



# COMMUNITY CHILD CARE PLANNING

## CENTRAL OKANAGAN



### CARE FOR OUR KIDS

A Collaborative Approach to Understanding Child Care  
in the Central Okanagan



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**matters**

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We acknowledge that this planning study took place on the traditional land and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people.

# ABBREVIATIONS

CCRR ◦ Child Care Resource and Referral Centre

ECE ◦ Early Childhood Education

ECEA ◦ Early Childhood Educator Assistant

ECEBC ◦ Early Childhood Educators of BC

MCFD ◦ Ministry of Children & Family Development

IT ◦ Infant / Toddler

UBCM ◦ Union of BC Municipalities



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## It take a village to raise a child.

Recommendations in this plan are grounded in a collaborative, community approach to improve child care in the region. No one player can do it alone.

*This report was completed prior to COVID-19. The far-reaching impacts of the pandemic have dramatically influenced the provision of child care as an essential service. While the information presented in this study is based on ideal space creation targets determined through current and projected child populations, the number of program offerings now required to support space needs may actually be greater given physical distancing requirements and health and safety guidelines.*



The **Care For Our Kids** study is the result of a successful application to the Community Child Care Planning Program administered by UBCM and offered through the Ministry of Children & Family Development. Due to the known crossover in child care within the Central Okanagan communities of Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna, representatives from these local governments came together to conduct a needs assessment across the region.

Care For Our Kids was informed through a regional licensed and licensed-not-required child care inventory, community profile and policy analysis and a robust engagement process that included both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The following report highlights the project findings after engaging with over 630 parents, caregivers, child care providers and other stakeholders through two online surveys, nineteen one-on-one interviews, four focus groups, multiple pop-ins and two action planning workshops.

A licensed child care inventory was developed to understand the current child care supply, while demand was understood through quantitative and qualitative engagement combined with Central Okanagan child population projections and benchmark space creation targets provided by the MCFD.



This study catalogued a total of 5,752 licensed and licensed-not-required child care spaces across the region: Kelowna (4036), Lake Country (351), Peachland (77) and West Kelowna (1,288).

Over a 10-year horizon with an ideal scenario of 30% coverage for non-school-aged children (0 – 5) and 80% coverage for school-aged children (6 – 12), the average annual space creation targets over the next ten years for each municipality include:

**Average Annual Space Creation Targets  
(2020 to 2030)**

	Ages 0 – 5	Ages 6 – 12
Kelowna	30	1103
Lake Country	11	119
Peachland	6	36
West Kelowna	23	283
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1541</b>

As we look to increase the number of child care spaces within the Central Okanagan over the next ten years, systemic child care challenges must also be considered; **a multi-dimensional, community approach is required to improve child care in the region and to create transformational change.**

Our recommendations and actions are grounded on the province’s goal to move towards Universal Child Care or improving access to licensed care.

We propose five main recommendation areas. These include:

- **Process:** Improve municipal processes
- **Policy:** Develop or refine local government plans and policies with child care in mind
- **Partnerships:** Leverage partnerships to access funding to “unlock” underutilized assets or develop new ones
- **Advocacy:** Advocate to higher levels of government for enhanced local funding
- **Education & Training:** Reduce the knowledge gap for parents trying to access care and for providers looking to startup or expand

With each recommendation, this plan has outlined actions, roles, timelines, outcomes and measures of success to help move the region towards a more sustainable child care offering.



*This report was completed prior to COVID-19. The far-reaching impacts of the pandemic have dramatically influenced the provision of child care as an essential service. While the information presented in this study is based on ideal space creation targets determined through current and projected child populations, the number of program offerings now required to support space needs may actually be greater given physical distancing requirements and health and safety guidelines.*

Photo disclaimer: all photos presented in this proposal have parental consent.

# INTRODUCTION

Access to affordable and available child care is one of several indicators of well-being in communities. Recently, the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development introduced a program to better understand local child care needs and to develop new child care spaces across British Columbia. The Care For Our Kids action plan provides information about the child care needs in the Central Okanagan communities of Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna. The inventory and action plan identify space creation targets over the next ten years and outline recommendations and actions to meet space creation needs.

