

2020 - 2030 Maple Ridge

# CHILD CARE

## ACTION PLAN



MAPLE RIDGE

British Columbia



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2020 - 2030 Maple Ridge Child Care Action Plan is a result of the valuable information and contributions made by staff, organizations and members of the public. We would like to thank Maple Ridge parents and guardians, child care operators and other stakeholders who participated in the consultation process through their participation in focus groups, interviews and completion of online surveys.

- Ridge Meadows Child Table
- Maple Ridge Child Care Resource and Referral
- School District # 42
- Consultant, Roberta O'Brien
- City of Maple Ridge Parks, Recreation & Culture Staff: Jennifer Baillie and Christa Balatti
- City of Maple Ridge Economic Development & Civic Property Staff: Wendy Dupley, Bruce Livingstone
- City of Maple Ridge Planning & Development Services Staff: Christine Carter, Lisa Zosiak, David Tieu and Amanda Grochowich
- City of Maple Ridge Bylaws & Licensing Services Staff: Michelle Orsetti and Sian Kane
- City of Maple Ridge Public Works & Development Services Staff: Stephen J Cote-Rolvink and Michael L'Arrivee





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Quality and abundant childcare opportunities, for parents and caregivers, support a healthy and thriving economy through the social, physical and emotional well-being of our youngest citizens. Recently, the Province of British Columbia has expanded investment in the child care sector of \$1 billion over three years, including \$237 million to improve access to child care and the creation of 22,000 new licensed child care spaces.

The 2020 - 2030 Maple Ridge Child Care Action Plan is the first child care needs assessment undertaken by the City of Maple Ridge. The purpose of this report is to better understand the child care needs of families and identify key strategies to support space creation targets over the next 10 years, as well as, provide a resource for the City, child care operators and community partners to address current and future child care needs.

This report provides an overview of the current child care situation in Maple Ridge. More specifically, it defines what is meant by child care and describes the different types; details its importance for Maple Ridge children and families from developmental, social and economic perspectives; discusses how it is delivered and funded; the City's current role; examines the supply and demand factors through an extensive gap analysis; and identifies and analyzes a number of related trends, gaps, barriers and concerns.

“THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE CHILD CARE NEEDS OF FAMILIES AND IDENTIFY KEY STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SPACE CREATION TARGETS OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS.”





The Child Care Needs Assessment incorporated comprehensive community engagement and consultation through feedback obtained by parents, caregivers, service providers and child care operators specific to the needs of Maple Ridge. This information, a child care gap analysis and an inventory of existing child care spaces, informed the identification of space creation targets and recommended strategic directions and actions to create a Child Care Action Plan that will guide and support the delivery of child care in Maple Ridge. Five significant priorities emerged that informed the recommended strategic directions and actions. These priorities are:

1. Affordability
2. Availability of child care spaces to meet families' needs
3. Accessible and flexible solutions, including part-time care, extended and non traditional hours
4. Location of child care centres in schools, or new residential areas
5. Lack of awareness of Child Care Supports & Community Resources to support and provide resources



The seven recommended strategic directions that address these priorities, support short, medium and long term goals and objectives:

- Policy & Planning
- Advocacy
- Creating & Supporting Spaces
- Accessibility & Inclusion
- Collaboration & Partnerships
- Monitoring & Research
- Promotion & Marketing

The Child Care Action Plan will support families, child care operators, service providers and stakeholders through collaborative practices by providing informed responses regarding the child care priorities set forth in this document. The plan will also act as a catalyst for Maple Ridge in determining where opportunities and challenges exist in the creation of future child care spaces.

# INTRODUCTION

To better understand the childcare needs of Maple Ridge, staff received Council's endorsement to apply for funding through the UBCM Community Child Care Planning Program to conduct a local Child Care Needs Assessment.

Although much of the community consultation results are reflective of a community approach that is based on a Public Health child care licensing mandate the national, provincial and City perspectives and contexts, as they relate to child care in Maple Ridge, are also included in the Background section of this report.

This report includes the methodology, community consultation process, results of the municipal plan, bylaw and policy review, and gap analysis. Based on this information, a comprehensive action plan was created including strategic targets, directions, and recommended actions.

Community consultation took place from November 2019 to March 2020 and included extensive feedback from parents and caregivers online survey with 631 respondents, and in-person surveys, an online survey and in-person interviews from 15 child care operators, and in-person interviews with 13 service providers that include the following agencies and organizations:

- Family Support Institute of BC
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Maple Ridge Library
- Immigrant Services Society of BC
- Family Education and Support Centre
- School District 42
- Fraser River Indigenous Society
- MRPM Community Network
- Fraser Health
- Ridge Meadows Association for Community Living
- Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Community Services
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Infant Development Program
- Supported Child Development







*The outcomes of this overview include:*

- Identify the key child care needs for Maple Ridge over the next 1-10 years.
- Provide a resource for the City and others involved with child care, in planning for current and future child care needs.
- Define strategic priorities and new child care targets for the next 10 years to improve the access rate for affordable, accessible and high-quality child care in line with projected growth.
- Establish the organizational structure through which the Child Care Action Plan will be collectively implemented, monitored and evaluated by partners between 2020 and 2025.
- Inform non-profit, commercial and municipal licensed child care space creation.

These outcomes will improve access to quality, affordable and accessible child care services; identify and address the unique child care needs at the local level; support healthy children; strengthen families; and build a resilient community and more prosperous economy.

# BACKGROUND

The following provides an understanding of the roles played by respective levels of government regarding early learning and child care and lists funding and support enhancements to families, child care operators and early childhood educators. The municipal perspective speaks to varying policies that support child care in Maple Ridge. The last section provides demographic highlights of Maple Ridge to understand key characteristics of our population and to put the context of this report into community perspective.

## NATIONAL CONTEXT

As part of the national Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework (ELCC) the Federal and Provincial Governments introduced a shared long term vision of early learning and child care. The Federal Government recognizes that “the evidence is clear that there are positive relationships between quality early learning and child care, especially for less advantaged children, parental labour market participation, especially for women, and child developmental outcomes” (1). The Federal Government has invested approximately \$155.6 million over three years to the Province of BC to enhance its systems of early learning and child care. The \$51 million annual investments are targeted to increase the quality, affordability, accessibility, flexibility and inclusivity (including underserved populations) of child care.

*Other federal financial supports include:*

**The Canada Child Benefit (CCB):** administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). It is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising children under 18 years of age. The maximum annual benefit has increased to \$6,639 per child under age 6 and to \$5,602 per child age 6 through 17. The CCB may include the child disability benefit and any related provincial and territorial programs.

**The Child Disability Benefit:** the child disability benefit is a tax-free monthly payment made to families who care for a child under age 18 with a severe and prolonged impairment in physical or mental functions.



## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

*As part of the ELCC, British Columbia's priority areas of investment include:*

1. Enhance the accessibility of child care options by increasing the number of spaces;
2. Increase affordability of child care, beginning with Infant/Toddler care;
3. Enhance the quality of licensed child care programs by supporting the training and professional development of early childhood educators; and
4. Enhance equity through targeted investment in underserved communities – Indigenous families, families with children with special needs, and young parents completing their secondary education – improving access to inclusive, affordable, and flexible child care programs.

