



THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

CHILD CARE ACTION PLAN 2021-2031

DECEMBER 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work has taken place within the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

The Child Care Action Plan was facilitated by information, involvement and collaboration from partners and community members. The Project Team would like to recognize and thank the many individuals and organizations who gave their time to provide input, share insights and give ideas for the City's future work and role in child care (for more information see appendices). Thank you to the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee and its members for ongoing support and collaboration.

The Project Team was comprised of consultants from the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) in collaboration with Sandra Menzer, Barry Forer and John Foster, working with City of North Vancouver staff. The City worked collaboratively with the District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver on the engagement processes, which informed this plan.

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PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Child care matters. It is critical for the social and economic well-being of our City, and the creation of a complete community.

Quality child care is a key contributor to the economy, labour force participation, gender equality, social inclusion, and poverty reduction. Further, quality child care has a long term benefit on children's development.

The City is a partner with other levels of government, community agencies, child care providers, and the community in the facilitation, creation, and maintenance of a comprehensive child care system that meets children's, families' and the community's need.

VISION

To improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of child care in the City over the next 10 years by collaborating with partners, creating new spaces, and advocating for the community's needs.

PRIORITIES



PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 1** **Develop a funding strategy with senior government for new spaces**
Action 1
- 2** **Leverage the City's and publicly owned assets for child care**
Action 4
- 3** **Achieve the Targets for space creation**
Targets Section, Action 7
- 4** **Set direction for achieving new spaces through development**
Action 9, 10, 11, 12
- 5** **Build partnership and protocol with the School District around child care**
Action 13, 32
- 6** **Work with partners and advocate for the City's needs and commensurate investments**
Action 41



STATISTICS

POPULATION

CURRENT (2019)



6,806

CHILDREN
0-12 YEARS

GROWTH FORECAST (2030)



8,347

CHILDREN
0-12 YEARS

ABOUT CHILD CARE



84%

OF CHILD CARE FACILITIES STRUGGLE TO FILL STAFF POSITIONS



25%

OF CHILDREN EXPERIENCE ONE OR MORE VULNERABILITIES IN THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL HEALTH

CHILD CARE SPACE ACCESS RATE

INFANT + TODDLER PROGRAMS



20

SPACES PER
100 CHILDREN

3-5 YEAR OLD PROGRAMS



43

SPACES PER
100 CHILDREN

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS



9

SPACES PER
100 CHILDREN

ABOUT THE CHILD CARE ACTION PLAN

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This Action Plan presents evidence-based and concrete actions to improve child care in the City for the betterment of the community.

This is a 10-year plan that includes targets and actions for the short term (2021 to 2023), medium term (2024 to 2026), and long term (2027 to 2031). With a defined plan and concerted and coordinated efforts, the City and its partners can achieve more accessible, affordable, and higher quality child care. As a local government the City does not have the mandate or resources to fully address the gaps in child care accessibility, affordability, and quality on its own. The mandate for early learning and child care is mostly provincial, with some federal involvement. Support from senior levels of government and strong partnerships with others are needed. This Plan defines the City's priorities and actions to meet local child care needs.

PROCESS

This Plan was informed by a literature review on the components of quality child care systems and programs; a review of promising practices from other jurisdictions, along with a review of the City's current planning framework; and compiling current demographics and child care service information.

The City collaborated with the District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver on the engagement and preparation of the three North Shore municipalities' child care action plans, in recognition of an interconnected child care system and partners across the North Shore, as well as the opportunity to continue to work together on common child care objectives.

The community, stakeholders, and partner engagement informed the City about the needs and opportunities for child care. The process also served to build both knowledge and relationships. The engagement methods are summarized below.

Table 1. Summary of Engagement for Child Care Action Plan

ENGAGEMENT METHOD	INPUT FROM
Surveys	Parents and caregivers (381 responses)
	Child care providers in the City (26 responses)
Interviews with key stakeholders	Community partners (16 interviews)
	First Nations: with Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation representatives
Focus groups / meetings with partners and community	Non-profit service providers (23 participants)
	Underserved population groups (5 meetings)
	North Shore Child Care Planning Committee
	Child Care Early Childhood Educators and employees
	General community meeting
Solutions Workshops	Co-Hosted with District of North Vancouver and involving multiple agencies including School District, North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission, Capilano University, Provincial representatives, etc.

Additional information on the creation of the Plan and supporting documents can be found on the City’s child care webpage. This includes details on the methodology, key demographic information, an overview of the current child care system in BC, a report on the key research findings, and a list of the stakeholder consultations.



POLICY CONTEXT

The City recognizes that child care is a vital part of a community's social infrastructure. In addition to directly benefiting the children and families using it, child care contributes to society and the broader population by contributing to the local economy and enhancing the overall health and well-being of the entire community.

The City has a robust planning and policy framework for child care, including support in the Official Community Plan, a stand-alone Child Care Policy and Plan (2009), a grant program, a density bonus and community benefits policy which seeks to secure contributions for amenities such as child care, and has included improving access to child care as an objective in the 2018-2022 Council Strategic Plan. This Action Plan replaces the 2009 Child Care Policy and Plan.

In 2018 the Province made a significant shift and commitment to provide new funding towards the building of a universal, high quality, publicly funded child care system for families. While details of the long-term plan to move child care away from the current market system are still unfolding, and a number of initiatives towards increasing access, reducing fees and improving quality have been made, the serious challenges for families in local communities remain. This Plan identifies actions that will enable the City to make a real difference, within the City's resources and mandate.

REGULATION AND POLICY

The City's policy and regulatory tools support child care and facilitate an increase in the number of child care spaces in the community:

- a stand-alone Child Care Policy and Plan (2009) informed this Action Plan, and is superseded by this Plan;
- a Zoning Bylaw that permits child care in all zones, subject to the specific regulations of each zone;
- a grant program for non-profit child care providers for minor capital improvements (Child Care Capital Improvement Fund);
- a Permissive Property Tax Exemption program;
- a Density Bonus and Community Benefits Policy which makes provisions for securing child care facilities through redevelopment – either as built amenities or by utilizing cash-in-lieu contributions to the Civic Amenity Reserve Fund to build child care facilities;
- the inclusion of increased child care accessibility as a priority in the 2018 – 2022 Council Strategic Plan; and,
- the City participates on and has played a leadership role for the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee.

CITY ROLES

The City’s role in creating child care can include policy and regulation, and investment of capital and operating funds. The City’s and other agencies’ roles vary according to the type and ownership of child care facility, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. City Roles in Creating Child Care

TYPES OF NEW CHILD CARE FACILITIES	CAPITAL AND OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS
Public or non-profit child care facility on public land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built by a public/civic agency (e.g. School District, etc.) or non-profit organization. • Built in a stand-alone building or within a civic facility on public land. • Capital cost is funded by a public / non-profit agency, most likely with financial contribution (grant) from the Province. • Operating cost and responsibility by public / non-profit organization. • Financial contribution from the Province to a public agency may require ownership of facility to be public.
Child care facility, built by a developer as on-site amenity contribution in a new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled by a Rezoning / OCP Amendment, through the City’s density bonus provisions: Community Benefit Contribution or allowable bonus density. • Built within a residential, commercial or mixed use development. • Capital cost is funded by the City’s Community Benefit Contribution funds, and may involve an additional capital investment by Provincial grant or another funder. • Facility ownership and the operational model may vary: could be city-owned or non-profit owned.¹ • Operated by a public or non-profit child care organization
For-profit child care facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built by a for-profit organization. • Enabled by City Official Community Plan land use designation and zoning that permits child care. • Capital cost is funded by a for-profit organization/child care operator, which may receive a financial contribution (grant) from the Province. • Operating cost and responsibility by for-profit child care operator.