This work will be an important resource and advocacy tool to help communities in the region. The information provided can help local governments and their partners advocate to the ministry and justify future space creation investments through the Child Care BC New Spaces Fund and the Community Child Care Space Creation program. As such, this work will inform future planning at a local, regional and provincial level.

Child care plays an important fundamental child development role in all communities including First Nations communities. There is an important need and desire of those within Westbank First Nation to explore child care in the context of their community and while informed and encouraged to participate through this process, the capacity and timing was not right for them. It is important for the provincial government to consider support for First Nations Bands to access the same funding being made available to local governments to explore this topic in their own culturally-appropriate way.

## A Note on Implementation

Staff from the City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of Peachland and City of West Kelowna have reviewed the report (plan) and recommendations. This plan identifies key recommendations for local government consideration. As a result, there will be additional staffing impacts to support implementation. It will be up to Councils and administration to decide on the allocation of resources to respond to these recommendations through separate staff reports related to future partnerships, policy updates and advocacy actions.

# CHILD CARE CONTEXT

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Child care is provincially-legislated under the Child Care BC Act, the Child Care Subsidy Act and Child Care Subsidy Regulation within the Ministry of Children and Family Development. There are two types of recognized child care in British Columbia -- Licensed and License-Not-Required. The following illustrates the difference in care types:

### Licensed Child Care

Licensed child care is monitored regularly and inspected by regional health authorities (Interior Health in the Central Okanagan). Child care operators must meet specific requirements with regards to health and safety, staffing, programming and more. There are several child care licensing categories within licensed child care:

**Group Child Care:** Offered in a community-based facility or centre that services three different age categories:

- Infant / Toddler Program (birth to 36 months)
- 3 to 5-year-old Program (30 months to school age)
- Before and After School Program (school age)

**Family Child Care:** Offered in the child care providers own home and services a maximum of seven children from birth to age 12.

**Multi-Age Child Care:** Offered in a community-based facility and services a maximum of eight children from birth to age 12.

**In-Home Multi-Age Child Care:** Offered in the child care providers own home and services a maximum of eight children from birth to age 12.

**Preschool:** Serves children from 30 months to school entry. Preschools are part-day programs, typically operating during the school year, September to June.



### Provincial Government Funding Supports to Operate Licensed Child Care:

- Child Care BC Maintenance Fund
- Child Care BC New Spaces Fund
- Child Care Operating Fund (includes the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative)
- Community Child Care Space Creation Program for Local Governments (Union of BC Municipalities)
- Startup Grants
- Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement





## Registered Licensed-Not-Required

These providers are unlicensed, but legally allowed to operate in British Columbia.

### Registered License-Not-Required (RLNR) Child Care:

This type of child care has been registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre (CCRR) (operating as [Childhood Connections](#) within the Central Okanagan). The registration process includes criminal record checks, references, a home-seeking review and first aid. Registered care providers have access to support, training, resources and group liability insurance. Families are eligible for a higher subsidy rate if they use RLNR care. Operators can care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them.

It should be noted that while this report focuses on licensed or registered licensed-not-required care, many families choose to use license-not-required or unlicensed care arrangements.

## Other Care Types

**License-Not-Required (LNR) Child Care:** Providers are not required to meet any standards for health or safety. LNR providers are not monitored or inspected. Parents and guardians are responsible for overseeing the care of their child in these arrangements. Legally, these child care providers can care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them.

**In-child's-own-home care:** Unlicensed care when parents arrange for child care at home – for example, a nanny or a baby-sitter.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although child care is overseen provincially, municipalities play a key role in land use and development decisions with respect to child care. They can also play a role through plans and policies where local government can set child care as a priority for long-range community planning processes like Official Community Plans. To better understand the needs of child care from a local perspective, the Province of British Columbia has announced a number of funding programs for local governments:

### Through the Union of BC Municipalities:<sup>1</sup>

- **Community Child Care Planning Program:** Provides funding for local government to develop a space creation action plan. Care For Our Kids falls under this funding stream.
- **Community Child Care Space Creation Program:** Provides funding to local governments to create new licensed child care spaces, with a focus on infants and toddlers.

