



## TOWN OF SIDNEY

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### Report to Committee of the Whole

**TO:** Chair and Committee Members  
**FROM:** Alison Verhagen, Senior Manager of Current Planning  
**DATE:** September 15, 2020 **FILE NO.:** 6970-20  
**SUBJECT:** Sidney Child Care Inventory & Action Plan– Final Report

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#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and summary of the Sidney Childcare Inventory and Action Plan to accompany the consultant's presentation and final report submission.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

At its regular meeting on January 14, 2019, Town Council agreed to participate in a joint application with Central Saanich, Highlands, North Saanich, Oak Bay, and Saanich to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for the Community Child Care Planning Program in order to fund a gap analysis study for daycare services.

In the summer of 2019, an inter-municipal working group comprised of one municipal staff member from each partner municipality oversaw the Request for Proposals (RFP) process to retain a consultant to produce a gap analysis and childcare action plan.

Following an open RFP process, the contract was awarded to Queenswood Consulting, for a contract price of \$130,850. The regional project was funded in its totality by the Community Child Care Planning Program.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The Town's Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1920 contains objectives and policies to encourage a balanced population (policy 5.3) and to provide a mix of amenities for all residents (policy 13.3.1). However, direct inclusion of child care as an element of the community in Sidney OCP is limited to the discussion of institutional land use in section 12, where child care is listed as an institutional use of land.

The benefits to the Town of advocating for and supporting the provision of affordable, accessible and quality child care are multi-fold. Having accessible, affordable and quality child care helps children, youth, families and the local economy thrive by supporting families in sustaining employment and making it easier for local businesses to attract and retain a stable workforce.

A chronic shortage of daycare space is causing significant problems for young families on the Saanich Peninsula and in the surrounding municipalities - impacting the quality of life, family budgets, and municipal economies. The action plan identified three main barriers to expanding childcare spaces throughout the study area: 1) finding and retaining qualified staff; 2) access to buildings or land suitable for child care facilities, and 3) funding to support child care development and operation.

Staff highlight the following key findings from the report:

- Across Sidney, there were 298 full-time licensed child care spaces identified in 2019: 32 Infant Toddler; 88 Thirty months to school age; 72 Group school age; 20 Preschool and 4 Family care.
- Sidney's available licensed child care spaces met just under half (42%) of the Town's estimated demand.
- Sidney's 298 full-time licensed spaces translate into an availability ratio of 16 licensed child care spaces available for every 100 children aged 0 to 12. Sidney's availability ratio of 16/100 is well

below the BC average of 37 licensed child care spaces available for every 100 children 0 to 12 years of age.

- 34% of surveyed families with paid child care reported that the search for care took 7 months or longer, and another 34% found care within one month of needing it. The remaining 32% of surveyed families reported that the search took 2 to 6 months.

The action plan also included the collection of qualitative data in the form of interviews with community partner organizations, municipal staff and child care providers and an online survey for parents and families to help inform the analysis and recommendations included in the action plan.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:**

Having reviewed the Action Plan recommendations and recognizing the workload associated with on-going planning projects, staff are proposing the following implementation plan and timeline for the main recommendations contained in the Action Plan.

Recommended actions		Proposed Actions	Implementation timeline
Bylaw & Policy Review	<i>OCP Bylaw No. 1920</i>	The Action Plan will be analyzed as part of the upcoming comprehensive OCP review to evaluate the degree to which the Town’s land use policies could further support the provision of the child care spaces needed to meet the community’s need.	2020-2021
	<i>Zoning Bylaw No. 2015</i>	Investigate options to and community support for amending Zoning Bylaw 2015 to allow licensed group child care centres as a permitted land use in residential and neighbourhood commercial zones.  Consider revising the definitions for Daycare and Child Care Facility with the requirements of the Child Care Licensing Regulation in mind.	2022
	<i>Policy DV-013 Bonus Density &amp; Community Amenity Contribution</i>	Consider adding child care facilities to the list of tangible amenities Council may accept as an alternate to a cash contribution.	2022
	<i>Parks Master Plan</i>	Consider including a reference to Early Childhood Education in the next update of the Parks Master plan.	TBD, when plan is next updated
Partnerships/ Advocacy	Sharing child care inventory findings with relevant municipal committees.		2020
	Staff representation at the Peninsula Connections for Early Childhood community table.		2021 and ongoing

	Adopting a Child Care Partnership Guideline (Policy) to designate one or more staff positions as the lead contact for organizations seeking to create or expand child care.	2022
	Promoting the Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education and work with local groups to acknowledge all nominees.	2022
	Writing a letter of support for the creation of a local Workforce Development Program to support people to receive basic training for Early Childhood Education	2021
	Informing and advocating on issues which require action from other orders of government or community groups and cannot be directly addressed by the municipal government	Ongoing
Space Creation	Exploring options to support the construction of new child care facilities on municipally owned land.	Ongoing, as facility planning occurs

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the 2020 Sidney Child Care Inventory and Action Plan prepared by Queenswood Consulting Group be received;
2. That the recommended actions and implementation plan outlined in the staff report titled, “Sidney Child Care Inventory & Action Plan– Final Report”, dated September 15, 2020, be adopted; and
3. That staff report back to Council following the adoption of a new Official Community Plan to provide an update on the implementation plan for the 2020 Sidney Child Care Action Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

I concur,

I concur,



Alison Verhagen, MCIP RPP  
Senior Manager, Current Planning



Corey Newcomb, MCIP RPP  
Senior Manager, Long Range Planning



Randy Humble  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachments:**

Appendix A: Town of Sidney 2020 Child Care Inventory and Action Plan