



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: November 20, 2023
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: November 29, 2023
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services
SUBJECT: Childcare Strategy Implementation Phase 1 Update and Next Steps

Recommendations

THAT Council receive this report for information.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report provides an update on implementation of *Making Strides: Vancouver's 10-Year Childcare Strategy* and on work to advance the *Council Motion: Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements (RTS 15496)*.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

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)*.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing.

Context and Background

Vancouver's families are facing an urgent and immediate need for childcare. Less than half of all Vancouver families that want childcare have access to a space.

While childcare is a Provincial responsibility, the City continues to play a strong role in supporting families through land-use policies and regulation, as well as through municipal leadership and innovation. Vancouver's significant investments in childcare infrastructure have enabled the creation of over 5,000 childcare spaces over the past five decades (including full-time care for children ages 0–5; school age care for children ages 5–12, and part-day preschool programs for children ages 3–5). The City's greatest impact has been in securing childcare for children ages 0–5. Between the late 1970s to fall 2023, the City has:

- Facilitated the creation of over 2,800 full-day spaces, which accounts for almost half of the licensed full-day childcare supply for children ages 0-5.
- Committed to an additional 3,000 childcare spaces for children ages 0–5, currently in planning or under development.¹

Historically, most of Vancouver's childcare spaces were enabled through Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) and Development Cost Levies (DCLs); however, recent senior government commitments to the development of a national, universal childcare system have led to an increasing number of spaces delivered through partnerships with the Province, Vancouver School Board (VSB), Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and non-profit organizations.

Senior government priorities are now shifting, with new childcare commitments, new funding, and the transition of responsibility for childcare into the new Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC), created in 2022. In response to these shifts, City Council approved *Making Strides: Vancouver's 10-Year Childcare Strategy* in June 2022, outlining the City's approach to supporting the development of a new universal system of early care and learning led by Provincial and Federal governments. This is a time of change, as senior governments' plans to build this new universal childcare system continue to unfold.

Since the adoption of the *Making Strides* Childcare Strategy (2022), staff have focused implementation efforts primarily on:

1. Working with the Province to align City policies, procedures, and directions, responding to opportunities as they emerge, and seeking to maximize outcomes in partnership with senior government, as directed by Council in the *Motion to Harmonize City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements* (Dec 2022);
2. Expediting childcare development by simplifying City processes, eliminating barriers, and providing clarity to applicants seeking to open and expand childcare centres; and
3. Developing a Childcare Expansion Framework, which identifies Vancouver's existing and projected demand for childcare spaces, outlines site categories for childcare

¹ The 3,000+ spaces in planning / development stages include approx. 850 spaces that have been counted in the 5,000+ spaces that the City has enabled the creation of in the past five decades.

development, and prioritizes opportunities for childcare space expansion, including with alternative and innovative new approaches such as modular and prefabricated childcare.

Moving forward, one of the City's key roles in advancing senior governments' priority to implement a universal system of childcare will be to help plan for, coordinate and direct significant childcare capital investments from senior governments. A second role will be to align City investments with the Provincially-directed focus on long-term investments in public and non-profit-operated childcare. And a third key role will be to continue to use regulatory and land-use powers to enable efficient delivery of all types of childcare across the city.

City staff efforts will continue to be, unless otherwise directed by Council, to focus on support for full-day childcare for 0–5-year-olds, and much-needed care for infants and toddlers (0–3-year-olds). The City has invested in school age care (for ages 5–12) over the last two decades and with increasing senior government leadership, an increased role for School Boards is expected, as this type of care is most needed and most successful when delivered on school grounds. The City continues to work with the VSB and the MECC to support efforts to address the considerable gap in school age care in Vancouver, as well as to find opportunities to create 0–5 spaces in schools and on school grounds, to provide families with a one-stop continuum of care.

All types of childcare play an important role in helping to address the significant gaps in supply, and the City is working to create favourable conditions for delivery of all childcare, including commercial childcare, to fit within or alongside a senior government-led, universal system.

Discussion

While *Making Strides* lays the groundwork for a wide range of policies and actions on childcare, staff focused this report on Phase 1, which responds to Council's key childcare priorities: (1) harmonization with Provincial childcare policies, and (2) speeding up the delivery of childcare.