### Through the Ministry of Child and Family Development:<sup>2</sup>

- **Childcare BC New Spaces Fund:** Provides funding to public sector organizations, indigenous governments, non-profit societies and corporate companies to create, expand or relocate new licensed child care spaces.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Child Care, Union of BC Municipalities: <https://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/child-care.html>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Childcare BC New Spaces Fund: Create New Spaces, Province of British Columbia: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/childcare-new-spaces-fund>

# CARE FOR OUR KIDS METHODOLOGY



The Care For Our Kids study was informed through a regional child care inventory, community profile analysis, policy analysis and an robust engagement process that included both quantitative and qualitative feedback.

A complete 'What We Heard Report' from the Care For Our Kids engagement can be found in Appendix A.

## **Inventory**

A number of sources informed an inventory of child care spaces in the Central Okanagan. Baseline data was provided by MCFD and represented provincial child care provider information as of January 2019 and reflected those receiving Childcare Operating Funding (CCOF) from the Province of B.C. The inventory was cross-referenced with Interior Health's licensed data set, the BC Child Care Map available through MCFD and information provided through the CCRR. Providers were also contacted directly to verify information and several Facebook groups that cater to parents looking for care were reviewed. An online child care provider survey also helped to inform the inventory.

## **Community Profile Analysis**

To provide greater insight into the community and family makeup across the Central Okanagan, an analysis of population data was conducted for each of Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna. Data was gathered from Statistics Canada and BC Stats. This data, combined with inventory data, helped to define the gap in access to care.<sup>3</sup>

## **Background Policy Research**

Background research on relevant policies, plans and bylaws was conducted for the City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of Peachland and City of West Kelowna. An analysis of Official Community Plans, Zoning Bylaws and Business Licensing identified municipal processes and policies that may create barriers to the creation of licensed child care spaces in the Central Okanagan.

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<sup>3</sup> The gap in care refers to the number of children who would require care if ALL children within the region were to access licensed or registered licensed-not-required child care across the Central Okanagan. It does not consider those who choose to opt out of care or those who would prefer alternate arrangements to licensed care.



## Community Engagement

The following engagement activities were conducted as part of this study:

### PARENT & CAREGIVER SURVEY

An online parent and caregiver survey was launched on September 16th, 2019 and closed on November 1, 2019. A total of 427 parents or caregivers responded to the survey from Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna, with most respondents residing in Kelowna.

### PROVIDER SURVEY

An online child care provider survey was offered from September 16th to November 1st, 2019. A total of 58 providers completed the survey. Most of the information collected was used to inform the inventory.

### FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups were conducted within Lake Country, Kelowna, West Kelowna and Peachland. They were open to parents, child care providers and anyone who regularly works with children. All focus groups were held in the evening with child care provided, however, most attendees were service providers.

The same questions were posed at each focus group and aimed to understand what is working well and what challenges participants experience. More detailed information was also provided with respect to space availability, operating times, staff, supports, location and financial challenges.





**40**

Participants

**18**

Participants

**51**

Participants

### POP-INS

Due to minimal parent participation in the focus groups, in-person engagement was adapted to better fit the needs of parents. Members of the project team dropped into the following existing programs and had casual conversations with parents about challenges, opportunities and solutions:

- ▶ Mamas for Mamas (Kelowna)
- ▶ The Bridge Special Deliveries (Kelowna)
- ▶ The Bridge Creative Playtime (Peachland)
- ▶ Baby Time @ the Library (Lake Country)
- ▶ Toddler Time @ the Library (Lake Country)
- ▶ Interior Health Baby Talk (West Kelowna)

### ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

To dive deeper into the experiences of those within the child care system, we conducted several one-on-one interviews. These conversations allowed us to understand the passion, stress, frustration and other emotions experienced by those impacted by child care.

