

From: **"Singh, Sandra"**

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 2024-04-19 1:02:05 PM

Subject: Memo to Mayor & Council - Update on Childcare related work (RTS 16114 & RTS 16141)

Attachments: ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) - Childcare Work Update - RTS 16114 & RTS 16141 (2024-04-18).pdf

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Attached please find a memo from Margaret Wittgens, GM, Arts Culture and Community Services, providing an update on Childcare-related work (RTS 16114 & RTS 16141). A few key points:

- The memo provides an update on various pieces of work in progress on childcare, including work to advance two Council Motions – *Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements* (RTS 15496); and *Enabling the Rapid Deployment of Additional Childcare Spaces Combined with Essential Worker Housing in the City of Vancouver* (RTS 16037) – and implementation of *Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy*.
- New childcare space development for 0-5 year old children continues, with a significant volume of applications and inquiries. A total of 67 projects (with ~3170 spaces) are in the development pipeline. Of those, 46 projects (with ~2,190 spaces) are City-facilitated. Staff anticipate that 2 new City-owned childcare facilities (138 spaces) will be opening before the end of 2024.
- Staff are establishing interdepartmental oversight to support childcare related work across City departments and ensure efficient and coordinated response. This approach acknowledges that advancing the City's work on childcare requires input, support and buy-in across the organization.
- ACCS staff will bring two Childcare reports to Council in July 2024.

Should Council have any further questions please contact Margaret directly at [margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca](mailto:margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca) and she will make sure to respond through the regular weekly Q&As.

Best,  
Sandra

**Sandra Singh** | Deputy City Manager

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Pronouns: she/her

*The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Sel̓wítlh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.*

## MEMORANDUM

April 18, 2024

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy & Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Margaret Wittgens, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Update on Childcare related work

RTS #: 16114 & 16141

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to update Mayor and Council on the various pieces of work in progress on childcare, including work to advance two Council Motions: *Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements* (RTS 15496); and *Enabling the Rapid Deployment of Additional Childcare Spaces Combined with Essential Worker Housing in the City of Vancouver* (RTS 16037) and implementation of *Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy*.

### BACKGROUND

November 29, 2023: Council received the report *Childcare Strategy Implementation Phase 1 Update and Next Steps* (RTS 15496)

Oct 4, 2023: Council passed the Motion: *Enabling the Rapid Deployment of Additional Childcare Spaces Combined with Essential Worker Housing in the City of Vancouver* (RTS 16037).

Dec 7, 2022: Council passed the Motion: *Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements* (RTS 15496).

June 2022: Council approved *Making Strides: Vancouver's 10-Year Childcare Strategy* (RTS 14540)

## DISCUSSION

### *General Update*

According to City estimates, the percentage of childcare needs being met (as of Q1, 2024), as well as the space shortfalls for different age categories, are as follows:

- **0-12 total: 48% of need met, 14,139 space shortfall**
  - 0-3 years: 28%, 4976 shortfall
  - 3-5 yrs full day: 78%, 1276 shortfall
- **0-5 yrs full day: 51%, 6,253 space shortfall**
- **5-12 yrs: 45%, 7,887 space shortfall**

New childcare space development for 0-5 year old children continues, with a significant volume of applications and inquiries. A total of **67 projects (with ~3170 spaces)** are in the development pipeline. Of those, 46 projects (with ~2190 spaces) are City-facilitated.

Staff anticipate that 2 new city-owned childcare facilities (138 spaces) will be opening before the end of 2024.

*Council Motion: Harmonization of Childcare Policies and Guidelines (RTS 15496)*

The Province is close to confirming and implementing their new Provincial Childcare Design guidelines. City staff have been informed that implementation should occur in Q2 2024. The “draft” Provincial Childcare Design Guidelines have close alignment with the City’s existing *Childcare Design Guidelines*.

Once the Provincial Childcare Design Guidelines are in place, they will replace the City’s *Childcare Design Guidelines*, and will apply only to City-led or City-invested projects. Projects or applications that fall outside of City investment will be subject only to the Provincial *Child Care Licensing Regulation*. It should be noted that applications for childcare facilities will still need to align with and work within Vancouver Bylaws and permitting requirements.

City staff are also working with the Province to identify and ultimately align methods to calculate childcare need.

*Council Motion: Rapid Deployment - Modular Childcare Workforce Housing ((RTS 16037)*

ACCS staff have been working with NMHDO, ENG, REFM, and Parks to identify potential site opportunities. including potential road-space allocation opportunities.

City Staff have connected with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) extensively about supporting options for utilizing school land for modular childcare. To date, the VSB has expressed reluctance, maintaining that their focus and priority will be on supporting increased school age care options.

*Childcare in Residential Zones – Childcare Strategy Implementation Phase 1 Update and Next Steps (15496)*

Staff have formed an inter-departmental working group to tackle potential adjustments to the City’s regulations and processes concerning childcare in residential zones. The work is highly complex and involves multifaceted, and multi-departmental collaboration. Services groups involved include: ACCS, DBL, ENG, and PDS. External input is also being solicited from Provincial Childcare Licensing (Community Care Facilities Licensing).

Work has been broken into Phases, with deliverables and target completion dates (Table A)

Table A – Childcare in Residential Zones – Deliverables and Timelines

DELIVERABLE	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
1. Phase 1 - Interim approach and messaging for potential applicants (including website updates and consistent messaging for Council and others)	April 30, 2024
2. Phase 2 - Bylaw and process analysis w/ options/scenarios – report to Council (July 23, 2024)	June 30, 2024
3. Phase 3 - Updated workplan	July 31, 2024
4. Phase 4 - Implementation of Council directed option(s)	TBD

Interest in creating childcare in residential zones has resulted in a high volume of non-compliant proposals/applications coming forward, with applicants anticipating future, potential regulatory changes. Although staff are prioritizing Council direction related to residential childcare, until potential changes are fully explored and confirmed, staff across numerous departments are required to evaluate proposals and applications within existing bylaws and regulations.

As per the table above, staff are working to enhance communication on the City’s website and through other channels to help reduce effort placed by applicants and the City in dealing with proposals/applications that do not fit within current regulations.

*Ongoing Accountability to Expedite Progress*

Staff are establishing an interdepartmental oversight to support childcare related work across City departments and ensure efficient and coordinated response. This approach acknowledges that advancing the City’s work on childcare requires input, support and buy-in across the organization.

The envisaged governance structure for childcare would include General Managers from the City Leadership Team, and chaired by Margaret Wittgens, General Manager of ACCS.

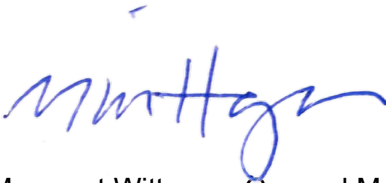
**NEXT STEPS**

Staff will bring two reports to Council in July 2024.

- Childcare Strategy Implementation Phase 2 (RTS – 16114)

- This report will include updates and details on progress on the two Council Motions: *Enabling the Rapid Deployment of Additional Childcare Spaces Combined with Essential Worker Housing in the City of Vancouver* (RTS 16037); and *Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements* (RTS 15496).
- A Childcare Expansion Framework will also be proposed, outlining the City's overall approach to childcare expansion.
- Report back re: Childcare in residential Zones (RTS – 16141)
  - This report will report back on Phases 1 and 2 (Table A) and seek further Council direction on preferred options.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at [margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca](mailto:margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca) and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.



Margaret Wittgens, General Manager  
Arts, Culture, and Community Services  
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