1. Harmonizing the City of Vancouver's Childcare Design Guidelines

In response to the December 7, 2022 Council Motion *Harmonizing City of Vancouver and Provincial Childcare Policies and Licensing Requirements*, staff have undertaken several pieces of work, including: (1) conducting a review of Vancouver's Childcare Design Guidelines, (2) performing a comparative analysis of the Province's mandatory Child Care Licensing Regulation with the City's Childcare Design Guidelines (Appendix A), and (3) integrating actions resulting from this motion into the Childcare Strategy implementation workplan. Further efforts will involve updating the City's approach to childcare needs assessment and space creation targets to align with the Province, work to be included as part of an upcoming Childcare Expansion Framework.

Additionally, staff have been working closely with MECC in the early development of its ChildCareBC Design Guidelines, and have been advised by the Province to wait for approval and implementation of the new Provincial guidelines before making significant policy changes.

The proposed ChildCareBC Design Guidelines will be applicable to all childcare projects seeking capital funding opportunities from the Province. The goal of these Provincial Childcare Guidelines is to ensure that publicly-funded childcare facilities meet a Provincial standard for quality, efficiency, safety, and functionality. Staff have been informed that Provincial approval and adoption of the Guidelines will take place in the spring of 2024.

Next steps: Once the ChildCareBC Facility Design Guidelines have been approved and are made public, they, or a customized version that addresses Vancouver-specific conditions, (including high-density and tall developments, space sharing, etc.), will be recommended to Council for adoption. Staff anticipate recommending two distinct pathways for Council consideration for childcare development in Vancouver:

- **Non-City-owned childcare facilities:** may be recommended to solely meet the Provincially-legislated Child Care Licensing Regulation, as outlined in the BC Community Care and Assisted Living Act, and would no longer be required to meet any Vancouver Childcare Design Guidelines. Applicants will still be supported through a streamlined set of conditions through the City's development and permitting processes. Additionally, it is noted that non-City-invested childcare developments may opt to align with the ChildCareBC Design Guidelines, if seeking access to Provincial childcare funding.
- **City-owned and/or City-funded childcare facilities:** may be recommended to meet both the Provincially-legislated Child Care Licensing Regulation, as outlined in the BC Community Care and Assisted Living Act, and the proposed ChildCareBC Design Guidelines. Note that any City-owned/funded childcare facilities will be required to meet Provincial guidelines to be eligible for current and future sources of Provincial funding. Applicants will still be supported through a streamlined set of conditions through the City's development and permitting processes.

In the interim, staff are assessing childcare applications for the opportunities towards streamlining. Staff will continue working on aligning processes and procedures to ensure consistency in the development process.

2. Speeding Up Childcare Delivery

A key priority in Council's motions and *Making Strides* is to increase the number of childcare spaces in Vancouver. To support this, a cross-departmental working group was formed, bringing together staff with childcare permitting experience from the Development Review Branch, the Rezoning Centre, the Services Centre, the Building Policy Branch, the Renovations Centre, City Wide and Regional Planning, and Social Policy and Projects. The working group focused on improving childcare development processes, including streamlining approvals, identifying process barriers and clarifying City requirements, while also ensuring future alignment with Provincial directions, policies and guidelines for childcare. Key outcomes of this work are summarized below.

a. *Streamlining Development Permit Reviews*

To expedite the development permit review process, the City is refocusing development permit requirements to move away from detailed design considerations and prioritize evaluating appropriate uses for a site.

To align with this direction, ACCS staff conducted a review of childcare development permit conditions, and to date, have eliminated 24 out of 33 typical childcare development permit conditions. The remaining nine conditions have been simplified to focus on childcare use. For example, recognizing that design is reviewed by Provincial licensing, City staff will no longer review design details at the development permit stage, such as the location of cubbies, nap rooms, and other room layout details. Staff expect that these changes will significantly speed up development permit review for childcare applications.

Next Steps: Staff will continue implementation of a simplified development process for childcare.

b. Updating and Clarifying Childcare Parking

Parking standards for childcare facilities are currently outlined in the City's Childcare Design Guidelines, which require two parking spaces for staff (classified as parking) and one pick-up drop-off space (classified as loading) for every eight full-time licensed childcare spaces. For example, a 37-space childcare facility requires a total of seven parking spaces, with five spaces designated as loading for family pick-up drop-off and two spaces dedicated for staff parking.

City staff have found that Vancouver applicants are increasingly having difficulty in meeting these parking requirements, especially in privately-owned childcare facilities for which existing space is retrofitted to accommodate a childcare business. The upcoming ChildCareBC Facility Design Guidelines are not expected to address childcare facility parking requirements explicitly, as parking needs and opportunities vary greatly between communities in BC. Therefore, City staff are exploring ways to update, simplify and clarify parking requirements to facilitate childcare development in Vancouver.

