



To: Planning Committee
From: Kim Somerville
Director, Community Social Development
Re: **Child Care Strategy Guiding Principles**

Date: August 28, 2023
File: 07-3070-04/Vol 01

Staff Recommendations

1. That the guiding principles detailed in the staff report titled “Child Care Strategy Guiding Principles”, dated August 28, 2023, from the Director, Community Social Development, be endorsed; and
2. That the guiding principles be used to inform the strategic directions and actions of the draft Child Care Strategy.

Kim Somerville
Director, Community Social Development
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REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Building Approvals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Corporate Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Development Applications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Facilities and Project Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Real Estate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation and Sport Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The City of Richmond has a long history of supporting child care in the community as demonstrated by the development of the Child Care Policy, created in 1991. The latest strategy, the 2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy, was adopted by City Council on July 24, 2017 and was the fourth child care needs assessment undertaken by the City since 1995.

To support the creation of child care spaces, the 2021–2031 Richmond Child Care Action Plan (Plan) was adopted by City Council on April 12, 2021. The Plan complements the strategies by setting defined child care space creation targets and identifying clear actions to meet these.

As the 2017–2022 Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy has come to the end of its life span, the City has commenced work to develop a new 10-year Child Care Strategy (Strategy). The new Strategy will identify needs and priorities of Richmond parents, caregivers and child care providers, identify challenges and opportunities and provide recommendations for addressing child care needs in Richmond.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s approval of the draft guiding principles that will shape the development of a draft Child Care Strategy.

This report supports City Council’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Strategic Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Advocate for the needs of Richmond in collaboration with partners and stakeholders and;

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Strategy #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous city.

This report supports City Council’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Strategic Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Advance a variety of program, services and community amenities to support diverse needs and interest and activate the community.

This report also supports the Social Development Strategy 2013–2022 Strategic Direction #4 Help Richmond’s Children, Youth and Families Thrive:

Action 10: Support the establishments of high quality, safe, child care services in Richmond through:

10.1 Conducting periodic Child Care Needs Assessments, with interim monitoring to identify existing and future child care requirements, by type of care and geographic area of need.

10.6 Consulting and collaborating with child care providers and other community partners on child care issues.

Analysis

The purpose of the new Child Care Strategy is to assess child care needs in Richmond, identify priorities and guide the City, child care operators and community partners to address current and future needs. The Strategy will be developed under the direction of the project team and Child Care Strategy Advisory Committee and will be informed by current best practices, qualitative and quantitative data. Development of the Strategy will be divided into four phases:

1. Phase One: Establish an Advisory Committee, conduct background research and develop Guiding Principles (in progress);
2. Phase Two: Conduct best practice review, collect and analyze demographic data, and develop public engagement plan;
3. Phase Three: Undertake public engagement, collate feedback and data and develop draft Strategy; and
4. Phase Four: Undertake public engagement on the draft Strategy and finalize Child Care Strategy.

The four phases will ensure work is carried out in a systematic fashion and will allow for input from a variety of interested parties. A set of guiding principles will be created during phase one and will help to support the following three phases.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles are intended to guide the project, support decision-making and inform the development of a draft Child Care Strategy for Richmond. The following draft principles are proposed:

1. Community engagement and relations: Maximize meaningful participation and engagement from a diverse community of families, employers and child care providers including Indigenous Elders, families and community members in Richmond.
2. Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility: Identify and prioritize engagement activities that are inclusive, accessible and equitable.

3. Respectful collaboration and partnerships: Collaborate with child care providers, partners and organizations to promote child care quality and workforce stability, as well as improve equitable access to child care in Richmond.
4. Alignment and integration: Ensure the Strategy aligns with and complements relevant City of Richmond strategies, plans, policies and resources that support both families and the child care sector in Richmond.
5. Needs-based and adaptive: Ensure the Strategy is based on the current and forecasted needs for child care in Richmond and can evolve and respond to the changing needs of the community.
6. Informed and sound: Ensure the Strategy's actions and recommendations are evidence-based and data-informed and are reliable and realistic for Richmond's context.

The guiding principles will guide both the project team and Advisory Committee when making decisions, planning engagement activities and considering the development of actions as part of the draft Strategy.

The draft guiding principles were created in collaboration with the Child Care Strategy Advisory Committee, which consists of a broad range of representatives from the public and not-for-profit organizations including:

- City of Richmond
- Community Associations and Societies
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Richmond School District
- Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives
- Richmond Supported Child Development
- Child Care Operators
- Parents

Other members of the community including residents, employees, employers and organizations will be involved in the development of the Strategy through the strategy's engagement process.

Next Steps

Upon City Council endorsement of the proposed guiding principles, a period of focused engagement will take place and may include interviews, focus groups, pop-up events and a survey in order to understand the challenges, opportunities and priorities of the community.

A draft Child Care Strategy and proposed public engagement plan is anticipated to be presented to City Council in mid-2024. Subsequently, the final Child Care Strategy, including the results of the public engagement process, will be presented to City Council for final adoption following public input being collected.

Financial Impact

Council previously approved a one-time additional level for the development of the Child Care Strategy in the 2021 City Budget Process, which will be utilized to fund the proposed public engagement activities and to complete the necessary steps to finalize the Strategy.

Conclusion

The guiding principles will set a strong foundation to help guide the project team and the Advisory Committee in creating the draft Child Care Strategy. The guiding principles will also support the development of draft strategic actions in the new Strategy. Building on the consistent and long-term progress made on the previous Child Care strategies for Richmond, including the 2017–2022 Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy and the 2021–2031 Child Care Action Plan, the new Strategy will help to guide the City and key organizations involved in developing, delivering and supporting the provision of high-quality, accessible and affordable child care in Richmond.



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