British Columbia is currently in its third and final year of ELCC investments. As part of the province's Childcare BC (2) action plan, the following key areas have been achieved through year two:

- Completed the first intake of the Child Care Community Space Creation Grant;
- Created 53 Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites to deliver more than 2,500 low cost, affordable child care spaces, serving over 2,900 children, and helping to set the stage for the implementation of a model of universal child care;
- Allocated funding for professional training opportunities in multiple areas, including but not limited to ethics, sexual abuse prevention, and family child care training, and the development of multiple online learning platforms;
- Created 643 new spaces in Aboriginal Head Start programs to deliver culturally appropriate and safe full day child care programming to Indigenous children and families, with 181 spaces becoming operational in the second year;
- Provided additional funding to Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs to assist 339 more children per month who require additional support to access child care programs; and
- Made amendments to the Child Care Subsidy Regulation to enable enhancements to the Young Parent Program, which covers child care costs for young parents completing their high school education.

*Provincial child care funding available to parents, child care operators and early childhood educators include:*

**Affordable Child Care Benefit:** Families with a pre-tax income of up to \$111,000 may be eligible for savings of up to \$1,250 a month per child. Benefit amounts are determined by factors such as family size, type of child care and income.

Young Parent Program: Parents who are under the age of 25 may qualify for help with child care while they finish high school including:

- Up to \$1,500 (per month per child) to help cover the cost of child care.
- A space for their child in a care program at or near the school they're attending.

**Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement:** Front-line Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in licensed child care facilities may be eligible to receive a \$2 per hour wage enhancement. Additional funding for statutory benefits is also provided at a rate of 18.73%.

**Early Childhood Educator Recruitment and Retention Program:** Includes the ECE Bursary Program that funds up to \$500 per course to pay for tuition, books and materials, and the ECE Workforce Development Fund that funds up to \$5,000 per semester to help with ancillary costs associated with continuing education and training, such as: tuition, books, materials, time off to complete practicums, child care expenses while in class, and travel.

**The Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI):** Enhances child care affordability by offering funding to eligible, licensed child care providers to reduce and stabilize parents' monthly child care fees. Child Care providers must apply to receive funding; parents do not need to apply.



**Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF):** Is available for eligible licensed providers through CCOF Base Funding, the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE). Participation in CCOF Base Funding, CCFRI and ECE-WE is optional however, enrollment in CCOF Base Funding is required to be eligible for CCFRI and ECE-WE. This funding is available to:

- Assist with the day-to-day costs of running a licensed child care facility,
- Reduce fees for parents, and
- Enhance Early Childhood Educator wages.



**Child Care BC Maintenance Fund:** The Childcare BC Maintenance Fund helps licensed child care facilities in emergency circumstances, defined as sudden and unexpected conditions that directly impact children's health and safety or may result in immediate facility closure. The fund is available to assist with the costs of addressing necessary repairs or replacing eligible item. The fund may also help with expenses from relocation costs if the relocation is required for compliance under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act.

**Start-Up Grants for Becoming a Licensed Child Care Facility:** One-time start-up grants are available to assist registered licence-not-required (RLNR) and license-not-required (LNR) child care providers, early childhood educators (ECE's), and any other eligible adults over the age of 19 to cover the costs of becoming licensed child care providers.

**Community Child Care Space Creation Program:** The fund, administered by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), provides local governments with up to \$1 million to create new licensed child care spaces for children aged 0-5. Priority will be given to projects that build spaces that serve infants and toddlers, offer care outside of regular business hours, are operated by a public body or non-profit organization, and/or benefit underserved populations.

**Community Child Care Planning Grants:** The Ministry of Children and Family Development has provided \$2.85 million for the Community Child Care Planning Program, administered by UBCM. Under this program, eligible projects can receive up to \$25,000 to help local governments identify their child care space needs.





**Child Care BC New Spaces Fund:** This funding is available to support the creation, expansion and relocation of child care facilities proposing to create new licensed child care spaces. The following applicants are eligible to apply:

- Public sector organizations, including local governments, school boards, health authorities and public post-secondary institutions.
- Indigenous governments.
- Non-profit societies, including non-profit child care providers, child development centres, and Indigenous non-profit societies.
- Businesses and corporate companies, including partnerships, sole proprietors, limited companies and incorporated companies.

*Per project, eligible applicants can receive up to:*

- \$3 million for up to 100% of eligible project costs for public sector organizations and Indigenous Governments.
- \$1.5 million for up to 100% of eligible project costs for Indigenous non-profit societies.
- \$1.5 million for up to 90% of eligible project costs for non-profit societies, including non-profit child care providers and child development centres.
- \$250,000 for up to 75% of eligible project costs for child care providers that are businesses or corporate companies.

*Other provincial financial supports available include:*

**B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit:** Budget 2019 replaces the B.C. Early Childhood Tax Benefit with a new B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit (BCCOB) effective October 1, 2020. The B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit provides a tax-free monthly payment to families with children under the age of 18. The maximum B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit is:

- \$1,600 for a family's first child.
- \$1,000 for a second child.
- \$800 for each subsequent child under the age of 18.



## MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

**Official Community Plan (3) and Area Plans:** The Official Community Plan outlines the long-term vision for growth and community development for the City. Chapter 4 speaks to Community Services. A few key policies pertaining to child care services to highlight include:

- Policy 4-12 - Maple Ridge will encourage opportunities for decentralization and integration of community services at the community and neighbourhood level.
- Policy 4-22 - Maple Ridge encourages the development of accessible quality child care facilities throughout the community, and will encourage the provision of space for child care in all assisted rental housing projects developed under senior government programs.
- Policy 4-36 - Maple Ridge supports the establishment of child care facilities in Residential, Institutional, Commercial and Industrial land use designations subject to compliance with District bylaws and regulations (4).

Overall, there is a strong policy base to support the provision of child care services throughout Maple Ridge.

In addition to the Official Community Plan, there are neighbourhood plans that govern specific geographic areas of the City. A few key points pertaining to the provision of child care services by area plan are as follows:

**Albion Area Plan:** Currently, the Albion Area Plan (2014) includes two commercial nodes, an elementary school and an under construction community centre (anticipated completion date of 2021). As of 2020, both existing commercial nodes contain a child care centre.

The endorsed North East Albion Concept Plan (2019) includes an additional commercial node and a co-located elementary school / park site. Child care services were identified as potential operators or users of the space at both the future elementary school and commercial node.

**Hammond Area Plan:** In Hammond, there are a number of areas designated for commercial uses. Hammond was the first area that introduced some specific commercial zones (H-1; H-2) which continue to provide for the possibility of child care facilities. A number of child care facilities operate in the Hammond Area.

**Silver Valley Area Plan:** Silver Valley has a number of sites designated for future commercial use throughout the four hamlets. Blaney Hamlet was the first Hamlet in Silver Valley to develop. The land designated for commercial in Blaney Hamlet includes a child care centre with an anticipated opening date of 2020.

The City has started to receive land use applications for the other Silver Valley Hamlets. There are 3.25 hectares of commercially designated land between Forest, River Village and Horse Hamlets (with an additional 4.61 hectares of Tourist Commercial land also available). While this land will not go solely towards child care centres, they will be able to operate at these locations.

South of Silver Valley lies the historic Yennadon community along 232nd Street. The ongoing Yennadon Lands Employment Redesignation process may also provide additional opportunities for child care centres to locate in this area as the site is accessible to Silver Valley residents as well as located along major transportation corridors.