Next Steps: Staff are exploring initiation of a study with an engineering consultant to confirm loading requirements for childcare facilities in different areas of the City. The expected outcome would be a recommendation regarding the number of on-site pick-up/drop off spaces that can be feasibly delivered by applicants on different types of sites around the City, while considering impacts for traffic congestion and children's safety when families access childcare services. In order to streamline City regulations, staff are also exploring moving childcare parking standards from the Childcare Design Guidelines to the Parking Bylaw, alongside other parking requirements, including those of similar institutional uses (e.g., schools, places of worship).

c. Clarifying Childcare in Residential Zones

Vancouver stands out in the region for its flexibility in permitting childcare facilities. Unlike other municipalities in Metro Vancouver, the City allows childcare as a conditional use in most zones, including residential areas. This flexibility has led to innovative childcare solutions, such as creating childcare facilities on the roof of an underused downtown parkade. However, the current definition of childcare in the Zoning and Development Bylaw often causes confusion for both City staff and applicants, especially when it comes to childcare in residential zones. For this reason, a cross-departmental working group (DBL, PDS, ACCS) has been looking to revisit and potentially revise references to childcare in the Zoning and Development Bylaw.

The current definition of childcare in the Zoning and Development By-law distinguishes between programs serving eight or fewer children and those serving more than eight. As the childcare landscape has evolved, this distinction has become inadequate for providing clear guidance for childcare proposals in residential zones. In recent years, there has been an increase in applicants seeking to open or expand licensed Group Childcare (8+ space) facilities on residential properties, without the operator residing there, fundamentally changing the property's use from residential to institutional.

Under the current Zoning and Development By-law definition of childcare, if an applicant proposes Licensed Group Childcare with eight spaces or fewer without an operator in residence, a development permit is not required, even though this use is institutional, commercial and permanent in nature. This kind of use would typically trigger the need for building review to determine if fire code and other safety upgrades would be required, especially if providing care for children under the age of three.

A description and summary of the definition of Childcare in the Zoning and Development By-law is provided as Appendix C.

Next Steps: Staff are exploring options and will report back to Council on clarifying the childcare definition in the Zoning and Development By-law, identify zones in which childcare would be suitable as an outright use, and explore ways to address any licensing or safety considerations related to childcare as an outright use. This cross-departmental effort (PDS, DBL, ENG, REFM, Law, and ACCS) will need to consider options and implications in order to propose how best to thoughtfully enable childcare across the city as an outright use. This will help maintain alignment with Provincial regulations and balance the intent of residential zoning, while continuing to provide opportunities for childcare in residential zones with appropriate City regulatory oversight.

d. *Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy*

The Board of Parks and Recreation and Community Centre Associations are public partners in supporting childcare. All of Vancouver's community centres include childcare programming and the co-location of childcare centres is a key consideration in the planning of any new and renewed community centres. In order to facilitate the creation of more full-day non-profit licensed childcare spaces in Vancouver, ACCS staff recently worked with Park Board staff to consider how to expand full-day childcare spaces within existing Community Centres located on park land. An important consideration was balancing the licensing requirement for dedicated outdoor space for childcare facilities with the Park Board's core mandate to provide public access to parks. One of the results of this collaboration was the Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy (Appendix B), approved by the Vancouver Park Board on July 17, 2023. This Policy outlines considerations for processing requests for exclusive use of community centre-adjacent park space to support new or expanded full day non-profit licensed group childcare programs within existing community centres, and establishes criteria staff will use to consider an application, including operational factors such as hours of exclusive use.

Next Steps: Initiation of the first project under this new policy is expected before the end of 2023, and to be completed in 2024.

3. Connecting Delivery of Childcare and Housing – Working with the Province

Given the recently released, provincially mandated housing targets do not have commensurate targets or support for delivering childcare, in conjunction with the recently passed Council Motion *Enabling the Rapid Deployment of Additional Childcare Spaces Combined with Essential Worker Housing in the City of Vancouver*, it is imperative to work with the Province on pursuing opportunities. City Staff convened senior staff at multiple provincial ministries to discuss the links between expanding housing and childcare supply together. A key outcome is a regular (bi-monthly) meeting series among governments to identify and capitalize on shared opportunities.

Next Steps: City staff will continue to seek to work with Provincial staff on this challenge. Furthermore, work will commence on developing a strategy and plan to realize the aim of the recent Council Motion to accelerate childcare delivery and innovative housing solutions.