¹ City owned facilities that are funded, in whole or in part, by a provincial grant to the City (New Spaces Fund) require continuous City ownership for at least 15 years.

CURRENT AND FUTURE CHILD CARE NEEDS

The following sections describe the current availability of child care spaces, forecasted population growth, a profile of three child care planning areas, other child care accessibility factors, costs and affordability, quality child care systems, quality child care programs, and auspice. The overall findings are that there are not enough child care spaces (there is a particular shortage of child care spaces for infants and toddler, and school age children), child care is expensive for families, and staffing of child care facilities is challenging,

CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY – A SNAPSHOT

In 2019 there were a total of 1,694 child care spaces in the City, for a total population of 6,289 children aged 0-12. In 2019 there were a total of 1,694 child care spaces. The preschool age group had the most child care spaces per capita, with 43 spaces per 100 children. Availability of infant and toddler (0-2) spaces and school age spaces was much less: 210 spaces in group care for every 100 children aged 0-2, and 0 spaces for every 100 school age (6-12) children.

Table 3. Child Care Spaces by Type

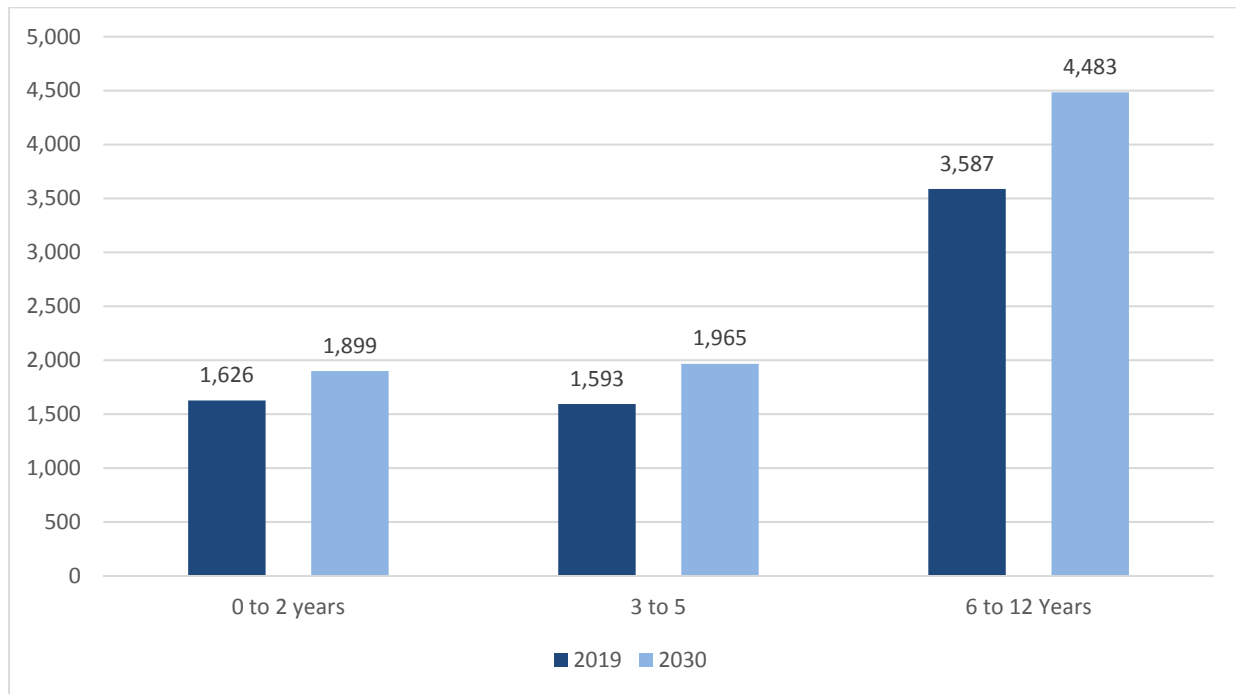
AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	CHILDCARE TYPE	NUMBER OF SPACES	SPACES PER 100 CHILDREN
0-2 year-olds	1,626	Group (birth to 36 months)	328	20
3-5 year-olds	1,593	Group (30 months to school age)	687	43 (excluding preschool) ²
6-12 year-olds	3,587	Group (school age)	397	9
General	n/a	All Others (family, in-home, multi-age)	282	n/a
TOTAL	6,806		1,694	25

² Preschools typically operate on the school-year (September to June). Most preschool programs run from one to four hours a day.

FORECASTED GROWTH OF THE CHILD POPULATION

The child population in the City of North Vancouver is projected to grow by 23% by 2030, which equates to an additional 1,541 children, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Current and Projected Population, Children 0 to 12 Years



Source: BC Stats Population Estimates for 2019 and Metro Vancouver Population Projection for 2030³

To maintain a current access rate of approximately 25 spaces for every 100 children 0 to 12 years old, 674 new child care spaces would need to be created in the City by 2031 in order to keep up with an increase in demand from the projected growth of the child population.

Metro Vancouver population growth estimates are intended to be interpreted at a high level. The City's actual 2030 child population may differ from the estimate for several reasons, which reflect society-wide trends and factors (e.g. birth rate, economic trends) as well as City-specific factors that are not accounted for in broad population estimates (e.g. residential growth, the types of residential housing forms and types that families choose to live in). The City is also working with the School District on forecasting child population, and will continue to monitor, adjust, and update as required.

³ 2019 Data: Child population by age groups is based on proportions in 2016 Census data.

A PROFILE OF THREE CHILD CARE PLANNING AREAS

Three child care planning areas, mapped in Figure 2 below, have been defined to understand current and future child care needs across the City. The table below provides a summary of each area in terms of location within the City, the population, and the child care access rates.

Table 4. Profile of Three Child Care Planning Areas

	WEST PLANNING AREA	CENTRAL PLANNING AREA	EAST PLANNING AREA
Description of Area (see - Figure 2)	From the western edge of the City to Forbes Ave. Adjacent to but does not include Squamish Nation Eslhá7an (Mission Indian Reserve No. 1).	From Forbes Ave to St. Georges Ave.	From St. Georges Ave. to the eastern edge of the City.
2019 Child Population (BC Stats Population Estimate)	1,089 children (0 to 12 years) This represents 16% of the City's child population.	2,654 children (0 to 12 years) This represents 39% of the City's child population.	2,994 children (0 to 12 years) This represents 44% of the City's child population.
2019 Access Rate for Child Care (see Figure 3)	Age 0-2: 34 spaces / 100 children Age 3-5: 55 spaces / 100 children School Age: 8 spaces / 100 children Overall, the access rate is slightly above the City's overall average. Slightly lower rate for school age programs.	Age 0-2: 16 spaces / 100 children Age 3-5: 34 spaces / 100 children School Age: 9 spaces / 100 children Overall, the access rate is below the City average.	Age 0-2: 20 spaces / 100 children Age 3-5: 48 spaces / 100 children School Age: 9 spaces / 100 children Overall, the access rate is close to the City average.
2030 Child Population Estimate (Metro Vancouver Population Estimate)	1,336 children (an increase of 247 children)	3,255 children (an increase of 601 children)	3,673 children (an increase of 679 children)