**Town Centre Area Plan:** The Town Centre Area holds a significant amount of the City's commercially designated land, and as such, sees a high number of child care facilities locate in these areas. Several in-stream applications have included discussions regarding creating more child care spaces in these new developments.

#### *City of Maple Ridge – Zoning Bylaw*

Child care facilities are governed largely by the regulation and requirements of other government agencies. From a planning perspective, there are three scales of Child Care Facilities identified in the City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw (5) and draft bylaw (6):

**Family Day Care:** Under the Zoning Bylaw, these facilities can accommodate up to 8 children, in a dwelling unit, licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act. These are permitted in all single family zones.

**Neighbourhood Day Care:** Under the Zoning Bylaw, these facilities can accommodate up to 15 children, in a home environment, licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act. These are currently permitted in all suburban and rural lots (i.e. RS-1, RS-1a, RS-1b, RS-1c, RS-1d, RS-2, RS-3).

5| [www.mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/587](http://www.mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/587)  
6| [www.mapleridge.ca/2283](http://www.mapleridge.ca/2283)

**Child Care Centre (Assembly Use):** Under the Zoning Bylaw, these facilities are licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act. These are permitted in several Commercial and Institutional zones.

Each type of facility is important for the provision of child care in our community. Each of these facilities have different needs and should be dealt with differently in terms of recommended next steps.

#### *City of Maple Ridge – Other Relevant Bylaws (7)*

The Off-Street Parking and Loading Bylaw addresses requirements for owners and occupiers of land to provide off-street parking and loading spaces:

**Family Day Care:** May be similar to Home Based Business requirements as the Bylaw is silent on Family Day Cares specifically – 1.0 space per non-resident employee working on the lot.

**Neighbourhood Daycare:** 1.0 space per non-resident employee plus 1.0 additional space for each 10 children enrolled.

**Assembly Use (Child Care Centres):** 1.0 space per 20m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area.

Currently, no long-term bicycle parking spaces are required for child care centres in institutional uses, but may have requirements for Commercial zones.





## DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

The following demographic statistics were derived from Census Profile, 2016 Census Maple Ridge (8), unless otherwise stated.

- **Population growth:** Maple Ridge has seen a growth in population from 2011 to 2016 of 8.2%, whereas BC's rate of growth during that same time is 5.6%.
- **Immigrant Population (9):** The immigrant population from 2011 to 2016 grew by 19.6%, and other than Langley District, has seen the highest rate of immigrant population growth in the Lower Mainland and Southwest BC.
- **Median total income of families (2015):** Maple Ridge's median income rate of \$99,899 is considerably higher when compared to BC's median income rate of \$88,451.
- **Prevalence of low-income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%) (10):** Maple Ridge's low-income rate for children under 6 years of age is 12.8% compared to BC's rate of 18%. The rates are almost identical for both Maple and BC for children under 18 years of age.
- **Lone-parent census families in private households:** The rate of lone parent families in Maple Ridge is 15.6%, just over the rate for the same population in BC at 15.1%.
- **Labour Force:** Unemployment rate was 5.1%, but will likely see an increase due to economic impacts of Covid-19.
- **Vulnerable Children:** The Wave 7 Early Development Instrument (EDI) (11) data (collected in 2016-2019) revealed that 31% of School District 42 children were vulnerable on one or more domain. This is lower than the provincial average of 33.4%. This rate reflects almost one in three children developmentally impaired prior to school entry.

8 | [www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016)

9 | NewToBC Maple Ridge Demographic Profile 2018

10 | The Low-income measure, after tax, refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

11 | The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a 104-item questionnaire developed by the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). The EDI is completed for individual kindergarten students by their teachers once the children enter the public school system. The EDI data provide communities and policy makers with valuable information for monitoring children's development, and for developing effective program and policy responses to help BC's children and families thrive.



# METHODOLOGY

Four methods of collecting data and information were used to inform this report – an internal analysis of the City's plans, bylaws and policies, the community consultation process, the child care space gap analysis and community forum.

1. A comprehensive internal analysis of plans, bylaws and policies was conducted and included reviews of the City of Maple Ridge – Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaws, Parking Bylaws. This work was led by Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) and supported by several City Departments who regularly interface with child care operators: Buildings, Licenses and Bylaws, Community Planning and Economic Development.
2. Community consultation to determine child care utilization patterns and collect feedback were derived from several sources of data collection methods from November 2019 to March 2020. The tools created to assess the trends and concerns from community stakeholders included:
  - a comprehensive and anonymous online parent and caregiver survey, of which 631 surveys were completed,
  - an in-person survey conducted at PRC's Parent and Child Playtime program to provide input into their child care needs, of which 15 parents and caregivers completed,
  - a service provider in-person survey of which 13 different agencies and organizations partook and 22 directors, managers and program leaders completed,
  - an online child care operators survey, of which 6 completed,
  - child care operators in-person interviews, of which 9 were interviewed.
3. Child care utilization rates and gap assessment outcomes were derived from utilizing the following:
  - the generic HELP (Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC) formula to assess the gaps in child care, commonly used by communities to calculate the gap in child care,
  - the child care inventory spreadsheet, a mandatory document that UBCM provided used to calculate how many current child care spaces exist,
  - Baragar children's population data provided by Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows School District #42 (SD42) that provided the data required to create the projected child care gaps.

- The HELP (Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC) (12) formula, developed by Lynell Anderson (13) and utilized by several other communities, has been used to calculate the gap in varying types of child care. The HELP formula utilizes local data, estimates and assumptions in order to determine the gap between current and desired child care spaces. The formula is based on the premise that child care is of high quality, easily accessible, affordable and incorporates full-time, part-time and full-time and part-time inclusive spaces. Inclusive spaces are spaces for children with varying abilities.
- Baragar data provided by SD42, was obtained to create a baseline of children's populations from ages birth to 12 years. Child Care Resource and Referral Services created proportions for projected participation rates – note that these are estimates but were discussed thoroughly in order to provide an accurate snapshot for the current need of types of child care in Maple Ridge.



4. Lastly, the City hosted a community forum in March 2020 to showcase the collective efforts regarding child care priorities that emerged through the community consultation process. A map of the locations of all child care operators in Maple Ridge was produced, and several City departments who provide resources were available to answer questions. It also provided an opportunity for community members to give insight into the concerns and issues regarding child care that the community consultation process may have missed prior to reporting out on the findings.

12 | HELP is the premier institution, situated in UBC, that monitors the state of children's development and, in partnership with McMaster University, created the Early Development Instrument, a non diagnostic tool used globally to assess kindergarten children's developmental outcomes prior to school entry.

13 | CGA and previous Senior Family Policy Researcher at UBC's Human Early Learning Partnership.

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section highlights the results of the community consultation process, and the child care space gap analysis.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FINDINGS

A comprehensive online child care survey conducted by the City resulted in 631 respondents and included data on family demographics, child care needs, gaps and barriers. Feedback was collected for 1,119 children ages birth to 12 years with over half of these children between 5 and 12 years old. Most families stated they have lived in Maple Ridge for more than three years, were born in Canada, work days, full-time outside of the house in Maple Ridge or neighbouring communities and make more than \$75,000 annually.

Of the 631 survey respondents, 180 answered these demographic questions. The number of respondents considered marginalized was a small fraction and suggests the barriers, issues and gaps discussed throughout the report reside among the broad spectrum of socio-economic families.

