transit corridors.

Table 4: Gaps, Opportunities, and How Locations for New Child Care Spaces Should Be Prioritized

Gaps	Opportunities	How locations for new child care spaces should be prioritized
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of space is a major problem; • Lack of certified staff; • Finding staff with ECE qualifications and a cultural capability – for example, speaking French; • Problems with recognition of foreign credentials; • Wages are too low for staff; • Discrepancy between wages for non-profit and private child care centres; • Schools are not willing to offer child care in the schools; • Lack of parking space to drop off their child at a child care centres; • Unaffordable rental or leases for child care centres; • Not enough space being designated for child care spaces in new developments; • Regulations that prohibit new spaces in the schools; • Siting is an issue for children – if they are constrained in a basement, they need to be in larger spaces and close to green spaces; • The service delivery model needs to include consistency in the quality of care and programs (i.e., more equality of opportunity); • Lack of reviews/verifications on child care providers makes it difficult for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of spaces for before and after school care; • Summer programming for K-5; • Cost and availability – increasing the access rate; • City could look into vacant space to use for child care; • Newly built public buildings could have day care facilities in them; • Continuation of policies for child care facilities in CACs; • Sites in the neighbourhood should focus on less concrete play areas (children need to be connected to nature); • New schools should accommodate and include day care facilities; • Child care needs to be close to schools; • Sites proximal to parks; • Prioritize the efficient utilization of spaces; • Family based daycare is positive and should be encouraged; • More information from the City's website to assist people to understand what process you need to go through to get a day care up and running would be useful; • Pick up and drop off services for day care (to and from home); • Day care provider comes and picks up children from school, takes them to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skyline buildings – where children can walk in the park; • Child care spaces on the rooftop of buildings; • In new community buildings (e.g., library, city hall, schools, etc.); • Shared outdoor spaces (e.g., parks) – currently is subject to licensing/liability issues; city lets people use community parks; • Offer daycare in some areas that are more remote; • Centres that offer more flexible options (e.g., drop in); • Spaces near schools and within schools; • School districts sharing spaces with child care (while attentive to safety; liability; licensing regulations); • Opening child care centres in local neighbourhoods; • Child care in community centres; • Day care portables on park land; • Day cares in the city that can take kids out to parks/nature (with a vehicle) with permission from parents, to meet outdoor play requirements; • Child care amenities on rooftops (e.g., Olympic village). Options could include Lonsdale Quay. This would be good for development as it would have developers

Gaps	Opportunities	How locations for new child care spaces should be prioritized
<p>parents to trust providers or make a good decision;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations for licensing in a park without fence reduces child care spaces; • Parents have every right to be picky to ensure their children are safe; • Shortage of after school care is a big challenge for parents; • Child care outside of “typical work hours” (i.e. 9 to 5) is practically nonexistent and makes it challenging for shift workers to find care; • School District is not taking up this responsibility to provide the care or the space for child care, although school sites are considered the best sites; • School Districts are giving child care providers eviction notices; • Child care is expensive if it’s not subsidized; • Regulating the unregulated spaces is a need; • There is no funding for schools to provide child care. Schools are forced to make space for growing school populations which takes precedent over child care provision; • There are too many governing bodies regarding schools and school decisions that complicates making space for child care; 	<p>school in the morning (for before and after school care services);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have more flexibility of service hours to accommodate shift work and untraditional schedules; and, • Replace parking garages with child care facilities (e.g., Capilano Mall parking lots). 	<p>thinking about creating more green spaces for children;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City allocating park space (both public park and daycare park space); • Dividing child care facilities for low income areas? (May lead to movement in the city where low income families will still use good daycare in other areas); • Offer child care through schools or other hubs for places for children, reducing transportation issues, ensuring these are close to amenities, parks; • Schools have spaces available – use for before/after school care and be creative (e.g., using lunch room or library); • “Kids Clubs”; • Home-based daycares should have access to parks in walking distance; • Family child care that has more flexibility; • Look at supporting existing child care spaces (close to schools); • Child care in community centres; and, • At existing schools for before/after school care (e.g., City of Vancouver and YMCA did seismic upgrades and added a 3rd floor just for child care).

Gaps	Opportunities	How locations for new child care spaces should be prioritized
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough school play space to begin with – so when there is a call for child care space it puts a strain on the limited outdoor space; and, • Teachers need their space in schools to work as well, and competition for child care spaces impedes on their space. 		

3.4: Results of Sessions with Staff of Key Stakeholder Groups and Agencies

Staff members of key stakeholder agencies involved with supporting child care services in the City of North Vancouver were invited to two meetings on February 26 and March 6, 2018, respectively. The following tables summarize the main discussion points.