Figure 2. Child Care Planning Areas

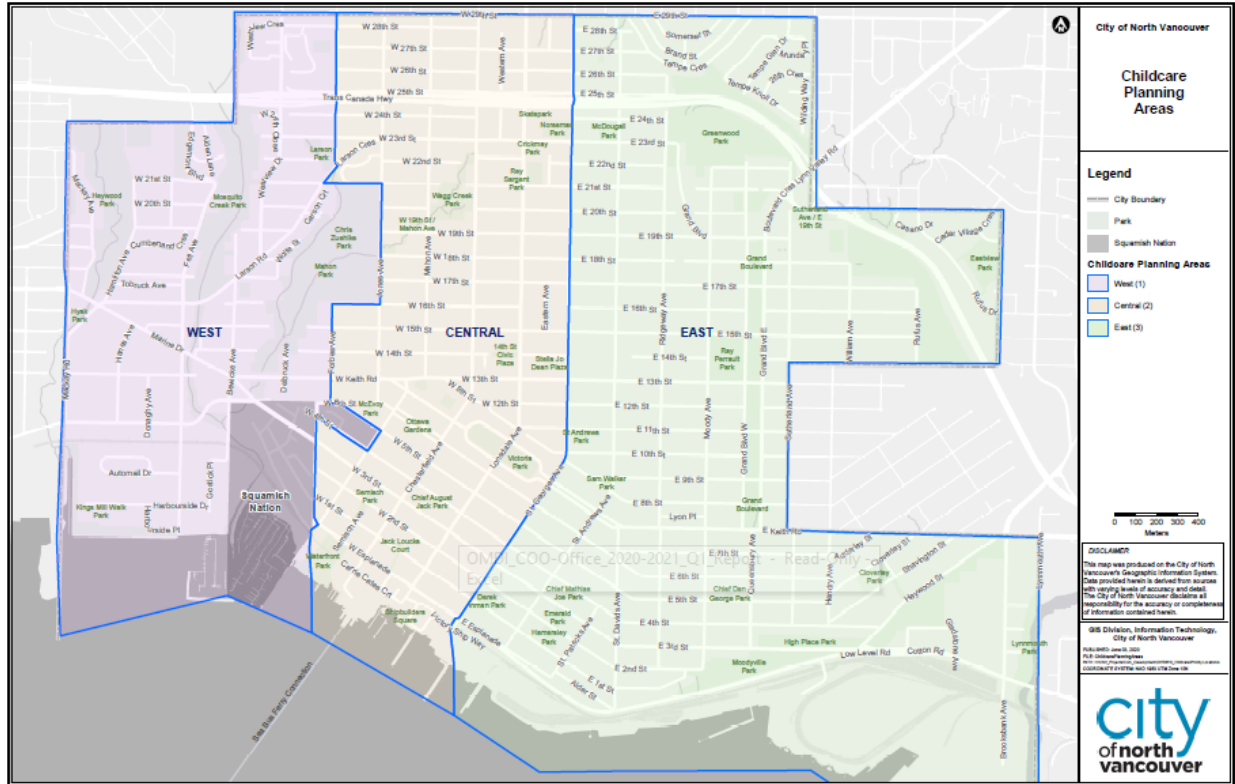
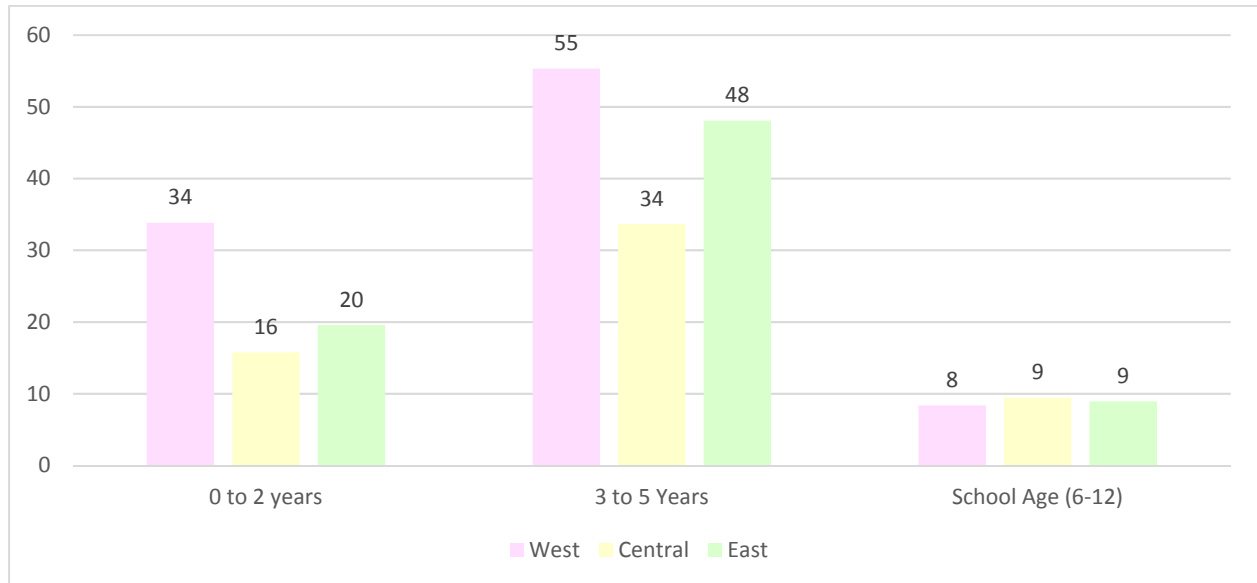


Figure 3. Group Child Care Spaces per Type by Child Care Planning Neighbourhood (2019 Child Care Spaces Inventory and 2019 BC Stats Population Estimate)⁴



⁴ Source: UBCM Child Care Inventory and VCH Child Care Data, and BC Stats Population Estimate for City of North Vancouver. This analysis assumes an equal distribution of children of various ages across the City for the purpose of general analysis.

OTHER CHILD CARE ACCESSIBILITY FACTORS

Access to child care is measured in terms of the number of spaces per 100 children. However, there are a number of other factors and circumstances in families' lives that can significantly affect whether they are able to access child care services and supports, such as families that are newcomers, have lower incomes, and/or are led by single parents. For example, few facilities in the City have non-traditional hours, which is difficult for parents (and especially lone parents) who work non-standard business hours. As well, over 70% of City residents work outside the municipality and therefore may require longer hours of child care service each day to manage work and commuting time.

It is important to note that parents, through recent surveys, identified a desire to have their children in child care in the neighbourhood where they live. To address accessibility challenges, child care that is close to families in their neighbourhood, offers extended hours, and/or other family supports can make a significant difference in families' lives.

Some of the factors and characteristics contributing to families' ability to access child care include the following:

WEST PLANNING AREA

- 22.6% of families in this area are lone parent families (highest of the three areas).
- About 20% of residents' main spoken language at home is not English or French (similar proportion to Central) and 43% of residents in this area are immigrants.
- 32% of homeowners are spending more than 30% of income in shelter (highest of the three areas)
- 11% of residents have an Aboriginal identity (the majority with a First Nations identity); a higher proportion than the other two areas.

CENTRAL PLANNING AREA

- 17.7% of families in this area are lone parent families, and family incomes are lower than the other areas. 40% of renters in this area are spending more than 30% of their income on shelter (highest of the three areas).
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) data show that that this area has a higher vulnerability rate than the School District average for kindergarten children.
- 20% of residents' main spoken language at home is a language that is not English or French and 43% of residents are immigrants.

EAST PLANNING AREA

- Early Development Instrument (EDI) data show that part of this area has a higher early childhood vulnerability rate than the School District average for kindergarten children.
- This area has the highest population of children.
- This area has a slightly lower proportion of residents who are immigrants (32%) than the other two areas, as well as a lower proportion of residents (14%) whose main spoken language at home is not English or French.