The aggregation and analysis of the online caregiver survey and focus groups, in-person service provider survey, online child care operators survey and in-person focus groups and interviews resulted in the following five priorities:

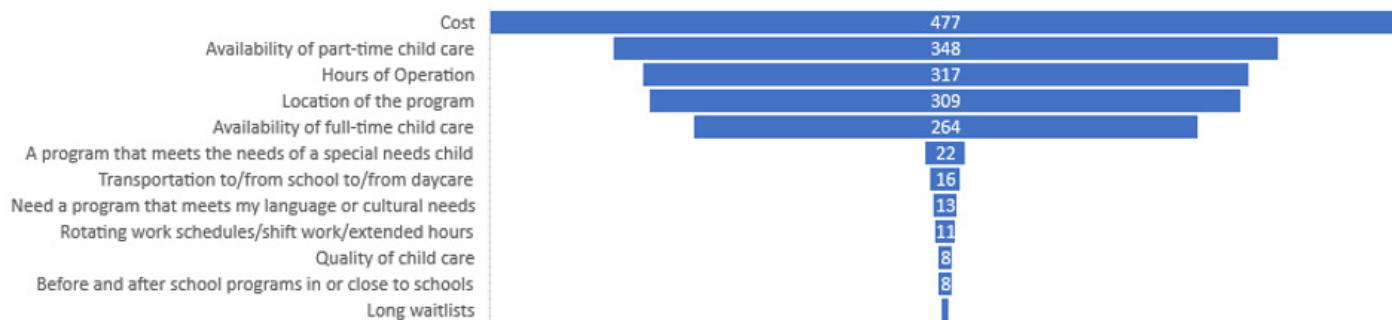
1. Affordability and cost of child care is paramount for parents and caregivers and was deemed to be the most significant of all barriers, gaps and issues.
2. Availability of child care spaces to meet families needs, particularly regarding infant/toddler incurring 69% shortage of spaces and before and after school care incurring 67% shortage of spaces.
3. Accessible and flexible solutions, including part-time care, extended and non traditional hours, and drop-in spaces are desired and needed by parents and caregivers.
4. Location of child care centres are primarily centric to the more populous areas of Maple Ridge, such as the dense urban core and along busy transportation corridors with not many options in outlying neighbourhoods, close to or in schools, or new residential areas.
5. Lack of awareness of child care supports & community resources to support and provide resources, training and networking opportunities for families and child care operators.

Concerted efforts were utilized to engage child care operators to participate in both the focus groups and the child care operator online survey through various organizations and networks, such as, CCRR, the City of Maple Ridge's social media platforms, the RMCCT and PRC's daycare provider drop-in gym programs. Focus groups were scheduled during the day and evening, and weekdays and weekends, but garnered minimal participation rates. Child care operators agree with caregivers and service providers regarding the barriers and issues that parents and caregivers experience. Six operators that participated in the online survey ranked caregivers' challenges causing some duplication and different ranking patterns.

The following findings provide greater context to these priorities utilizing the tabled charts, revealing the main concerns, and finding commonality between themes provided by all stakeholders that participated in the community consultation. Table 1 below shows the top five priorities for parents and caregivers. They are also listed as the top priorities for service providers in Table 2.

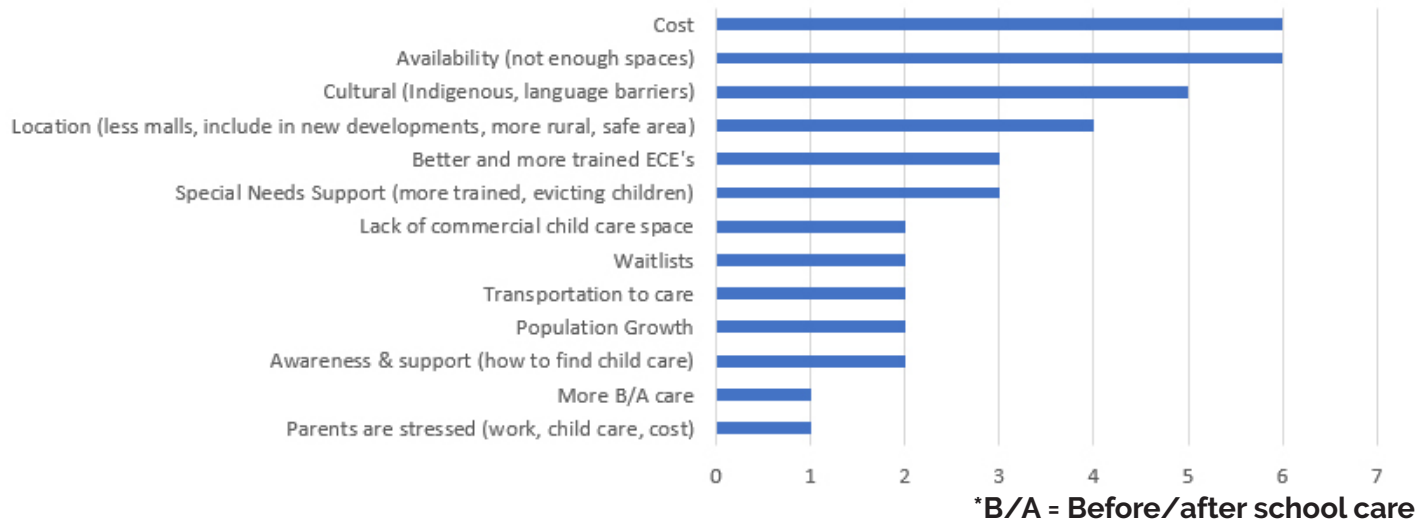
**What are the barriers that could make it difficult to find your preferred arrangement in the future? Select all that apply.**