4. Development of the Childcare Expansion Framework

For the past decade, the City's estimates for childcare space demand have been based on a model that considers factors likely to impact childcare demand, such as child population, labour force participation of parents, affordability, differences in enrolment trends by age group, etc. Staff are developing an updated Childcare Expansion Framework that will outline existing and projected need for childcare and identify opportunities for childcare space expansion in Vancouver. It will aid in decision-making by mapping out where Vancouver is in terms of meeting demand for childcare, outlining options available for the City to play a role in meeting existing

and future demand, and identifying opportunities for outcomes to be maximized in partnership with the Province of BC and local partners towards the goal of universal childcare.

Key areas of consideration will include building on existing work to collocate in civic projects, to pursue childcare opportunities in rezoning and development sites across the city, and to continue to remove barriers for private childcare applicants. New areas of expansion include new partnerships, including the pilot delivery of new modular and prefab childcare, collocation of childcare in Province-led projects, and enabling employers to deliver childcare in the workplace.

Overall Next Steps

Staff will report back in Q2/Q3 2024 with Phase Two of the *Making Strides Implementation Plan*, including finalization of the City’s childcare policy and guideline harmonization efforts, a Childcare Expansion Framework, and a proposed long-term financial strategy for childcare.

Financial Implications

Providing childcare is primarily the responsibility of senior governments. The recent investments from both provincial and federal governments have been transformative in creating affordable childcare. The City welcomes these new initiatives since, in the absence of senior government support, the City does not have the capacity to preserve and expand childcare to address critical service gaps in Vancouver. The City uses a variety of tools to enable childcare delivery:

- *Development contributions* – The City secures “turn-key” childcare through CACs and/or inclusionary zoning polices. Staff are presently reviewing the implications of legislation recently introduced by the Provincial Government which, if enacted, will significantly alter the City’s existing mechanisms to finance amenities to serve a growing population.
- *City contributions on school grounds* – The City provides capital funding to deliver childcare on school grounds as part of seismic upgrades and redevelopment.
- *City-owned childcare* – The City provides capital funding to renew and/or expand childcare at community facilities.
- *City land contributions* – The City provides land to NPOs to deliver affordable housing and/or social facilities which may include childcare.
- *Capital grants* – The City provides capital grants to deliver childcare on non-profit or senior government land.
- *Nominal DCLs* – Childcare is eligible for nominal DCL rates (\$20 per facility), which substantially reduce the overall projects costs.

Even with the new senior government funding programs, overall investments in childcare will still fall short of the significant needs, particularly due to high land value, limited space, and complex design and construction associated with high-density mixed-use development in Vancouver. To achieve the ~7,500 spaces (0-4 years old) envisioned in *Making Strides*, ~\$2.25 billion (excl. land) of capital funding is required. As such, the City must continue to advocate for sustainable and predictable senior government funding, while leveraging its regulatory powers, policy levers, and financial tools to preserve and expand affordable childcare.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

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Appendix A: Comparative Analysis of City of Vancouver Childcare Design Guidelines Relative to BC Child Care Licensing Regulation

TABLE 1: COMPARATIVE SCOPE of City of Vancouver Childcare Design Guidelines Relative to BC Child Care Licensing Regulation