Input from Meeting with Child Care Stakeholder Groups and Agencies

– At a Glance

Key issues and gaps according to stakeholder agencies include the cost of living on the North Shore; the high proportion of providers' budgets going toward staff wages; the diversity of the North Shore population's needs (i.e., language); the inability for licensing staff to be available on short notice to inspect commercial rental spaces for providers looking to sign a lease; the trend for ECE students to transition to another degree program instead of working in the field; and issues such as noise requirements, parking needs and strata limitations in providing child care spaces. There is no space for pre-teens in particular to spend time after school and existing services such as libraries are becoming "de facto" child care spaces, stretching resources.

There is an opportunity for the City to better support providers with the application process to set up a child care business with information access and stronger collaboration with referral centres; continue and improve its CAC policies by encouraging developers to provide child care spaces in new builds; looking to other cities for best practices; and encouraging businesses to provide child care for their employees. Design guidelines might include prioritizing universal access for facilities and other design considerations at the building stage to educate developers on space needs and increase the number of commercial options meeting licensing requirements. Continuing to support existing child care round tables is key, as is improving access to governmental granting and funding opportunities. In terms of selecting sites for new child care facilities, there is an interest in spreading sites across neighbourhoods to facilitate local access to care, while also prioritizing child care hubs near transportation corridors and near or within existing social services. The City can also take a stronger advocacy role by exploring the economic cost of inadequate social infrastructure to make the case for more investments in child care to the province.

Ultimately, the approach should be to build a system, as opposed to implementing piecemeal solutions that do not address the core issues in providing child care in the City of North Vancouver.

Table 5: Responses of the Staff of Stakeholder Groups and Agencies (February 26, 2018)

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of living on North Shore is an impediment; • Transportation on the North Shore is also bad; • Child care providers who do not live in the north Shore spend most of their time in transit, which leads to unqualified staff being used in centres, especially around before and after school times; • Capilano University offers ECE and degree programs and there is a trend whereby people start in a ECE program and then transition into different education opportunities instead of working in the field; • Rules and regulations in education/training of caregivers, child-staff ratios, licensing, space all limit possibilities to fill gaps; • Low wages for qualified staff; • EDI scores are quite high relative to the provincial rates; • Diversity of North Vancouver's population and associated needs (e.g., language, culture); • Environmental factors like exposure to noise might mean that an outdoor space by the highway doesn't work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing immediate needs to improve child care spaces, including the timing of steps to set up a child care business; media and information from CNV about resources, positions, and opportunities; • Supporting people who want to start child care facility; • Work with referral centres; • More hands-on support for people who are thinking of applying for a child care license to avoid delays or wasting time; • Expanded formal program with CCRR; • City support for someone getting through the not-for-profit board approval process (i.e., support to reduce wait times with bureaucracy); • Finding balance between supporting the development of NFP and for-profit child care; • Opportunity for CNV to require daycare/child care/play space in new builds according to licensing requirements; • City has CAC policy for rezoning, funding, etc. – continue this; • Policies that encourage more developers to choose child care option for CACs, which provides more long term change; 	<p>Currently there is no clear set of guidelines or a strategy for decision-making around child care, which should be changed. There is an agreement that CNV needs a strategy that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for building/expanding new facilities; • Clarifying the building code for child care spaces; • Partnering with schools and using School District spaces; • Focusing on child care opportunities in community centres, health facilities, seniors' centres; • Guidelines for licensing; • Supports for staffing; • Guidelines for site selection criteria; • A strategy to optimize benefits to full-extension daycare (0-12) next to schools, so families can pick up older and younger kids in one location to reinforce the continuity of care across age groups as family needs change; • Transportation must be considered too, especially with B-line potential in lower Lonsdale (current child care locations are not necessarily accessible by transit);

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
<p>from a licensing perspective. Marine Drive may be another challenging location to site child care facilities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ideal space in existing buildings; • Parking considerations; • Strata limitations in buildings; • 85% of budget for child care facility goes to wages/benefits. If someone is opening a business they are likely hoping to make some money, and that is a big chunk of expenses; • Licensing officers and city inspectors not being able to be there in time to inspect a place being considered for a lease. They don't have resources to be as timely as required and delays often mean a commercial child care rental opportunity is lost; • City needs more connections with developers; and, • City need more data on licensed vs. unlicensed child care spaces to help determine need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For developers providing a child care amenity, maybe City can provide free space for the provider so that the money can go toward fair wages to retain staff; • Government funding opportunity to non-profits, could be amended to provide some incentive system for for-profit providers as well; • Dissuade developers from giving a one-time donation, vs. having a space for 60+ years (preferable); • EA Sports has on-site child care and dog care at their location for people who work there, supports families, connections in families, etc. – encourage this model with new businesses; • Libraries, hospitals, etc. offering child care; • Look at City of Vancouver and Richmond for ideas and incorporate into this Child Care Strategy; • Mix of strategies for residential, commercial, and public buildings; • CNV owned homes and spaces that were turned into child care; used RFP to find best candidate to award site, offered affordable rent, etc. That was a great option that should be replicated; • Emergency child care centre for when something closes (e.g., a centre floods); and, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having child care buildings be friendly for bikes, including space where parents can store their bike trailers; • Secure stroller parking at child minding/core facilities; • Mapping of parents' child care location preferences; • Exploring a partnership with the recreation commission to walk kids from school to recreation centre after school, with supervision (e.g., Harry Jerome recreation centre); • Explore the economic cost of inadequate social infrastructure to make the case for more investments to the province; • A strategy for families with children with physical disabilities, who face additional struggles to find accessible daycare and child care (e.g., funding those accessibility requirements for child care spaces that do not have them?); • Educate developers on licensing requirements for child care spaces (e.g., a toolkit for developers to know steps to follow, requirements, etc.); • Integrate accessibility design principles for any new daycare/child care facility into the strategy; • Guidelines for care, separate from guidelines for space/building requirement (e.g. X bathrooms, doors Z