**Table 1: Caregiver barriers to child care**



**Issues or trends observed that might help the City better understand child care needs.**

**Table 2: Service provider feedback regarding issues and trends that their clients experience**

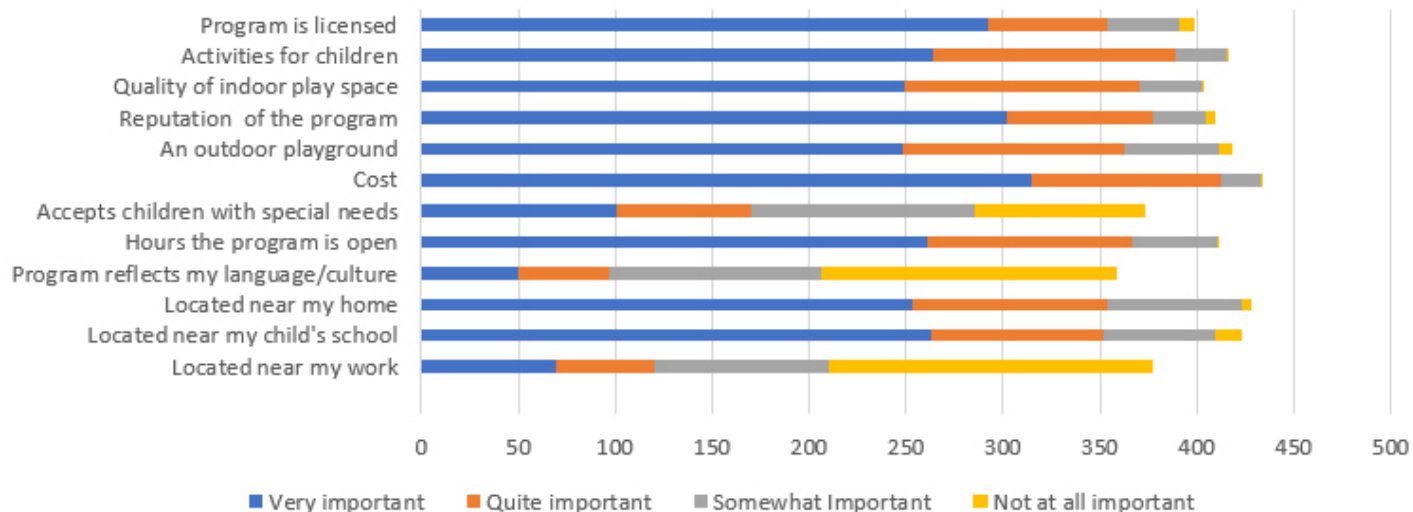




Tables 3 and 4 describe what parents and caregivers consider as important aspects of programming and what caregivers want to see improved regarding child care. Recurring themes are present and include cost, accessibility, availability and location.

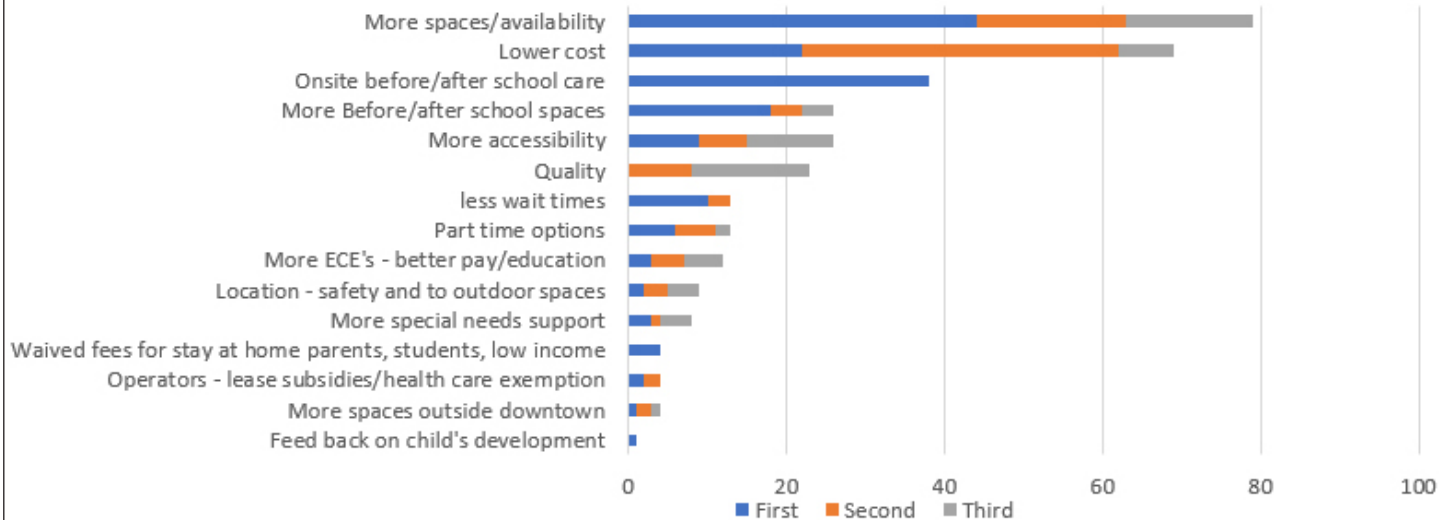
### How important are each of the following aspects of a child care program for you?

**Table 3: Important aspects of child care for parents and caregivers**



What are the top three things you would like to see happen to improve the child care situation for you and other families in the Maple Ridge?

**Table 4: What caregivers want to see improved regarding child care**

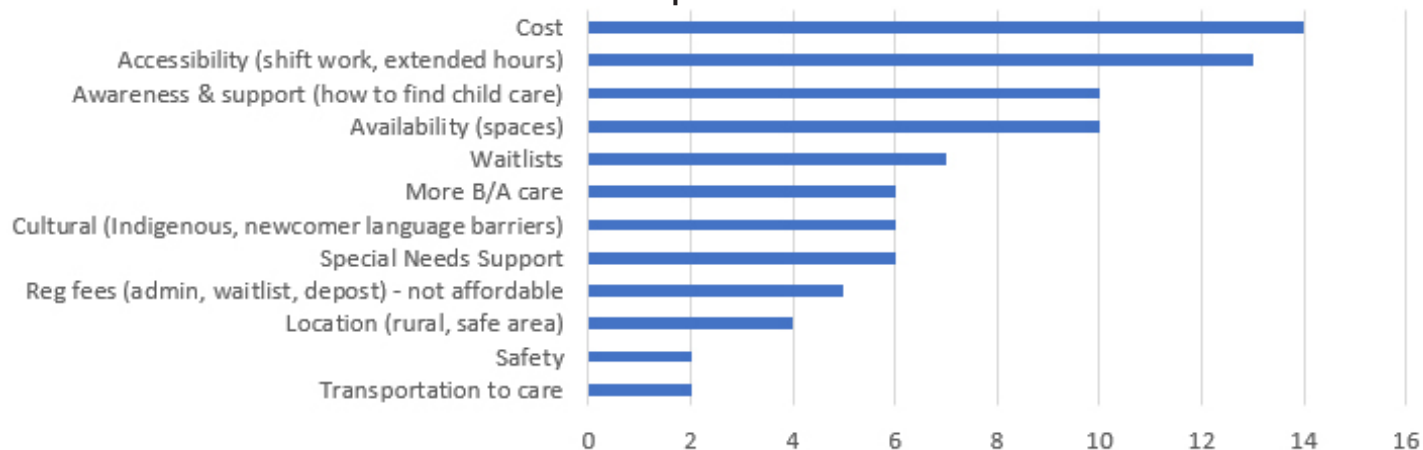


\*ECE's = Early Childhood Educators

Tables 5 and 6 below speak to the challenges underserved populations experience accessing child care and suggestions for delivery of child care and child development services from a service providers perspective. Service providers explained that underserved populations experience the same issues and challenges that the broader population experiences with the exceptions that awareness and support, cultural programming and barriers, and special needs supports and funding should be improved upon and have also been included in the recommendations that the Action Plan addresses.