Area of Consideration	Key Distinctions between City and Provincial Childcare Design Standards	BC Licensing Standard - Vancouver Coastal Health Community Care Facilities Licensing (CCFL)	City Design Guidelines
Key Resources	n/a	BC Provincial Community Care and Assisted Living Act: Child Care Licensing Regulation	CoV Childcare Design Guidelines (2021)
Additional Design Resources	n/a	CCFL Design Resource for Child Care Facilities CCFL Licensing Application Guide - Group Childcare, ages 0-5 BC Child Care Facility Design Standard (potential future standard)	CoV Childcare Design and Technical Guidelines (2021): (publicly available for reference, but required only for City-owned childcares)
Application - Types of care	While BC Licensing Regulation applies to all licensed care, City design guidelines apply only to group care for age 0-4, which generally requires the most complex facility design and development process.	All licensed care all ages, including home-based family childcare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Licensing Regulation sets nominally similar standards across license types on a per-child basis. • Practical application requires the most complex facility design for group care, particularly in high density contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoV Childcare Design Guidelines apply to new group childcare for ages 0-4 (infant/toddler, 3-5 and preschool) • Family Childcare, school age, and other license types are regulated through zoning, VBBL, etc
Mandate	While BC Licensing Regulation sets design and operational requirements for all childcare, City guidelines' purpose is more focused:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure facilities are licensed and premises, staffing, operations etc are in compliance with basic health and safety standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of licensable group childcare facilities from enquiry through development permitting process (enquiry, RZ, DP, BP)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to support successful initial and ongoing licensing by CCFL once occupied • to minimize use conflicts over public and shared spaces (e.g. roads, parks, common areas in mixed-use development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are performance-based and apply to fully built and staffed facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are prescriptive, and apply to facility designs proposed at an early stage of development.
<p>Key Objectives</p>	<p>Objectives of City Guidelines and BC Licensing Regulation broadly align on facility design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic health and safety is the focus of quantitative standards in BC Regulation; • Functional viability and healthy child development are shared objectives of flexibly applied qualitative standards in BC Regulation (Schedule G) and of City guidelines • City guidelines further reflect municipal objectives to mitigate neighbourhood impacts, particularly in high density contexts (e.g. parking, public park access). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure basic health and safety standards are met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align City permitting and VCH Licensing processes to provide early assurance for childcare applicants that a licensed facility can be achieved • Provide clear area standards for BC licensing requirements with no standards identified (nap areas, kitchens, storage) • Provide specific targets to achieve healthy child outcomes • Identify outdoor play needs in high-density environments • Manage pressures on public parks and greenspaces
<p>How and When Applied</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of City guidelines in early development supports design of new purpose-built group childcare facilities that can achieve and maintain a BC license (including in complex mixed-use and high-density contexts) to minimize both licensing uncertainty and negative neighbourhood impacts. • City Guidelines are applied flexibly to guide planning and permitting of new group centres from initial design to occupancy permit. BC 	<p>CCFL determination of licensing and maximum capacity is performance-based.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final assessment of licensability and capacity after occupancy • Assessment of licensability varies considerably across sites • BC Licensing Regulation sets operational requirements including daily outdoor programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Guidelines and by-laws set prescriptive, consistent area and design standards, to offer greater development certainty and guide proposals at early stages. • Guidelines are applied flexibly to all new group childcare proposals serving ages 0-4, to support all projects to meet the intent of the guidelines to the fullest extent possible based on site conditions and

	<p>Licensing Regulation is applied later in development, with licensed capacity issued once a facility is built and furnished. Some aspects of the BC Licensing Regulation are applied flexibly and others are not.</p>	<p>However VCH Licensing review does not consider or review permissions for operations to access land, including proposed regular access to public land and parks.</p>	<p>contexts. A high degree of flexibility is applied for childcare proposed in existing buildings.</p>
<p>How Reviewed</p>	<p>City and VCH staff work together at Development Permit stage to coordinate and align City and early Licensing reviews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCH CCFL offers comments on proposed childcare development plans at the Development Permit stage • Licensing capacity is determined once a facility is fully occupied, staffed, and furnished • Licensing officers visit a childcare facility once it is fully built, staffed, and furnished, to determine if a license can be issued for the proposed operations, and for how many children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and direction is provided by City Staff through early enquiry and/or rezoning processes • Final application of Childcare Design Guidelines is at the Development Permit (DP) process. • VCH CCFL is identified as a review group at DP process.

TABLE 2: Comparative Standards And Application of City of Vancouver Childcare Design Guidelines Relative to BC Child Care Licensing Regulation