### CHILD CARE WORKSHOP

On December 3rd, 2019, an action planning workshop was held with child care providers. We had 51 attendees participate in an evening that included a presentation by Emily Gawlick, executive director from ECEBC, reporting back from the Care For Our Kids team and an interactive, hour-long engagement session where attendees asked their peers one of four interview questions. Participants worked alone and in small and large groups.

# STATE OF CHILD CARE



The state of child care in the Central Okanagan is complex, and involves many stakeholders. Parent and provider experiences, and the systemic challenges that they face, cannot be addressed by space creation alone. What follows, is the narrative and supporting data that describes child care within the Central Okanagan. The communities within the region, for the most part, experience child care similarly with differences highlighted throughout this report and the engagement summary.

## CHILD CARE SPACES & PROGRAM LOCATIONS

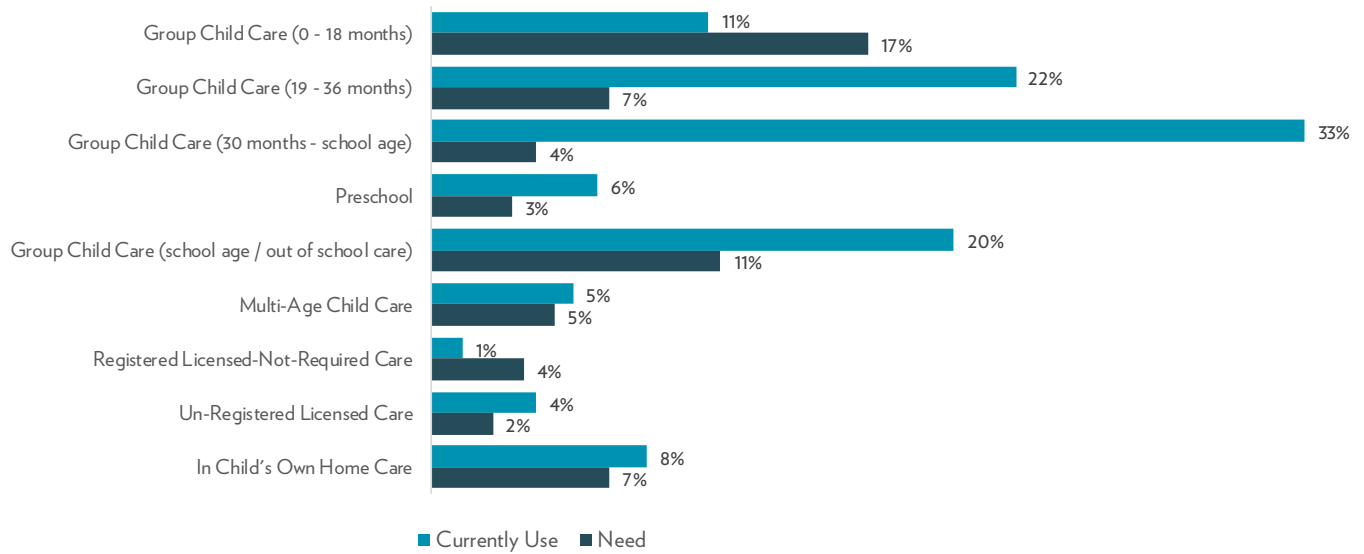
There are total of 5,752 licensed or licensed-not-required child care spaces (Table 1) in the Central Okanagan offered by 195 program locations (page 8).

It should be noted that many other child care offerings exist throughout the region that are unlicensed or unregistered with the CCRR. This may include, for example, care provided by a stay-at-home parent, nannies or family members providing care. These care types are incredibly difficult to quantify and are fluid. As such, they have not been accounted for within the inventory.