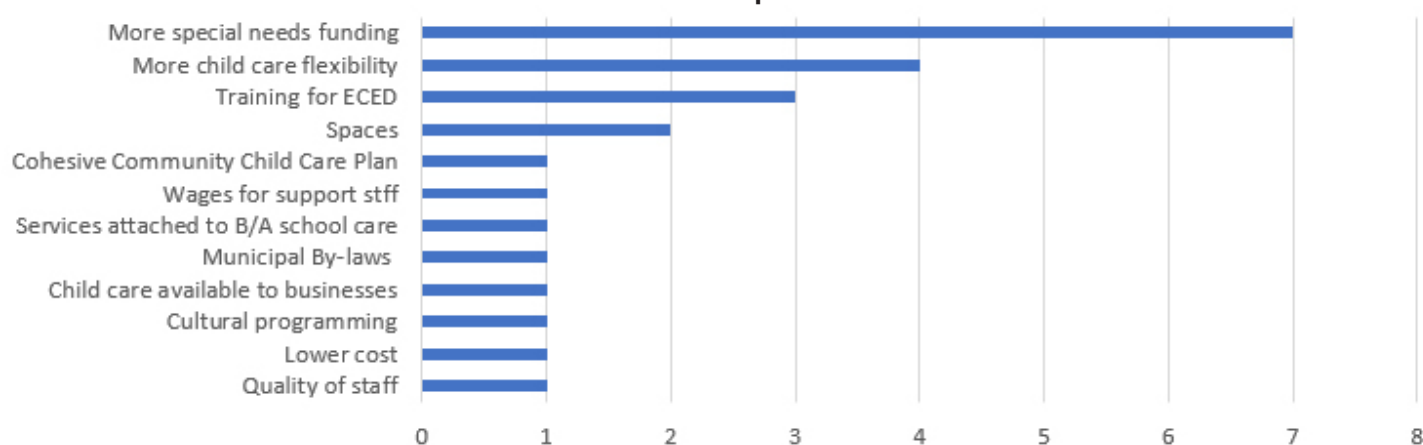
### Challenges underserved populations experience.

**Table 5: What challenges service providers feel their clients, more specifically Indigenous, newcomer, refugee, immigrant, minority, low-income, single parent and parents under 25, experience.**



### Suggestions for the delivery of child care and related child development services.

**Table 6: Service providers suggestions for better delivery of child care and related child development services**



\*ECED = Early childhood education development

## CHILD CARE GAP ANALYSIS

The child care utilization rates and gap assessment outcomes were derived from:

- The child care inventory spreadsheet provided by UBCM to calculate how many spaces currently exist.
- The generic HELP (Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC) formula commonly used by communities.
- The Baragar children's population data provided by Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows School District 42 (SD42).



The child care inventory spreadsheet was populated with specific child care group and family centres information from Public Health and was compared to current child care operators in Maple Ridge using CCRR's database of public health licensed care providers up to January 2020. This information confirmed 26 new child care operators, which were added to the inventory, bringing the number of current child care operators in Maple Ridge to 140. The child care inventory also includes information on the types of child care, numbers of children in each type and whether operators provide extended hours (evening, weekends, statutory holidays, etc.). The inventory was used to calculate the current number of total public health licensed child care spaces utilized in 2020, which is 3,295 spaces.

Baragar population data is used by SD42 to create population projections for children birth to 12 years for each school catchment area. This data aids the School District in planning for future changes in school populations. The Baragar data utilized for this report shows population data for each year from birth to 12 years, for years 2019 to 2025, for each elementary school catchment in Maple Ridge. This data allowed for the calculation of gaps in child care. CCRR applied proportions for each type of child care to create utilization rates for full-time, part-time and inclusive spaces. The amount of child care spaces that are required to meet the need of families in Maple Ridge were calculated using these proportions based on the 2020 Baragar data for each age of children for each year.

The number of spaces required to meet the need in 2020 are 7,625, and as mentioned above the current number of spaces are 3,295. The overall gap (need) in child care is 4,330 spaces meaning less than half the need is currently being met. In order to meet child care needs (the child care gap of 4330 spaces), while looking for or waiting for space, some parents and caregivers access family members and friends to care for their children. This leads to less stable and predictable child care arrangements and can be costly as only licensed care is subsidized. They have also commented they feel that their children could be missing out on quality child development opportunities and that older family members may be overwhelmed and overburdened looking after young children.



These calculations, broken down into type of child care as determined by Fraser Health, shows that infant/toddler spaces and before/after school spaces show the highest gaps of 69% more spaces and before/after school care requiring 67% more spaces being required, respectively.

## IDENTIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF TRENDS

The culmination of all the preceding findings were filtered into the five priorities listed and explained in detail below. These priorities have informed the Child Care Action Plans' recommended strategic directions and actions.

## AFFORDABILITY AND COST

Affordability of child care is paramount for caregivers and was deemed to be the most significant of all barriers, gaps and issues, even more than lack of available child care spaces. Many caregivers explained that they made the decision to stay home with their child until the child enters the school system and to support their household solely through/with their partners income, rather than combine their household with two incomes and pay for child care as they would not financially gain from the latter. As most caregiver respondents make over \$75,000 annually many were eligible for child care subsidies.

The majority of parents who provided information on the cost of child care for their household reported costs between \$500 to \$1100/month. Caregivers that paid 'nothing' either did not access child care as their children were older (10 to 12 years) or grand parents and/or friends took care of their children.

Service providers described subsidies are helping families that earn lower incomes, however, cost, as seen throughout most communities in BC, is the number one challenge that service providers are seeing for caregivers and they encourage that the Affordable Child Care Benefit (14) be expanded to include all Public Health licensed child care types in the immediate future and increase subsidies and/or incorporate universal \$10 a day child care (15).

Operators explained that the Employer Health Care Tax (EHCT) (16) is another expense they will incur effective January 2020. If they request an increase in fees to the province to pay for this expense, and are denied, they feel they will have no option but to recover this expense by reducing funding for programming, thereby decreasing the quality of program delivery.

14 | Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) are subsidies for child care that parents may access if they meet certain income criteria.

15 | \$10 a day child care plan is estimated to cost \$1.5 billion a year to implement and would create 31,215 new full-time child care spaces, reduce fees for parents, and provide a living wage for child care workers by the year 2025.

16 | Employer Health Tax is now in effect. Employers with a payroll of more than \$1.5 million in BC will pay a rate of 1.95% on their total payroll. Lower rates apply to employers with lower payrolls. Employers with payroll of less than \$500,000 are exempt from paying the Employer Health Tax.

## AVAILABILITY

The projected assumptions derived from the HELP formula reflect that Maple Ridge has an overall shortage of 53% for all child care types. The model also shows that the two types of child care that have the highest demand are infant/toddler incurring a 69% shortage of spaces and before/after school care incurring a 67% shortage of spaces. Caregivers, service providers and child care providers all state that most licensed and group centres are carrying waitlists. Caregivers wish to have one care provider for all their children and space is typically not available in one or more types for what they require.

*There are two main reasons why infant/toddler spaces are in critical need:*



1. Child care operators state that there is shortage in early childhood educators, specifically for special needs and infant/toddler designation. They also reported that their staff are gravitating to the higher paid positions offered at other centres in Maple Ridge. Early childhood educators require a two year diploma and operators expressed that individuals are opting to become early childhood educator assistants, rather than educators, because there is less financial burden and the designation only requires one year of education.



Additional specialized training for staff was also mentioned by service providers and operators as essential to accommodating behavioural issues and overall child development requirements in the field. Quality of programming, although not rising to the top of the priorities listed in this plan, was expressed as the most important aspect of a child care program caregivers would choose for their child/ren and includes: licensed programming, reputation of the program, quality of indoor and outdoor play space, and activities.



Service providers explained that continued and ongoing funding should be infused into education and training for child care workers in the form of subsidies and bursaries. As well as the improved action of new core competencies be introduced into the education curriculum for early childhood educators and assistants that creates training opportunities, similar to what teachers receive in the education system, regarding child led play, outdoor education and behavioural training.