Standard	Analysis of differences, application and rationale	BC Licensing Standard	City Design Guidelines
<p>Indoor Area Standards - ACTIVITY AREAS</p>	<p>City Guidelines functionally align with BC Licensing Regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Guidelines space standards appear slightly larger due to measuring gross area rather than net area, reflecting the timeline of City review at DP stage, prior to construction and furnishing. 	<p>BC Net Indoor Activity Area Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.7 m²/child, all ages Licensing excludes door swings, circulation, furniture and equipment from Activity Area calculation once space is occupied. 	<p>COV Net Indoor Activity Area Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 0-3 = 4.13 m²/child Age 3-4 - 4.56 m²/child
<p>Indoor Area Standards - SUPPORT AREAS</p>	<p>City guidelines functionally align with BC Licensing Regulation, with some minor differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Guidelines space standards appear larger due to including estimated area to meet mandatory licensing standards, whereas BC Licensing Regulation does not identify areas for required support functions. Minor differences pertain to specific support areas recommended in City Guidelines which are not mandatory in BC Licensing (e.g. parent rooms) 	<p>BC Regulation does not provide area standards for MANDATORY support areas including kitchen, washrooms, nap rooms, office, laundry, janitorial, storage, garbage, staff room, office. Functions are specific and required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e.g. washrooms require 1 toilet and 1 sink per 10 children, in a design that allows staff to supervise children accessing washrooms e.g. nap rooms /sleeping areas: Separate sleeping area located away from any activity area and within sightlines of operators; for children under 36 months must accommodate 12 cribs/mats 	<p>Minimum recommended areas identified for required support spaces, estimating space required for functional delivery of Licensing Requirements</p> <p>COV Indoor Support Area Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 0-3 is 5.3 m²/child Age 3-4 is 2.66 m²/child
<p>Outdoor Area Standards</p>	<p>City guidelines apply a flexible gross area standard that exceeds strict net minimum area standard in BC Regulations, to address objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy child development (evidence for physical, mental health) 	<p>BC Net Outdoor Activity Area Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6m²/child minimum (net) Licensing will exclude furniture, storage, and fixed equipment from Activity Area calculation Multiple groups of same age/license type may be allowed to share play space if Standards of Play regulations can be met (performance based) 	<p>COV Gross Outdoor Activity Area Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10.5 - 14 m²/child (more space recommended for older/more active children) COV gross area count includes all furniture, equipment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional viability (ability to meet BC standard for outdoor play) • Minimizing public park impacts (if site below licensing standard) • Licensability (supporting intended capacity) • City standards are applied flexibly based on site limitations, and measure gross area, reflecting City review before construction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Existing Buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 15% reduction allowed (12 m2/child) ◦ Additional reductions considered for efficient design ◦ OR Space may be shared between up to two programs of same age/license (gross area of 7 m2/child)
<p>Outdoor Areas – Potential Offsite Activity Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City guidelines functionally align with BC Regulations, with some additional guidance to minimize use conflicts in public parks • While BC Regulations offer no specific requirements regarding ownership of land, City guidelines seek ability to meet licensing requirements onsite for full-day childcare, applied in alignment with Vancouver Parks and Recreation policy for use of public parks. 	<p>Offsite play area considerations are performance-based and not finalized until occupancy. Considerations include crowding/capacity, proximity, ease and safety of access and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can meet daily Standards of play, age-appropriate equipment • Safety of offsite play space (other users, near traffic/noise) • Ability to maintain required staff ratios (to supervise children) • Supports (e.g. WC, drinking water, barriers from traffic/users) 	<p>Primary (daily) outdoor play offsite allowed for preschool, but not for full-day care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplementary (occasional) outdoor play offsite to allow a reduction in onsite space may be considered if proposed offsite space has sufficient capacity (in consultation with Parks), and is considered suitable for childcare use (as per CCFL criteria)
<p>Other Design Considerations (beyond area standards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City guidelines functionally align with BC Regulations, with some additional guidance to support functional viability • City guidelines are flexibly applied considering site limitations to encourage contiguous indoor and outdoor areas. This supports feasible operations to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to strict regulations on space requirements, staffing, and program size, BC Licensing Regulation provides advice on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Best practices for program activities ◦ Identifying reportable incidents • Operational requirements include daily outdoor programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design performance (staffing optimization, supervisability) • Contiguous on-site indoor-outdoor space standard • Optimal configurations of age groups to ensure operational

	meet BC Regulation operational standards.		viability and sustainability
Parking	While the City regulates childcare parking through its Guidelines, parking is not a consideration of the BC Licensing Regulation.	Not a Licensing consideration, beyond safety of access.	<p>Parking Bylaw refers to Design Guideline requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff parking (2 per group care facility) • pickup/drop-off stall per 8 childcare spaces in program • Staff are exploring consolidated requirements in Parking Bylaw, with standards for family and school age care.
Suitable Siting (e.g. adjacencies, height above grade, air quality, noise)	<p>Considerations regarding suitable siting are complex in both BC Licensing Regulation, and City policy and regulation (Design Guidelines, Zoning and Development By-law and Building By-law):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare license may be denied on BC Regulations basis of site safety. City standards are applied early across departments and with VCH to minimize risk of late identification as unlicensable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing requirement and concern, but few clear regulations. Performance/Outcomes based (e.g. no height maximum, but evacuation plan must be approved by Licensing.) In some situations, an approved safety plan may be too onerous to achieve • VCH Fact Sheets address childcare-specific consideration including noise pollution, traffic-related air pollution, wildfire smoke 	<p>Conditional use in almost all zones, including light industrial, and some medium industrial zones. City staff work across departments to assess site suitability considerations and to apply internal guidelines for maximum traffic, adjacent uses, maximum height to ensure safety in emergency evacuations</p>

Appendix B: Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy

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APPENDIX A

Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy



VANCOUVER PARK BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy	
CATEGORY: Non-Park Use of Park Space	POLICY NUMBER: <i>to assign</i>

PURPOSE

The Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space (CCCUPS) Policy has been developed to consistently review and address requests by childcare operators operating out of community centres for exclusive use of park space under the jurisdiction of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation ("Park Board") and is applicable to new or expanded group childcare programs proposed in existing community centres.