COSTS AND AFFORDABILITY

In the City of North Vancouver Parent Survey, 58% of respondents indicated that the fees they currently pay for child care are unsustainable. Even though there are now more financial supports provided by the Province of BC to parents, people are still struggling with affordability.

A 2020 survey of child care costs completed by North Shore Community Resources and the North Shore Child Care Resource and Referral Program identified average monthly child care costs, by program type, for the North Shore.

Table 5. North Shore Child Care Costs (2020)

PROGRAM TYPE	INFANT	TODDLER	3-5 YEARS	GROUP MULTI-AGE	SCHOOL AGE
Parent Fees (monthly average)	\$1407	\$1375	\$1190	\$1138	\$683

Approximately three quarters of facilities have implemented the Provincial Fee Reduction Initiative, which is intended to stabilize fees. However, the survey also found that 59% of facilities have raised fees in the past year.

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE AFFORDABILITY

It is important to note that many staff in child care facilities face affordability challenges due to relatively low wages and high cost of living and housing in North Vancouver. The City continues to work with partners to improve this through other initiatives and projects that increase affordable housing options for lower wage earners, improving the transportation network to offer accessible and affordable transportation options, and by advocating to senior governments for increasing child care workers' wages.

QUALITY CHILD CARE SYSTEMS

The Province of BC has committed to building a universal, publicly funded child care system with a focus on quality, affordability, and accessibility. *Childcare BC: A New Day for Families & Providers in BC* is a provincial plan specifically focused on establishing a holistic child care system and adheres to eight commonly accepted elements of a quality child care system, graphically presented in Figure 4. While the direct mandate and authority to build, monitor and assess a quality child care system is within the Provincial government’s scope, the City can ensure that actions and investment decisions are aligned with what research has identified as eight commonly accepted elements of a quality child care system, graphically presented below.

The eight elements are: (1) Ideas, (2) Governance, (3) Infrastructure, (4) Planning and Policy development, (5) Financing, (6) Human Resources, (7) Physical environment, and (8) Data, Research and Evaluation. All elements are interconnected and fit together to create a strong system; individually, each component has a limited impact.

Figure 4. Eight Elements of Quality Child Care



(Source: Martha Friendly and Jane Beach, (2005). Elements of a high quality early learning and child care system. Childcare Resource and Research Unit.)

QUALITY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

At the program level, reporting of positive relationships between families and providers, among colleagues, and between children and staff is strongly indicative of quality care. Additionally, when staff have higher levels of education and training, feel appreciated, and are well-supported, the quality of care increases. Planned programming and a strong curriculum that is tailored to meet the diverse needs of children further enhances quality. There is also ample evidence that a well-designed indoor/outdoor space is critical to supporting the development of children under five. Child Care providers, with support and guidelines from the Province, are responsible for these aspects of quality child care.

In order to facilitate the quality criteria identified, special attention should be paid to the following considerations regarding staff:

- Staff should have ECE (Early Childhood Education) training;
- At least some staff should have special needs and cultural/ESL skills if required;
- Compensation that is commensurate with the level of training;
- There should be written policies and formal procedures, which give staff a feeling of worth and certainty, such as: job descriptions, contracts, salary schedule, performance reviews, and a staff manual.



AUSPICE

The auspice (which means the financial model / organization type) is critically important to the quality of child care programs. In BC and Canada, three types of child care auspices exist:

1. Non-profit child care services;
2. For-profit child care services; and
3. Publicly operated child care services (i.e. services directly operated by a public entity such as a municipal government or school district).

The City values and recognizes that many for-profit child care centres provide high quality and reliable care to families and the community. Broader research on auspice has consistently demonstrated that non-profit and publicly operated centres perform better on global evaluation scales when compared to for-profit centres. British Columbia studies have found that the reliability of non-profit centres is much higher: non-profit centres are 97 times more likely than for-profit centres to continue long term operation. The Province has prioritized funding for public and non-profit child care, in a long term investment in quality child care.

Across British Columbia about 50% of the child care facilities are operated on a not-for profit or public basis. In the City of North Vancouver, non-profits currently operate about 30% of the total child care spaces. In the table below, for-profit group and multi-age care is also distinguished from family and in-home multi-age care.

Table 6. Child Care Programs and Spaces by Auspice, 2019

SERVICE TYPE AND AUSPICE	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	NUMBER OF SPACES
Family and in-home multi-age	13 (14.8%)	91 (5.4%)
Group and multi-age: For-profit	52 (59.1%)	1,083 (63.9%)
Group and multi-age: Non-profit	23 (26.1%)	510 (30.7%)
TOTAL	88 (100%)	1,694 (100%)

Source: Based on data from City of North Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health Licensing.

TARGETS FOR CHILD CARE SPACES

Targets for creating additional child care spaces assist with planning and prioritization to meet community needs over the coming years. In addition, the Provincial government has requested local governments that were supported by the Community Child Care Planning Program Grants (including the City) to identify targets as part of the scope of their child care planning activities.

To achieve the targets, local governments require support from senior levels of government, community partners, and others to address service gaps and to create new spaces. Given that the City does not have the mandate or resources to fully address the gaps in child care on its own, support from senior levels of government and strong partnerships with others are needed. This Plan defines the City’s priorities and actions to meet child care needs.

CREATING THE TARGETS

Federal and Provincial standards and recommendations do not currently exist to guide the recommended number of child care spaces per capita. The City’s targets are informed by research and other jurisdictions’ targets and leading practices, and a discussion among key partners about appropriate and meaningful targets for the child care sector in North Vancouver. The key inputs to create the City’s targets include:

EXAMPLES FROM ELSEWHERE	EMPLOYMENT RATES	GAPS	GROWTH	TIMEFRAME
<p>European Union targets include:</p> <p>Under 3 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33 spaces per 100 children <p>3 to 5 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 spaces per 100 children <p>School Age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No targets are provided 	<p>Employment rates for families, which drive the need for child care spaces and population growth.</p>	<p>A focus on increasing the two age groups with the largest access gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infant / toddler • school age 	<p>The number of child care spaces is measured per capita to relate to estimated population growth.</p>	<p>The estimated child population is expected to grow by 23% from 2019 to 2030.</p> <p>Targets are organized into two timeframes to allow for the building of facilities and spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Benchmark (by 2025)

In Quebec Target
(Canadian publicly
funded system):

- 55 spaces per 100 children (average)

• Ten Year Target
(by 2031)

THE TARGETS

The City of North Vancouver target is to create 1063 new licensed child care spaces over the next 10 years (by 2031) as follows:

Table 7. Child Care Average Access Rate Targets

PROGRAM TYPE	TARGET FOR AVERAGE ACCESS RATE BY 2031	NUMBER OF SPACES NEEDED TO MEET TARGET BY 2031
Infant and Toddler	33 spaces per 100 children	299 new spaces
Preschool (3-5 year olds)	50 spaces per 100 children	300 new spaces
School age (6-9 year olds) ⁵	33 spaces per 100 children	464 new spaces



⁵Note that the target for School Age Programs includes children aged 6-9 years old (not 6-12 years old). It is recognized that 10-12 year olds can more easily and preferably access other non-licensed opportunities before and after school.

INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAM TARGETS

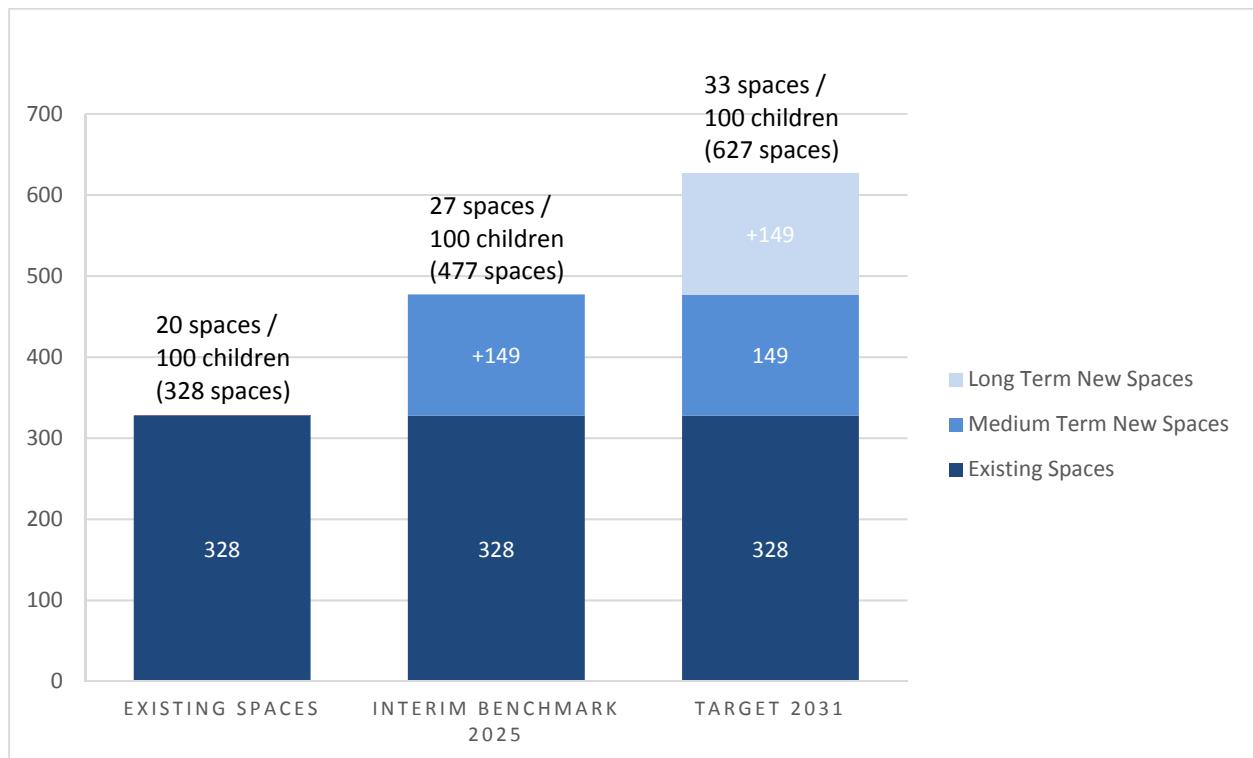
To meet the average access target of 33 spaces per 100 children by 2031, the targets for the infant and toddler programs include:

Table 8. Infant and Toddler Space Targets

YEAR	TARGET SPACES PER 100 CHILDREN
Interim Benchmark 2025	27
Ten Year Target 2031	33

To accomplish the target, two to three 12-space Infant Toddler programs need to be created each year for ten years (25 programs total) for a total of 299 new spaces, to add to the existing 328 spaces in the City. When this goal is accomplished, the total number of infant and toddler spaces by the year 2031 would be 627.

Figure 5: Space Creation Targets for Infant-Toddler Child Care Program by 2031



Note: These targets are developed based on the City of North Vancouver and Metro Vancouver projection that the infant-toddler population will increase by 273 children from 1,626 in 2019 to 1,899 in 2030.

PRESCHOOL AGE (3-5 YEARS) PROGRAM TARGETS

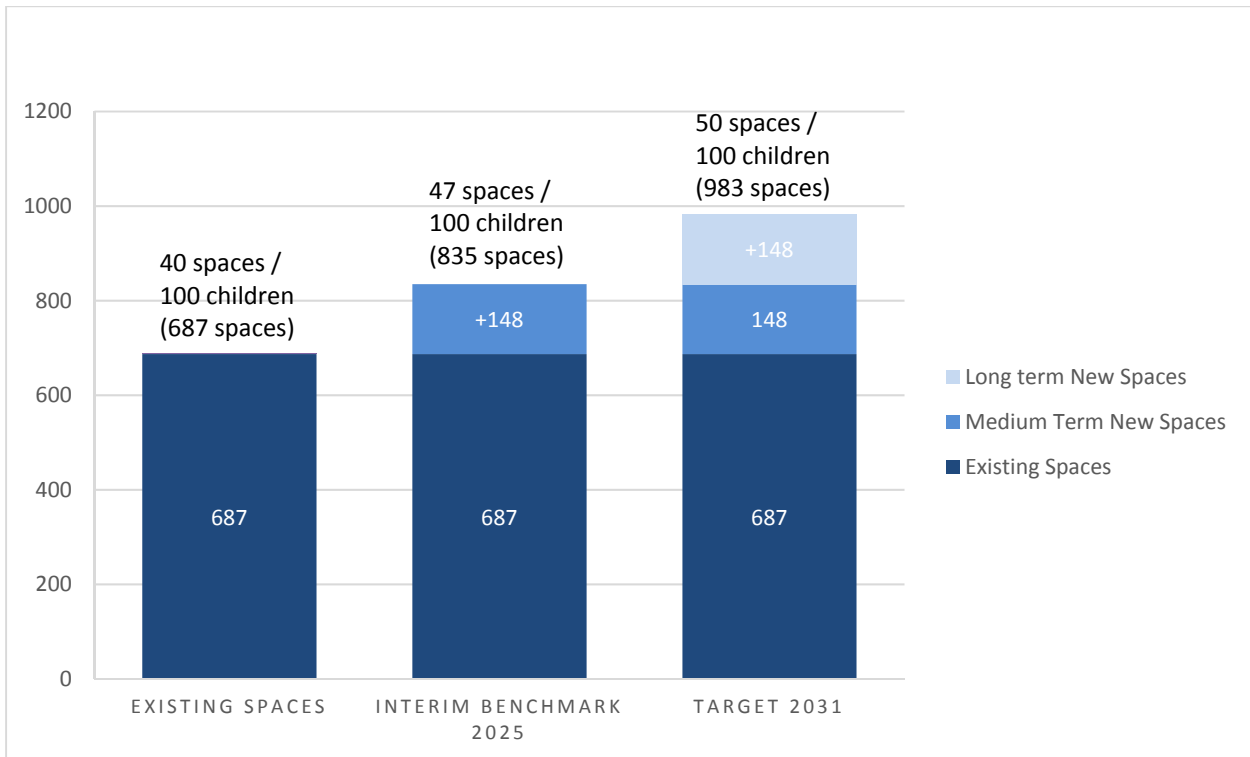
To meet the average access target of 50 spaces per 100 children, the targets for 3 – 5 year programs include:

Table 9. Preschool Age Program Space Targets

TARGET YEAR	TARGET SPACES PER 100 CHILDREN
Interim Benchmark 2025	47
Ten Year Target 2031	50

To accomplish the target, one or more 25-space group programs needs to be created every year for ten years (12 programs total) for a total of 296 new spaces, to add to the existing 687 spaces. The total number of infant and toddler spaces by the year 2030 would be 983.

Figure 6: Space Creation Targets for Preschool Age Child Care Program by 2031



Note: These targets are developed based on the City of North Vancouver and Metro Vancouver projection that the preschooler population will increase by 372 children from 1593 in 2019 to 1965 in 2030.