2. Operators expressed that infant/toddler spaces are expensive to operate due to the high ratio of staff and the increased wages for their certification, thus they prefer to provide some infant/toddler spaces, but not enough to meet demand.

In addition, the City of Maple Ridge is growing, increasing the need for more spaces and types of child care, including more specialized services for children with special needs and behavioural issues. Operators expressed that there is an increased trend of children, whether diagnosed or undiagnosed, that exhibit behaviours that are disruptive to other children and staff. As Maple Ridge's population increases more spaces for children that require extra supports will be required. Operators also specify the need for dedicated child care spaces in new developments and more commercial spaces that include appropriate outdoor space. Operators also felt that the cost of commercial space is extremely high, especially for non profit operators.



## ACCESSIBILITY

The findings show that accessible and flexible solutions, including part-time care, extended and non-traditional hours, and drop-in spaces are desired and needed by caregivers. Non traditional work hours, shift workers and caregivers that work in other communities require extended, evening and weekend programming hours. Many caregivers report penalty surcharges by child care providers for late pick up.

Operators explained there are multiple steps in the process to become a licensed provider which makes it difficult to operate in a field where there is high demand for services and high staff vacancies. While strict guidelines regarding extended hours of care and temporary placements, leave caregivers frustrated and without care.

Service providers are seeing an increasing trend for clients experiencing issues with finding child care that reflects the reality of their work schedules, including options for shift workers, overnight and weekends. Requirements for overnight care mean that operators must provide bathing facilities, which they felt could be difficult in some circumstances. The child care inventory shows that only seven child care operators provide extended care before 6am and after 7pm, five provide overnight care and only one operates on statutory holidays.



## LOCATION

The majority of child care centres are located in more populous areas of Maple Ridge such as the urban core and along transportation corridors where parking and traffic safety is perceived as a concern. This results in many outlying schools and newly developed residential areas being underserved. For convenience, caregivers prefer child care close to their home and/or school and near public transit for those utilizing this service.

Before and after school care is also highly sought after by caregivers and there is a keen preference for this type of child care to be located on school grounds. Also, caregivers desire more options for part-time and drop-in child care to meet the needs of part-time employed families and caregivers that take on additional work.

Operators reported a lack of available commercial space with adequate outdoor space and that commercial space is costly, which increases program fees. Service providers described play spaces within child care locations' are typically unnatural. In particular, environmental child care centres have identified difficulties in finding spaces with outdoor space, and that safety was of paramount concern to ensure that child care locations are not exposed to other social issues.

Lack of commercial space is one of the obstacles for service providers to collaborate and partner with child care operators to provide wrap around services. If more space was obtainable with adequate outdoor play space more providers may opt to consider the possibility of co-locating with child care centres above all other obstacles.

Several child care operators expressed that navigating the City's licencing, bylaws, planning and fire requirements are challenging. Some operator's expressed that it would be extremely helpful if there was a 'one stop shop' at City Hall to find all the information required to open or renovate a centre. This has since been implemented the Economic Development.



## AWARENESS OF SUPPORTS & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Caregivers, service providers and child care operators commented on the lack of awareness, particularly for underserved populations, to access support to complete subsidy forms, find child care and access other programs, services, resources and supports in Maple Ridge. Such services are provided to the community by Child Care Resource and Referral Service and are also available to support child care operators, provide training and drop-in programs, offer networking opportunities and connect them to free resources, such as the toy lending library, and broader networking opportunities.

## STRATEGIC TARGETS, DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

### Recommended Action Plan Targets

To address the child care gap analysis in this report, child care creation targets have been set below to increase the number of targeted types of child care to meet community need. The following community partners have been proposed as the project lead to work on the space creation targets:

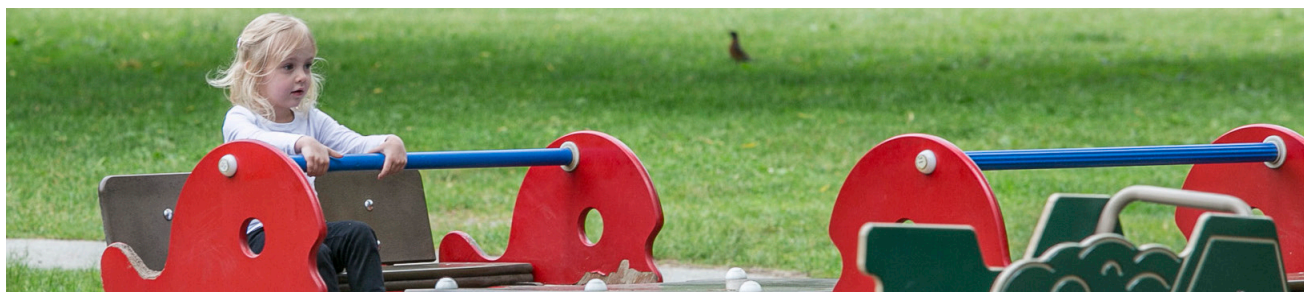
- Child Care Resource & Referral
- School District #42
- Fraser River Indigenous Society
- Maple Ridge Community Services
- Family Education & Support Centre
- Public Health/Fraser Health

SHORT-TERM TARGETS (YEAR 1 & 2)	
Current Child Care Spaces 2020:	3,295
New Child Care Spaces 2020 - 2022:	1,450
Targeted Types of Child Care:	Group under 36 months; Group 30 months to school age; Group school age
Location:	Maple Ridge (urban core, rural north and new residential areas, rural east and new residential areas)  East Maple Ridge (Albion Neighbourhood, Albion Community Centre 2021)
Flexible Spaces:	450 (child care spaces available outside of typical hours)
MEDIUM-TERM TARGETS (YEAR 3 TO 5) (16)	
Current Child Care Spaces 2023:	4,745
New Child Care Spaces 2023 - 2025:	1,250
Targeted Types of Child Care:	Group under 36 months; Group 30 months to school age; Group school age
Location:	Maple Ridge (urban core, rural north and new residential areas, rural east and new residential areas)
Flexible Spaces:	450 (child care spaces available outside of typical hours)
LONG-TERM TARGETS (YEAR 6 TO 10) (16)	
Current Child Care Spaces 2025:	5,995
New Child Care Spaces 2025 - 2029:	1,650
Targeted Types of Child Care:	Group under 36 months; Group 30 months to school age; Group school age
Location:	Maple Ridge (urban core, rural north and new residential areas, rural east and new residential areas)
Flexible Spaces:	600 (child care spaces available outside of typical hours)

GROUP CHILDCARE (BIRTH TO 36 MONTH SPACES)	GROUP CHILDCARE (SCHOOL AGE)	GROUP CHILDCARE (30 MONTHS-PRESCHOOL)
Year 1 = 311.75	Year 1 = 282.75	Year 1 = 130.50
Year 2 = 311.75	Year 2 = 282.75	Year 2 = 130.50
Year 3 = 179.17	Year 3 = 162.50	Year 3 = 75
Year 4 = 179.17	Year 4 = 162.50	Year 4 = 75
Year 5 = 179.17	Year 5 = 162.50	Year 5 = 75
Year 6 = 141.90	Year 6 = 128.70	Year 6 = 59.40
Year 7 = 141.90	Year 7 = 128.70	Year 7 = 59.40
Year 8 = 141.90	Year 8 = 128.70	Year 8 = 59.40
Year 9 = 141.90	Year 9 = 128.70	Year 9 = 59.40
Year 10 = 141.90	Year 10 = 128.70	Year 10 = 59.40
subtotal = 1871 (rounded up)	subtotal = 1697 (rounded up)	subtotal = 783
TOTAL NEW SPACES = 4351		