This policy allows staff to assess proposals against established criteria. Under this policy successful applicants will be granted exclusive use of park space to meet licensing requirements for outdoor space to support group childcare use during, at minimum, operating hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all childcare operators in existing community centres located in or adjacent to public park space.

DEFINITIONS

Exclusive use of park space: Exclusive use of park space means a fenced area within a park under the jurisdiction of the Park Board that is only accessible for childcare use during specific hours.

ELIGIBILITY

Applications under this policy are required to demonstrate that they meet eligibility, planning and design criteria, and that applicants agree to a series of operational and administrative requirements. Staff will provide a standard intake form to guide applications.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

To be considered favourably, the application must be:

- Submitted by an existing or proposed operator of a childcare located in a community centre, or its delegate (such as a Community Centre Association ("CCA")), and
- To support an ongoing proposal for a new or expanded indoor group childcare, noting this policy addresses outdoor space to support an indoor program, and
- Supported in writing by:

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APPENDIX A**Community Centre Childcare Use of Park Space Policy**

VANCOUVER PARK BOARD

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- The Park Board's Director of Recreation,
- City of Vancouver Arts, Culture and Community Services Managing Director of Social Policy and Projects or their delegate
- Licensing Authority (Vancouver Coastal Health)
- Any CCA that is a joint operating partner of the applicable community centre, if not the applicant

Planning and Design Criteria

Criteria for a successful application will include the following:

1. The application must be:
 - For a nominal amount of park space adjacent to an existing Community Centre, noting strategies for co-locating group childcare centres with new or renewed community centres are addressed through the Community Centre Strategy.
 - To support a new or expanded group childcare program that would not otherwise meet the outdoor space requirements as established by the City of Vancouver, the Government of British Columbia and Vancouver Coastal Health.
 - Aligned with minimum provincially-legislated group childcare outdoor space requirements for the proposed facility size (currently 6 sq.m. / child), to a maximum of a 30-child program or 200 sq.m.
2. The proposal must not result in significant negative impacts or conflicts with existing or planned park or recreation uses, as determined by the General Manager of the Park Board in their discretion, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Park features or regularly programmed areas,
 - b. Areas required for external building circulation,
 - c. Riparian or other environmentally important areas,
 - d. Known archaeological sites, or
 - e. Sites of known or suspected cultural significance.
3. The request must not significantly reduce park access within a neighbourhood of low park provision or access as determined by the General Manager of the Park Board in their discretion. Requests will be closely examined for balance between access to park space and childcare use in areas with low provision or access to park space based off up to date Neighbourhood Park Provision map or similar.

Criteria for Operation

Criteria for a successful application will include the following operational and administrative requirements:

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- The requested outdoor space must be open to the public outside of childcare hours while the park is open, with public access hours clearly posted at the site. At minimum this would be days when the childcare is not in operation, but may also include evenings. This criteria will be determined, waived or amended on a case by case basis at the discretion of the General Manager of the Park Board.
- All costs and expenses related to the proposed use are to be funded by the applicant and the request will not result in any additional costs to the Park Board, including:
 - Costs associated with the outdoor space design and construction,
 - Costs associated with day-to-day operations, maintenance and repairs, renewals or upgrades of the outdoor space, and
 - Costs to restore or repair the area to the satisfaction of the Park Board once the proposed use by the childcare operator has ceased.

Agreements

Prior to any work being commenced on the outdoor space proposed for childcare use, the applicant must sign all legal agreements required to confirm terms of use of space, including requirements as noted above, and termination clauses. The type of documentation and approvals process will be based on City and Park Board practices at the time the application is processed under this policy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The applicant must submit a completed intake form, appending all required information. Submission requirements will include:

- Confirmation of applicant eligibility as established by the criteria set out in this policy
- Confirmation that proposal meets planning and design criteria as detailed in this policy
- Confirmation that applicant agrees to operational and administrative requirements as detailed in this policy
- Supporting materials and calculations, as requested by staff, including:
 - Contact information for the applicant
 - Written support to proceed with application by signatories noted on page 1 of this policy.
 - Area calculations, including:
 - Group childcare outdoor area licensing requirement
 - Area of park request
 - Assessment of existing uses in and around the area of proposal
 - Aerial photograph and sketch plan clearly showing area of proposal

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- Aerial photograph clearly demarcating location of underground utilities
- Site photos
- Other relevant supporting materials

Public Engagement

When a proposal is conditionally approved, Park Board staff will lead a community notification process as part of application review. This process will include posting of signage at the site for a period of two weeks. This process will be coordinated by Park Board staff and any community input received will be considered in the final review of the application.

