

**SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP UPDATE FOR 2023

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council endorse the Child Care Resources Group work plan for 2023.
2. **THAT** Council approve an expenditure of \$1,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget, to support the activities of the Burnaby Child Care Provider Appreciation event in May 2023, as detailed in Section 4.2 of this report.
3. **THAT** staff investigate the feasibility of enforcing adherence to Child Care Resources Group design principal guidelines that facilitate quality childcare and are not a barrier to the addition of new spaces for all childcare developments that receive funding from the City.
4. **THAT** Council support the necessary staff resources for a policy to be developed that supports the addition of new, quality spaces, and for continued partnership in developing new child care facilities.

**REPORT**

The Social Planning Committee, at its meeting held on March 15, 2023, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council approval for the 2023 Child Care Resources Group work plan, and an expenditure of \$1,000 to support the activities of the Burnaby Child Care Provider Appreciation event.

Arising from discussion, the Committee adopted additional recommendations #3 and #4, as noted above.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor A. Gu  
Chair

Councillor M. Santiago  
Vice Chair

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

**DATE:** February 21, 2023

**FROM:** GENERAL MANAGER  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**FILE:** 1750 20

**SUBJECT:** CHILD CARE RESOURCES GROUP UPDATE FOR 2023

**PURPOSE:** To provide an update on the activities of the Child Care Resources Group during 2022 and propose a work plan for 2023.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to endorse the Child Care Resources Group work plan for 2023.
2. **THAT** the Committee request Council to approve an expenditure of \$1,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget to support the activities of the Burnaby Child Care Provider Appreciation event in 2023 May, as detailed in *Section 4.2* of this report.

**REPORT****1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Child Care Resources Group (CCRG) was established in 1990 as an advisory body to the City on child care matters. It is comprised of representatives from non-profit child care societies operating in Burnaby, as well as Fraser Health Community Care Facilities Licensing, the Burnaby School District, the Burnaby-New Westminster Child Care Resource and Referral Program, and the City's Planning and Parks, Recreation and Culture departments.

As outlined in its Terms of Reference and Burnaby's Child Care Policy, the mandate of the CCRG is to:

- serve as an advisory body on child care matters;
- assist with the development of Burnaby child care policies, services and programs; and
- act as an advocate for child care services and programs in Burnaby.

In accordance with the Child Care Policy, the CCRG prepares update reports on its activities for the Social Planning Committee and Council. This report provides an overview of activities in 2022 and proposes a work plan for the CCRG for 2023.

## 2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Over the years, the CCRG has assisted staff in monitoring the child care environment and identifying and providing advice to address emerging issues in child care. It was instrumental in developing the *City's Child Care Policy*, adopted in 1994 and revised in 2000. The Policy's vision states that the City is committed to:

- assisting with the creation of a comprehensive and inclusive child care system in Burnaby;
- supporting families and children in their search for child care options; and
- working with the Board of Education, government ministries, child care providers, community service providers, and others in pursuing the City's child care objectives.

Further, the Child Care Policy states that the City will work to improve the availability, accessibility, and affordability of child care by providing appropriate and sufficient opportunities for the establishment of child care facilities within the context of the Official Community Plan, community plans, the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw, and other City regulations.

These policy statements are also identified as key objectives in the *Social Sustainability Strategy* (2011), *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* (2016) and the *Corporate Strategic Plan* (2022).

## 3.0 KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE CCRG IN 2022

### 3.1 Child Care Policy Review

In 2022, the CCRG continued to provide advice and insights into provincial and federal child care policy. In 2018, the Province initiated its 10-year plan to create a universal child care system in B.C. More recently, the Federal government announced its new Early Learning and Child Care Plan (2021) to provide parents with, on average, \$10/day licensed child care spaces for children under six years old within five years. The Province has allocated \$5.2 billion from 2018 to 2025 and the Federal government has allocated \$3.2 billion from 2021 to 2025 to develop the system. Both the Provincial and Federal governments' plans focus on three key elements – 1) access to child care spaces, 2) fee reductions for parents, and 3) recruitment and retention of the child care workforce - as detailed below.

#### *Access to Child Care Spaces*

A key focus of this funding is to create new, quality licensed child care spaces. Together, the Provincial and Federal governments aim to fund over 50,000 new licensed child care spaces in B.C. by 2026. Funding for new spaces is restricted to public and non-profit sector organizations in alignment with the Province's goal of creating a universal child care program.

Since the ChildCareBC New Spaces fund was first announced in 2018, the City has accessed \$3 million in funding to create the Montecito, Capitol Hill and Stride child care centres, built in partnership with Burnaby School District. The City will also be applying for New Spaces funding for a new child care centre on Rowan Avenue that will provide priority placement for City and Burnaby RCMP staff and a new 25-space centre at the Christine Sinclair Community Centre.

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### ***Fee Reductions***

Child care fees have been one of the most significant household expenses for young families. Prior to recent funding programs, the main source of operating funds for child care operators was parent fees. This situation has limited the ability of operators to attract and retain qualified child care staff through higher wages since any increases have been directly derived through parent fees.

In December 2022, the Province implemented further fee reductions from its initial reductions. For families in centres that have opted-in to the fee reduction initiative, reductions include a further \$550 for children under 3 years old, \$445 for children 3 to 5 years old, and \$220 for kindergarten-age children. Fee reductions now total \$900 for children under 3 years, \$545 for children 3 to 5 years and \$320 for kindergarten age children.