## Recommended Strategic Directions & Actions

To address the child care needs and concerns identified in this report, seven strategic directions with thirty-four recommended actions are being presented for Council's consideration. The seven strategic directions are:

- Policy & Planning
- Advocacy
- Creating & Supporting Spaces
- Accessibility & Inclusion
- Collaboration & Partnerships
- Monitoring & Research
- Promotion & Marketing

Recommendations have been noted as short term priorities (1-2 years), medium term priorities (3 to 5 years) and long term (6 to 10 years) and many will be ongoing. Seven strategic directions and thirty-four recommended actions, including leads responsible for the work of each action, are presented below to address the needs and concerns identified through community consultation and the child care gap analysis.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & ACTIONS	LEAD	2020-2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2029	ONGOING
<b>1. Policy &amp; Planning</b>					
<b>1.1</b> Create a Child Care Action Table (CCAT), consisting of community agencies that may include City staff and representatives from Child Care Resource and Referral, Health, Education, Indigenous communities, newcomers agencies and committees, child development agencies and organizations, and Ridge Meadows Community Children's Table to oversee the work of the Child Care Action Plan.	PRC	X			
<b>1.2</b> Designate child care as a standard community need, like park land, and that it be considered in municipal policy, planning and land use decisions, including the review of larger developments and master planned communities.	Planning				X
<b>1.3</b> Establish annual targets for the number and type of child care spaces.	CCAT				X
<b>1.4</b> To Review policies and bylaws that support child care space creation.	CCAT				

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & ACTIONS	LEAD	2020-2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2029	ONGOING
<b>1.5</b> Research and consider building or incorporating space for child care facilities as part of the development of new municipal facilities or major renovations to existing ones.	Planning, Building	X			
<b>1.6</b> Review the quality outdoor/nature-based play spaces in child care centres and make recommendations to improve upon these spaces if needed.	CCAT	X			
<b>1.7</b> Research opportunities in North Maple Ridge and based on the Commercial & Industrial Strategy (2014) west of 222nd Street, east of 227th Street along DTR to create spaces in these high need areas.	Planning	X			
<b>1.8</b> Review the Off-Street Parking and Loading Bylaw's parking space requirements for child care centres.	Planning	X			
<b>1.9</b> Develop a Child Care Facility policy similar to OCP Policy 6-45 (Employment Lands) which sets out preferable attributes of future child care facility locations.  Possible attributes could include along major transportation corridors, access to green spaces, opportunity for unstructured play, etc. These attributes can be broken out by scale of child care facility.	Planning	X	X		
<b>1.10</b> Review zoning bylaw definitions to better align with other City bylaws (i.e. Business Licencing Regulation) and other governing agency definitions, when appropriate.	Planning	X			
<b>1.11</b> Explore permitting Neighbourhood Daycares in an Accessory Building similar to Home Based Businesses. This would apply to larger suburban / rural lots (i.e. RS-1, RS-1a, RS-1b, RS-1c, RS-1d, RS-2, RS-3).	Planning	X			
<b>1.12</b> Explore owner-occupancy requirements for Neighbourhood Day Cares.	Planning	X			
<b>1.13</b> Develop an updated Child Care Needs Assessment every five years (pending funding).	PRC, Planning		X		



RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & ACTIONS	LEAD	2020-2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2029	ONGOING
<b>2. Advocacy</b>					
<b>2.1</b> Support the advocacy of local agencies for a publicly funded child care system, like that of the public education system.	CCAT				X
<b>2.2</b> Support the advocacy of enhancing access to the Child Care Subsidy, including for median or moderate income families and ongoing, increased funding dollars for educational bursaries for early childhood educators, and continued and increased wage and benefit enhancements for early childhood educator's to attract qualified professional's and support the existing and new child care spaces being created.	CCAT	X	X		
<b>2.3</b> Enhance funding support to agencies and organizations for children with varying abilities.	CCAT	X	X		
<b>2.4</b> Work with the Ministry of Health to explore strategies regarding meeting outdoor play space requirements and extended hours.	CCAT	X	X		
<b>3. Creating &amp; Supporting Spaces</b>					
<b>3.1</b> Explore all mechanisms, including developing civic child care facilities, accessing senior government grants and working with developers to maximize child care spaces.	Planning, PRC	X			
<b>3.2</b> Share information on new opportunities for agencies and partners to co-locate.	CCAT, Building, Planning				X
<b>3.3</b> Monitor funding and grant opportunities, along with future actions planned by senior levels of government regarding child care initiatives, to maximize opportunities to enhance affordable, accessible and quality care in Maple Ridge.	CCAT				X





RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & ACTIONS	LEAD	2020-2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2029	ONGOING
<b>4. Accessibility &amp; Inclusion</b>					
<b>4.1</b> Consult with Indigenous and multicultural and immigrant serving agencies and organization to determine ways to improve cultural programming and awareness.	CCAT				X
<b>4.2</b> Review child care settings to support accessible barrier free designs and inclusive elements in locations of child care reflective of special needs populations.	CCAT				X
<b>4.3</b> Work with the Ministry of Health to ensure that the creation of extended care opportunities (before 6am, after 6pm, overnight, weekends, drop-in care) are obtainable and barrier free for child care operators to incorporate into their programs.	CCAT	X	X		
<b>5 Collaboration &amp; Partnerships</b>					
<b>5.1</b> Support child care facilities in applying for senior government funding, accessing statistical information, facilitating partnerships, etc.	CCAT				X
<b>5.2</b> Prepare information for developers and realtors. This information would document needs, identify opportunities, discuss facility requirements, and provide links to resource materials.	Economic Development	Completed			
<b>5.3</b> Participate on the Ridge Meadows Community Children's Table, including any action teams related to child care and child development.	PRC				X
<b>5.4</b> Identify educational opportunities for students in early childhood education to increase the number of Early Childhood Educators (including infant/toddler and special needs designation) in the field to support the creation of new spaces.	CCAT, Education, Child Care Operators	X			



RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & ACTIONS	LEAD	2020 - 2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2029	ONGOING
<b>5.5</b> Foster relationships with senior levels of government to ensure the City is consulted on Federal and Provincial policy changes.	All				X
<b>6. Monitoring &amp; Research</b>					
<b>6.1</b> Review Maple Ridge's child care space needs and dependant on funding, update child care space targets.	PRC, Planning		X	X	
<b>6.2</b> Learn about child care needs in Maple Ridge and how they can build capacity to meet child care needs.	CCAT, Child Care Operators				X
<b>7. Promotion &amp; Marketing</b>					
<b>7.1</b> Create awareness through promotion and marketing of caregiver and child care operator supports, services and resources.	CCAT				X
<b>7.2</b> Improve availability of information to Maple Ridge families on child care and family-related resources.	CCAT				X
<b>7.3</b> Update, as needed, the City's child care webpage and resources, including child care location map to provide information on current civic initiatives related to child care and links to useful resources that build awareness and educate the community.	PRC				X
<b>7.4</b> Support agencies to expand the complement of promotional vehicles such as social media to share information about child care with caregivers and child care providers.	CCAT				X