Approval

Park Board staff will submit each compliant application to the General Manager of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation ("General Manager") for their decision. Authority to approve or deny the application will rest with the General Manager; however, any lease or licence required to be granted as part of the application may be subject to the further approval of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, in their sole discretion.

Next Steps

Approval of a proposal under this policy will allow the applicant to proceed with:

1. The design of the outdoor space to, at a minimum, the Park Board's Park Development standards. The design of the outdoor space will be subject to the approval of the General Manager of the Park Board, in their discretion.

Note that other requirements may be required by others, (including meeting the intent of the City's Childcare Design Guidelines and Community Care and Facilities Licensing regulations). This will not be regulated by the Park Board.

2. Entering into any legal agreements required to detail the terms of use including a termination of use clause. The type of documentation and approvals process will be based off City and Park Board practices at the time the application is processed under this policy is processed. Any lease or licence required may be subject to the further approval of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation pursuant to sections 488 and 490 of the Vancouver Charter.

REFERENCE

Outline or link to relevant background or reference information.

RELATED POLICIES

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VanPlay - On October 19, 2020, the Park Board approved the [VanPlay Framework](#) for Vancouver's [Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan](#). VanPlay sets priorities and provides tools and policies to support the pursuit of equity, connectivity and access to parks and recreation for all.

Vancouver Citywide Community Centre Strategy - On April 25, 2022, the Park Board approved Vancouver's [Community Centre Strategy](#) ("CCS"). The CCS outlines a process for planning and delivery of major community centre projects, and provides recommendations and guidance across key areas of community centre service delivery and planning.

City of Vancouver Childcare Strategy - In June 2022, City of Vancouver Council approved "[Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy](#)" (the "Childcare Strategy"). This City of Vancouver Strategy references and aligns itself with the Park Board's Community Centre Strategy's approach to childcare, and notes that a significant number of childcare spaces are located in or adjacent to community centres operated by Vancouver's Board of Parks and Recreation. The Childcare Strategy directs City staff to work with Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation to support policy development guiding shared outdoor space access for childcare operations in parks.

APPROVAL HISTORY

ISSUED BY: Park Planning Policy & Environment	APPROVED BY:	DATE:
AMENDED BY:	APPROVED BY:	DATE:

Appendix C – Childcare Definition in the Zoning and Development By-law

According to the City’s Zoning and Development Bylaw, childcare with more than eight spaces is considered an ‘institutional use’, while childcare with fewer than eight spaces is not. Childcare programs with more than eight spaces are classified and licensed as ‘Group Childcare’ by the Province. In such cases, operators are not allowed to reside where the childcare is provided.

The City’s definition of childcare with fewer than eight spaces as ‘non-institutional’ was originally meant to align with Provincial licensing categories of ‘In-Home Multiage Childcare’ and ‘Family

Childcare provided within an operator’s home has historically been seen as small-scale, temporary, and having a minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The City’s definition, distinguishing between eight spaces or fewer and more than eight spaces, is intended to facilitate and expedite this kind of childcare arrangement without the need for a development permit.

For childcare proposals of more than eight spaces without an operator in residence, applicants must submit a development permit application to assess the suitability of use and request a change from a residential to an institutional use. This process also involves notifying and soliciting feedback from the neighborhood.

An overall summary is provided in Table A.

Table A – Summary of Childcare Definition in the Zoning and Development By-Law

Provincial Childcare License Type	Maximum space capacity	Childcare Definition under Vancouver Zoning and Development	Operator lives in unit?	Principal Use (Municipal)	Development Permit Required?	Building Permit required?
Family Childcare	7 spaces	Childcare if more than 8 on site	Yes – required by Province	Residential	No – special inspections only	
In-Home Multiage Childcare	8 spaces	Childcare if more than 8 on site	Yes- required by Province	Residential	No-special inspections only	
Group Childcare <i>(for 0-3 years, 3-5 years, school age, preschool, multiage)</i>	Between 12-30 depending on age / group childcare type	Childcare if more than 8 on site	No – residential use not allowed by Province	Institutional (intended) Under current definition, no use type is identified if providing 8 or fewer group childcare spaces	DP and BP (intended) Under current definition, no DP required if providing 8 or fewer childcare spaces	