In addition to the fee reductions, the Province has increased the number of prototype sites where parents pay a maximum of \$200 month for child care. The prototype sites have allowed the Province to test the funding and operational models required to move towards a universal child care program. In 2022, a further 132 providers representing 6,143 spaces were included in the prototype program. Providers in the new round of prototype sites in Burnaby include SFU Childcare Society, Burnaby Family Life, and the YMCA (Metrotown Centre and Cascade Heights).

Since the fee reductions, members of the CCRG report even greater demand for child care spaces.

### ***Recruitment and Retention of Child Care Workforce***

A third and critical component of creating a universal child care system is the recruitment and retention of the child care workforce. As noted above, the child care sector has historically depended on parent fees to fund the operating costs of child care. As such, because of the direct impact on parents, child care providers have been limited in the wages they can pay child care workers which in turn has affected their ability to recruit and retain qualified staff. Many members of the CCRG report ongoing challenges to recruit and retain a full complement of staff to operate their centres. Since child care licensing requirements have strict staff-to-child ratios, this means that some licensed spaces are vacant because agencies cannot recruit enough qualified staff to meet staffing ratios.

To address this challenge the Province initiated an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy in 2018. The strategy has included bursaries for Early Childhood Education (ECE) students, the creation of new ECE spaces at post-secondary institutions, recruitment of ECEs through the Provincial Nominee Program (economic immigration program) and implementation of a wage enhancement of \$4 an hour for ECEs. These initiatives have helped the sector but members of the CCRG note that the wage enhancement program to date has not included child care administration staff (non-floor staff), early childhood education assistants and child care staff who provide child care to school age children. In addition, the wage enhancement program does not cover vacation time or sick time so organizations are required to make up the difference in wages which creates budget and accounting challenges.

The child care sector continues to call upon the Province to implement a publicly funded, competitive and equitable wage grid for Early Childhood Educators that recognizes staff qualifications and experience and provides wages that are competitive with other positions with similar education, experience and responsibilities.

### **3.2 Meeting with the Minister of State for Child Care and Ministry Staff**

In relation to the many policy and program initiatives implemented by the Province, the CCRG had two meetings with the now Ministry of Education and Child Care.<sup>1</sup> The first meeting was held with then Minister of State for Child Care, Katrina Chen and Ministry staff to discuss specific concerns and observations with the roll-out of new fee reductions and related child care operating funding. The second meeting was with the Manager of Partnership and Engagement, Child Care Capital Branch to discuss ChildCareBC New Spaces funding and the importance of incorporating quality design in the funding formula for new spaces. The Minister and Ministry staff appreciated hearing directly from Burnaby child care providers and have committed to addressing the concerns raised.

### **3.3 Celebration of Child Care Month**

In recognition of the important role quality child care plays in the social and economic well being of our community, the CCRG celebrates child care month in May each year. Activities include the Child Care Appreciation event for child care providers from home-based, private and non-profit child care centres throughout Burnaby. In 2022, the City provided funding to support an in-person event that included a dinner and a professional development presentation. Over 80 providers from across Burnaby attended. Burnaby Council also proclaimed May as Child Care Month and the Mayor recorded a video message expressing the City's appreciation for the essential role child care providers in our community.

## **4.0 THE YEAR AHEAD – 2023**

### **4.1 Burnaby Child Care Action Plan Implementation/Quality Child Care Design**

The CCRG's main activity for 2023 will be to provide guidance and advice on the implementation of the Burnaby Child Care Action Plan (CCAP), adopted in July 2021. A separate report will be prepared for the Social Planning Committee on the plan's implementation.

In relation to the priority actions in the CCAP, as well as new funding opportunities for child care spaces, the CCRG will focus on the importance of creating quality child care spaces. Considerable research indicates that well-designed indoor/outdoor space is critical to supporting the healthy development of children under five. The CCRG's focus will include support for the development of design principles and/or guidelines for new City or other public sector child care centres developed in Burnaby.

### **4.2 Celebration of Child Care Month**

The CCRG will work with partners to celebrate Child Care Month in May 2023 by:

- requesting Burnaby Council to proclaim Child Care Month and Child Care Provider Appreciation Day; and

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<sup>1</sup> In February 2022, the Province announced that child care would be moving to the Ministry of Education and Child Care in recognition that children's early learning is part of the learning continuum that extends into primary, secondary, post-secondary and beyond. This move has been a long standing request of the child care sector.

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- supporting the Child Care Provider Appreciation event on May 25, 2023 at the Burnaby Neighbourhood House – South House. The event will be open to all in-home, private and non-profit child care providers in Burnaby and include a dinner and a professional development component. To support this event, it is proposed the Social Planning Committee request Council to approve an expenditure of \$1,000 to assist with expenses for this event.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This report provides an overview of the CCRG's key activities in 2022. It also proposes a work plan for the CCRG for the year ahead. Specifically, the CCRG proposes to provide guidance and advice for the implementation of the Burnaby Child Care Action Plan including the development of design guidelines or principles for new child care centres developed by the City or other public sector organizations. A separate report will be prepared for the Social Planning Committee on the implementation of the CCAP.

As detailed in *Section 4.2* above, it is also recommended that the Committee request Council to approve an expenditure of \$1,000 from the 2023 Boards, Committees and Commissions budget to support the activities planned for the Child Care Provider Appreciation event on May 25, 2023.



E.W. Kozak, General Manager  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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