SCHOOL AGE (AGES 6-9) PROGRAM TARGETS

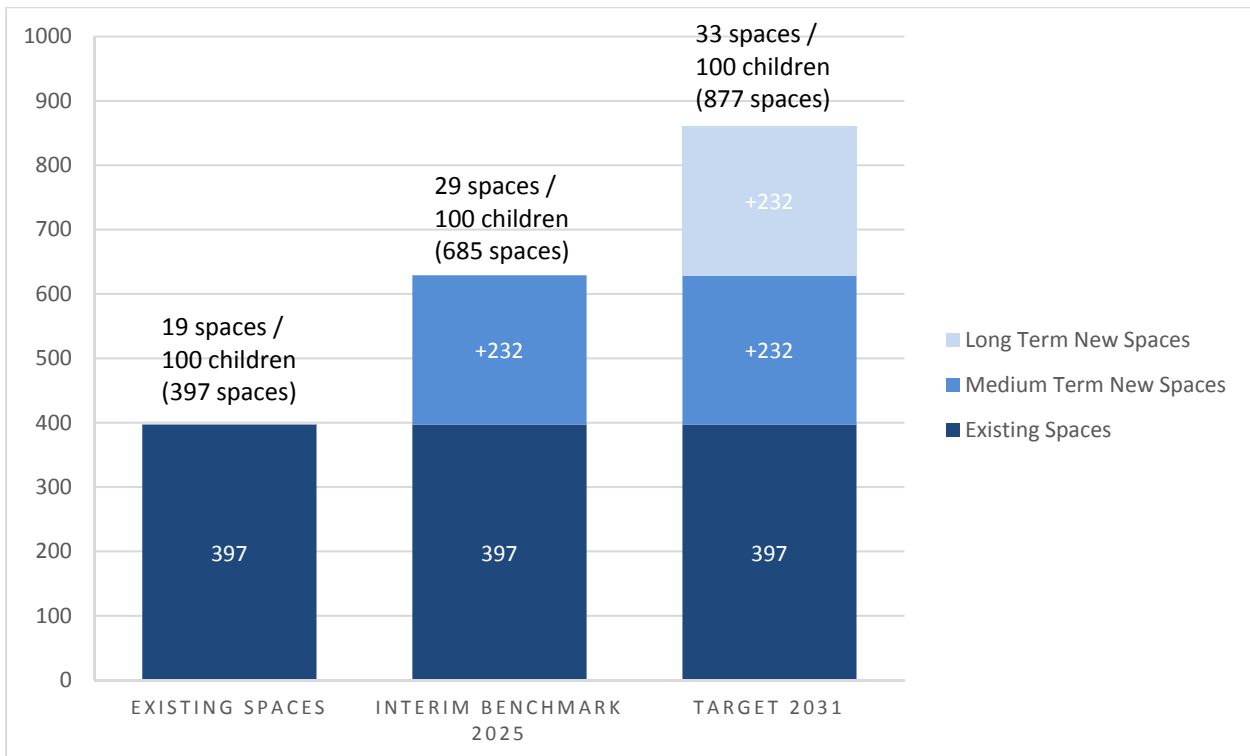
To meet the average access target of 33 spaces per 100 children, the targets for school age programs include:

Table 10. School Age Space Targets

TARGET YEAR	TARGET SPACES PER 100 CHILDREN
Interim Benchmark 2025	29
Ten Year Target 2031	33

To accomplish the target, two 24-space group programs need to be created every year for ten years (20 programs total) for a total of 464 new spaces, to add to the existing 397 spaces.

Figure 7: Space Creation Targets to School Age Children by 2031



Note: These targets are developed based on the City of North Vancouver and Metro Vancouver projection that the school age population will increase by 545 children from 2064 in 2019 to 2609 in 2030. Note that the school age population for the purpose of target-setting includes children 6 to 9 years of age. As noted in the Plan, the needs of children aged 10-12 may be supported by after school programs that are not licensed child care spaces (See Action 14).

CHILD CARE PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

This Plan is organized around four priorities:



In the following sections, the relevance and importance of each of the priorities is outlined, what we learned through the process is highlighted, a summary of key information is provided, and a series of actions is defined, with timeframe and key partners.



PRIORITY 1: INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- Families need to be able to find licensed child care spaces that meet their needs.
- All families, especially those who have traditionally been underserved, should have their child care needs met, so that parents can effectively work, learn, and participate in community, ; and so that children can benefit from early childhood learning and development opportunities.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Four key issues regarding accessibility of child care in the City are:

- **Number of Spaces**

One of the biggest issues is the insufficient number of spaces to meet the demand for child care. The most pressing needs are spaces for infants/toddlers and school age children.

- **Location of Spaces**

Child care spaces need to be located close to home/school/transit and in underserved neighbourhoods.

- **Who is Able to Use the Spaces**

Underserved population groups such as immigrants, newcomers, lone parents, families with children with special needs, etc. need to be able to access child care services and supports.

- **When are the Spaces Available**

Child care options with non-traditional or extended hours are limited.

ACTIONS: INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

The City has important roles to play in increasing access to child care. While the City does not have a mandate or resources to fully address the gaps in child care accessibility, the City will work to create, coordinate and advocate for child care accessibility. The City will coordinate and facilitate the development of new facilities and spaces, will fine-tune the City’s policies and regulations to encourage the delivery of child care through development, and will prioritize and direct child care into priority locations that meet families’ needs. The City will also work to address the location and hours of child care facilities so that the services meet the needs of families that face barriers in accessing child care.

The City will also identify opportunities for civic projects, and joint funding opportunities with the Province, to lead the creation of a portion of the child care spaces in the City over the next ten years.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	EXTERNAL PARTNERS
Funding and Partnership for future City Owned Child Care Facilities – Shovel Ready Projects		
<p>1. Access Provincial capital funding to build child care spaces. Develop a structured partnership with the Province for multiple programs and sites, in order to plan and build shovel-ready projects⁶ for additional child care spaces in the City that are constructed over multiple years.</p>	Short	Province, School District, Non-profit operators
<p>2. Include multi-year project plans for new child care facilities/spaces in the 5-year capital plan process for Council deliberation and prioritization. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City-initiated facilities to be delivered as civic projects, using the Civic Amenity Reserve Fund; and, • Where possible, in-kind child care spaces that are delivered through development. 	Ongoing Short	None
<p>3. Consider targeting a proportion of Civic Amenity Reserve Fund to be allocated to child care that is in balance with the provision of other community amenities and with evolving community needs and priorities.</p>	Medium / Long	None

⁶ In this context a shovel ready project refers to a child care facility project that is at a stage of development for building to begin after detailed design and permits are in place. Conceptual planning is completed and the site is zoned.