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on existing facilities with adaptive capacity to add spaces or expand services. 	<p>feet wide, commercial kitchen, drop off location, parking, etc.) that create optimal spaces;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandating or encouraging space for stroller parking, secure car seat storage, etc. at child care facilities; and, Have child care facilities in all neighbourhoods to provide potentially more stimulating environments that improve outcomes for early child development for all families.

Table 6: Responses of the Staff of Stakeholder Groups and Agencies (March 6, 2018)

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of school age children with disabilities are on waitlists because there is not enough space; Transportation for children with physical disabilities to get to and from school and child care location is a challenge; Child care locations often do not have accessible spaces; Huge groups of children come to the library and wait until their parents can come and pick them up. Library becomes de facto child care centre. Groups include 15-20 from a single grade that puts a lot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding on early years' tables is ending in July. Need more funding to continue this good work; Separate School Districts and their rules are both a challenge and an opportunity; Need to identify where older children gather and create supported programming that sends them there (i.e. the Library); Creating safe "hang out" spaces for older kids; Need universal access for child care facilities (e.g., drop off zones, wheel chair access); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website and other communication tools; Enforcing agreements between the School Board and all parties; Need to get School Trustees more involved – they are the decision makers; Families are looking for more flexibility. The M-F 7:30am – 6pm need not be rigid anymore and we need to consider and accommodate shift work and family activities. For example, Cambie Community Centre in Richmond and Ridgeway and Westview are great

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
<p>of pressure on the library (children are hungry, bored, tired and have no way of communicating with their families – typically grade 5 and up);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of understanding of what is child care and what is pre-teen care; • There is no a dedicated and consistent place for pre-teens to go to the library every single day of the week; • Funding stream for the middle years has been gone since 2016; • Many children are not in their neighbourhood because they live in multiple households and they go to schools out of catchment, meaning they must stay close to school until parents come to get them because where they live is too far away; • We should be looking for gaps in child care around public spaces and facilities, not just schools; • NV Recreation centre has limitations of 2 hours of child programming through licensing. This was put in place so as not to compete with child care provision, but means they have limited opportunities to fill the deep need for child care; • Getting staff for 2 hours of work at Recreation Centres is a challenge as people can't make a living; and, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening working relationship with NV Recreation Centre and School District; • NSNH has a person that helps pre-teens, gets them to a Community Centre or other appropriate place. Provides support to the locations that offer a public service, but is not programmed to take on before and after school programming. Building this out into something more structured is an opportunity; • Need to build a system – the strategy cannot be based on relationships alone (once a person leaves it's tough to build all the relationships up again); • Communications strategy is important to know what others are doing in the community and avoid duplicating services; • Title of services is important – we need to also be inclusive of school age care and “Child Care Strategy” may not fit into that parameter; and, • Need to have a Social Planner on staff at the City at all times, who is dedicated to child care matters. 	<p>examples – their practices can be shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit lines, bikes and walking relations account for how many people get to child care; new locations should account for these relationships; • Topographical challenges in North Vancouver regarding building and transit; • “Double drop off” is a real challenge. You have one child in a 0-5 child care location and have another child in a 5+ age child care location – consider clustering child care for multiple groups to reduce these barriers; • NSNH has lots of families on the NS now, and cannot serve them all – expand services?; • Residents' cost of living and transportation issues must be considered when attracting staff; • Consider building and offering housing for employees as part of contract to work in child care on NS; • Right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. (i.e., city puts money out for child care and then licensing fees go up.). Better communication and collaboration is key;

Gaps	Opportunities	Strategies/Guidelines the City should follow in allocating and designing child care spaces across neighbourhoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of coordination/ integration among schools, child care providers and Recreation Centre (this is the triangle that needs to work together). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to be an “all of government approach” to child care. Strategy could advocate for this; School board needs to partner with others; Need a mix of transit oriented and cross-neighbourhood approaches; and, Licensing needs to think about design guidelines to deal with neighbourhood issues (i.e. noise complaints).

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