<p>4. In an effort to prepare shovel ready child care projects, maintain an inventory of existing publicly owned locations and properties that would meet basic suitability criteria. The inventory would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City assets (buildings and land), that are potential sites for capital redevelopment; • Underutilized or vacant spaces or land; and • Working with other public and non-profit partners to identify additional spaces and land in 'new builds' and renovations of existing facilities. 	<p>Short / Medium / Long</p>	<p>Vancouver Coastal Health, School District, non-profit child care providers, post-secondary institutions, NVRC, other non-profits</p>
<p>5. Develop building models/prototypes and high level cost estimates, to facilitate planning for new child care facilities on civic sites.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Developers (consult)</p>
<p>6. Explore innovative models for public and non-profit ownership and operation of child care facilities that achieve feasible reliable long-term operation.</p>	<p>Short / Medium</p>	
<p>Updating City Policies and Regulations</p>		
<p>7. Endorse child care space creation targets in this Plan, to guide and monitor space creation over the next ten years. The targets aim to create new spaces as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infant/Toddler: 299 new spaces • Preschooler: 300 new spaces • School Age: 464 new spaces 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>8. Through the Community Well Being Strategy and the next review of the Official Community Plan, strengthen the child care goals and objectives to further this Action Plan.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Developers, Vancouver Coastal Health, School District, non-profit providers (consult)</p>
<p>9. Ensure that future amendments to the Zoning Bylaw are child care friendly for all types of child care including family and in-home multi-age services. Any future Zoning Bylaw changes should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional barriers are not imposed; • build on existing strengths and proactive focus on quality and safety; • revised bylaw is provided to the child care sector and VCH Licensing Staff for reference; and, • the impacts of the new bylaw are routinely monitored and assessed for impact on child care space creation. 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Child Care providers, applicants, VCH, School District</p>
<p>10. Amend the Density Bonus and Community Benefits Policy to include:</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Developers (Consult)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for residential development applications: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. For large residential development applications (in the range of 300 or more units) the City will work with the applicant to include on-site child care spaces as a component of the project’s amenity contributions. ii. For small and medium residential development applications (less than approximately 300 units) the City will consider the feasibility of delivering a child care facility on site based on criteria including: child care need in the area, other priority needs for community amenities, and the suitability of the site and proposed development. • Guidelines for the submission of valuation studies for child care facilities that are being proposed as on site amenities. 		
<p>11. Undertake a land economics analysis of City policies and programs to explore incentives to increase child care provision through density bonusing and density transfer for child care provisions.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>Developers (Consult)</p>
<p>Prioritization of Child Care Opportunities – Program Types and Locational Criteria</p>		
<p>12. Direct new spaces to sites that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of the City with lower access rates and growing population; • In civic facilities and parks; • In new developments (especially residential and commercial) along or near transit corridors; • In developments with affordable housing; and, • On school properties. <p>Include consideration for the provision of child care within strategies and projects for affordable housing and transit expansion/improvement.</p>	<p>Short / Medium / Long</p>	<p>Child Care Providers, School District, Vancouver Coastal Health, School District, non-profit providers, TransLink, BC Housing,</p>
<p>13. Work with the North Vancouver School District to create new child care spaces in existing and future schools and school sites.</p>	<p>Short / Medium / Long</p>	<p>North Vancouver School District</p>
<p>14. Work with other agencies to develop after-school programs that support children aged 10-12 years whose needs are not specifically addressed by school aged licensed child care space.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>NVRC, VCH, parks and library staff, non-profit sector, School District</p>

15. Work with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee to explore and pilot, with providers, child care that offers longer hours, non-traditional hours, and/or flexible hours.	Medium	Province, VCH, non-profit providers, School District
16. Continue to engage in dialogue with First Nations on the North Shore, focusing on meeting the needs of Indigenous families/children and support high quality and culturally rooted and supportive child care programming.	Medium	First Nations Communities
Planning and Development Process to Enable Child Care		
17. Join Vancouver Coastal Health child care information meetings for potential child care owners and operators who are interested in opening child care centres.	Short	VCH
18. Offer information and guidance for creating child care spaces, in an online portal or other format that is clear, easily found, and is based on the assumption that applicants may have limited prior knowledge of the requirements.	Short / Medium	VCH, Child Care Resource and Referral





PRIORITY 2: IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- The cost of child care is unsustainable and unaffordable for many families, which can cause stress, financial strain, and can keep parents from participating in the labour force.
- The unaffordability of child care has disproportionately negative impacts on low income and vulnerable families.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Two key issues regarding the affordability of child care in the City are:

- **Fees**

Child care is expensive, and fees are a driving factor in the choices families make regarding which program their children will attend, or whether they consider other alternatives. The alternatives may include relatives caring for children full time, or parents opting to care for children full time and not participating in the labour force, or other alternatives.

- **Barriers**

Affordability is exacerbated for families who face additional challenges or barriers such as: low income families, families with multiple children, lone parents, recent immigrants, families with children with special needs, foster families, and families in which parents do shift work.

ACTIONS: IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY

The City has limited opportunities to directly affect the cost of child care for families; key tools and responsibility rest with senior levels of government. The City’s role is to provide some supports to non-profit operators to help to make their child care operations feasible, so that they can in turn offer more affordable child care fees to families.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS
19. Explore a funding strategy and revised criteria for the Child Care Improvement Fund, which would result in a City grant program that would assist non-profit child care providers with funding facility upgrades/maintenance or extended hours.	Short / Medium	Non-profit providers
20. Lease City-owned child care facility spaces to non-profit child care providers at nominal lease rates.	On-going	Non-profit providers
21. Provide permissive tax exemptions to not-for-profit child care providers, where applicable.	On-going	Non-profit Providers
22. Continue to work with partners to monitor child care fees on the North Shore, to understand changes in affordability and feasibility of child care.	On-going	North Shore Child Care Resource and Referral
23. Advocate to senior governments to reduce the cost of child care, and increase compensation for child care workers.	Short / Medium / Long	NS Child Care Planning Committee, District of West Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, School District



PRIORITY 3: FOCUSING ON QUALITY

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- The research is clear that high quality child care is linked to positive child development outcomes for children. More generally, parents dropping off their children at a child care centre each working day want to feel secure knowing their children will receive safe, high-quality care.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

The Province is moving toward a universal approach to child care, which requires public investment and system wide planning across the province. At a program and facility level in the City, elements of quality include well supported and paid staff, and well designed and equipped facilities. The City's role in quality includes:

- Supporting and creating quality child care program spaces (both indoor and outdoor) in the City.
- Working with partners that provide quality care, which meets children's development needs.
- Working collaboratively with senior government and partners to exemplify the characteristics and outcomes of quality child care system in the City and on the North Shore.

ACTIONS: FOCUSING ON QUALITY

The direct mandate and authority to build, monitor, and assess a quality child care system is within the Provincial government’s scope. The City’s role in creating quality systems focuses on the quality of facilities and spaces (e.g. referring to guidelines and best practices) and to work with partners that provide quality care.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS
<p>24. Work with child care non-profit operators/partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lease space for child care facilities in City-owned buildings and properties; • Demonstrate high quality child care services and spaces; and, • Strategize and look for opportunities to increase the number of licensed, non-profit, publicly funded child care spaces in the City. 	On-going	Districts of North & West Vancouver, Non-profit providers, School District, Non-Profit Providers
<p>25. Apply the following guidelines to the process of creating new City-owned child care facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review proposed space for operational feasibility and quality of the child care space prior to approval. • Exceed provincial licensing requirements for the quantity and quality of design for indoor and outdoor space. 	Short / Medium	VCH, Non-profit providers, Child Care Planning Committee
<p>26. Explore feasibility and options for creating design guidelines for City-owned child care spaces.</p>	Medium	VCH, Non-profit providers, Child Care Planning Committee
<p>27. Support the Province in its “Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy” initiative through joint advocacy.</p>	Short	Districts of North & West Vancouver, Non-profit providers, School District



PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- The child care system involves many parties playing various roles, which requires intentional relationships and collaboration across jurisdictions in order to achieve accessible, affordable, and high quality child care spaces.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

During the engagement process for this Plan, the theme of partnerships was the most frequently suggested approach to increasing the quality, affordability, and accessibility of child care in the City and on the North Shore:

- **Value of Relationships**

The value of stronger ongoing relationships with the First Nations and Indigenous peoples, including incorporating Indigenous perspectives and history in child care planning and curriculum was recognized.

- **Opportunities for Collaboration**

Opportunities for collaboration focused on the use of publicly owned land / facilities, such as schools, post-secondary institutions, and hospitals for child care. In addition to public entities, participants also suggested partnerships with senior centres and large employers who might provide facilities on-site for their employees.

- **Value of Partnerships**

The value of enhanced partnerships with the neighbouring municipalities and other jurisdictions, such as School District, Health Authority, etc. to work and advocate together for meeting our community's child care needs.

ACTIONS: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

The following actions will help the City to bring focus and attention to the essential relationships and partnerships for a coordinated quality child care system that meets families' needs.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	PARTNERS
Coordinated Child Care Services		
28. Work with the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee and child care agencies to explore the development of a joint interagency role/position focused on meeting space targets on the North Shore, which would facilitate partnerships and engage with Provincial and community partners to meet the North Shore's needs.	Short / Medium	School District, DNV
29. Explore opportunities for child care facilities to include space that incorporates programming/partnerships for family support services.	Medium	NS Child Care Planning Committee, child care operators
30. Explore the feasibility of a centralized child care waitlist or portal on the North Shore, to use existing spaces most efficiently and to simplify communication about space availability.	Medium	DWV, DNV, North Shore CCR&R, Operators, Child Care Committee, School District, Province
Nurturing Partnerships and Building Relationships		
31. Build supportive and learning relationships with First Nations. Support Indigenous perspectives and history in child care, and culturally appropriate and supportive child care in the City.	On-going	First Nations
32. Build partnership and joint planning protocol with the School District around child care to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure child care is part of all new school facilities, and renovated school spaces where possible; • Facilitate use of school spaces and grounds for school age child care operations where possible; • Structure the ongoing communication about child care between the City and School District; • Aim to stabilize the existing child care spaces and ensure no net loss of child care space in schools; and, 	Short / Medium	School District

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Provincial direction toward an enhanced role for the School District regarding school age child care. 		
33. Continue to work with the North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission (NVRC) to plan, where possible, for additional child care spaces and services as part of new building opportunities.	Short / Medium	NVRC
34. Work with non-profit child care providers on partnerships that support them and their child care operations in the City, and consider mechanisms to increase their capacity, feasibility and economy of scale for child care operation on the North Shore.	Short / Medium / Long	Non-Profit Child Care providers
35. Pursue opportunities with employers in the City to participate in creating or providing child care opportunities that would serve their employees' families and community.	Short / Medium / Long	Local employers
36. Enhance the collaboration with the Child Care Resource and Referral Program and other child care sector and community service organizations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring child care operators and staff together for information sharing, joint training and education; • Inform parents about how to find quality child care and, especially support more vulnerable populations • Provide consistent child care messaging and information for across agencies on the North Shore 	On-going	Child care providers, VCH, Community Service Organizations, Child Care Resource and Referral Program
37. With the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee, provide regular briefings to elected officials (municipal and School District) and commit to offer orientation on child care matters after each local election to elected officials.	Short / Medium / Long	NS Child Care Planning Committee
38. With the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee, explore how to maximize the Committee's effectiveness for a systematic approach to child care on the North Shore.	Short / Medium	NS Child Care Planning Committee
39. Recognize and honour the value of child care workers and the child care in our community by supporting Child Care month on an annual basis, requesting and including their input, monitoring child care issues, and considering additional support and partnership opportunities.	On-going	North Shore Child Care Planning Committee, CCR&R
40. Build partnership opportunities with Capilano University Early Childhood Care and Education Program (School of Education and Childhood Studies) faculty and students. Collaboratively explore opportunities to improve child care quality, strategies to recruit and retain ECE employees, and ideas to innovate child care in the City.	Short / Medium	Capilano University

Advocacy		
<p>41. Advocate to senior governments to provide support to the child care sector and families in the following areas, and other priorities that arise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the needs of City of North Vancouver children are a priority for new spaces in provincial planning and funding; • Recruitment and remuneration of ECE's; • Increased resources to support children with additional needs and those from more vulnerable populations; • Lower fees for families; and, • Specific funds are needed to support non-traditional hours of care. 	<p>Short / Medium</p>	<p>DWV, DNV, School Board</p>



RESOURCES AND REPORTING

RESOURCES

Implementation of the Child Care Action Plan will be driven by the availability of City staff and financial resources to accomplish short, medium, long term, and ongoing actions. The City’s inputs toward plan implementation will be complemented and enabled by contributions from and partnerships with other agencies, child care providers, and senior governments. The City will not accomplish all of the actions on its own. Support from senior levels of government and strong partnerships with others are needed, and the actions in this Plan seek to define and confirm their involvement.

Table 11. City Resources Required to Implement the Plan

POLICY DEVELOPMENT	<p>Funds for specialized consulting assistance to inform projects in the Action Plan, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing building models / prototypes and high level cost estimates, to facilitate planning for new child care facilities on civic sites (Action 5) ○ Exploring innovative models for public and non-profit ownership and operation of child care facilities that achieve feasible reliable long-term operation (Action 6) ○ Amending the Density Bonus and Community Benefits Policy – land economics study (Action 10) ○ Reviewing potential city-owned child care spaces that are proposed as on site amenity contributions for operational feasibility and quality of child care (Action 24, 25) ○ Exploring feasibility and options for design guidelines for city-owned child care spaces (Action 26) <p>Process: Staff will submit project sheets within the financial plan process, for Council’s consideration. Actions that are listed as short-term in the Plan will be submitted with a priority timeline.</p>
FUNDS FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS	<p>City resources are beneficial to securing additional capital funds from the Province.</p> <p>Funds for capital projects to create new child care spaces (Action 2, 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 5 year increments, plan for city-initiated facilities that will be delivered through new development and voluntary developer contributions to the Civic Amenity Reserve Fund. ○ Consider targeting a proportion of Civic Amenity Reserve Fund to be allocated to child care that is in balance with other community amenities, for Council’s consideration in the budget process and with evolving community needs and priorities. <p>Process: Staff will include multi-year project plans for new child care facilities/spaces in the 5-year capital plan process for Council deliberation, prioritization, and direction.</p>

Resources to support a strong and proactive staff role and responsibility in child care, may include:

- A facilitator/point person on staff to undertake overall responsibility and coordination of child care may require re-allocation of staff resource or new staffing depending on staff availability and demands.
- Project staff to plan and oversee capital development projects for child care.
- Staff to lead additional advocacy, relationship and planning with senior government (Action 41); relationship-building with partners including First Nations, School District, North Vancouver Recreation and Culture, Capilano University, and others (multiple actions, including Actions 31-40); and a proactive City role and involvement space creation and partnership development (multiple actions).

Process: As required, staff will bring forward project sheets within the financial plan process for additional staff resources to support the implementation of the project plan.

Note: *Some of the staff resources for an enhanced staff role in child care can be accomplished through re-allocation of existing staff resources and will not require additional requests.*

CITY COST FOR CREATING SPACES

The cost for creating child care spaces varies depending on the type of construction, the context, the type of child care program space, the standard to which it is constructed, and other factors. The City's share of the capital cost for creating new child care spaces also depends on the contributions from senior governments, and will drive the feasibility of proceeding with new facilities.

REPORTING

City of North Vancouver Council will receive reports on the City's progress toward meeting the child care space targets and actions in this Plan. The reports will be aligned with timeframes of the interim benchmarks (2025) and the longer-term implementation (2031) of the Plan.

The City will also regularly receive and provide updates about the child care sector through the North Shore Child Care Planning Committee, School District 44, and other partners and stakeholders.

Staff will bring financial requests and items that require Council direction and approval as they arise or are required.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional resources and information to supplement this Child Care Action Plan are available on the [City's website](#), including:

- Glossary of Types of Child Care
- Child Care Action Plan Engagement Summary
- Child Care Action Community Statistical Profile
- Key Findings from Child Care Action Plan Research & Promising Practices
- Summary of Child Care Action Plan Stakeholder Consultation Input



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