Table 1. Number of child care spaces and program locations for each municipality

	<b>Group Child Care</b> (birth to 36 months)	<b>Group Child Care</b> (30 months to school age)	<b>Licensed Preschool</b>	<b>Group Child Care</b> (school age)	<b>Multi- Age Child Care</b>	<b>Family Child Care</b>	<b>In-Home Multi-Age Child Care</b>	<b>TOTAL Child Care Spaces</b>
Kelowna	551	1088	495	1457	293	147	5	4036
Lake Country	24	89	84	125	0	21	8	351
Peachland	0	8	18	44	0	7	0	77
West Kelowna	72	223	266	527	64	105	31	1288
<b>TOTALS</b>	647	1408	863	2153	357	280	44	5752

## What kind of child-care services do you currently use and/or need?



Child care program locations within the Central Okanagan:

**Kelowna**

120

**Lake Country**

13

**Peachland**

4

**West Kelowna**

58

**Total**

195

## ACCESS TO CARE

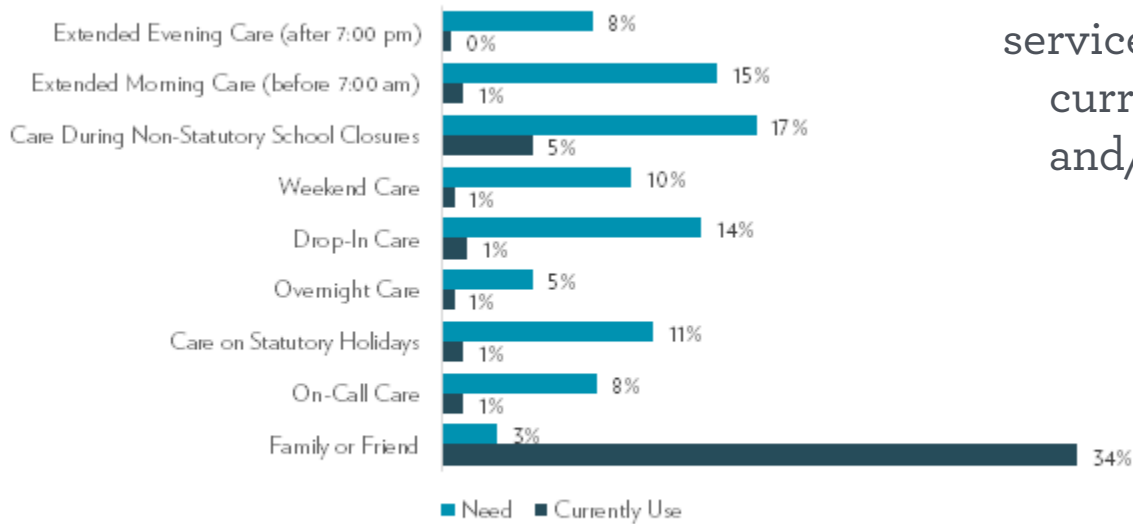
MCFD performance indicators show that the Central Okanagan is an area with “Significant difficulty in finding care” for the infant / toddler age group and with “General difficulty to find care” for ages 3-5.<sup>4</sup>

Parent and provider survey data and engagement feedback support the MCFD’s findings and further illustrate that there is not enough space to meet demand.

Parent and caregiver survey respondents indicated that the child care categories that have unmet needs are primarily licensed group care (0-18 months) and registered license-not-required care (figure above). The need for care in the infant / toddler age group was echoed throughout community engagement from both parents and providers. This was further substantiated through the provider survey where 69% indicated that infant / toddler care is most needed followed by care required for school-aged children (21%).

<sup>4</sup> Source: Early Years Performance Indicators. 1.01 Accessibility of Licensed Child Care Spaces, Ministry of Children and Family Development: <https://mcfcd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/early-years/performance-indicators>

What kind of child-care services do you currently use and/or need?



Pending Space Creation

- 18 of 58 child care providers who responded to the provider survey indicated that they were opening up additional spaces within the next 12 months
- Interior Health licensing has indicated that they are in the process of adding an additional 227 spaces to the region\*

*\*Values indicate the fluid nature of space creation. It should be noted that not all spaces will become licensed, available spaces.*

One hundred percent (100%) of provider survey respondents who carry a waitlist indicated that they are at capacity and carry between two and 200+ children on their waitlist. This further illustrates the limited access to care.

Parent and caregiver respondents also indicated that there is unmet need for:

- Care during non-statutory (17%) and statutory school closures (11%)
- Extended morning care (before 7 am) (15%) and evening care (8%)
- Drop-in (14%) and weekend care (10%)

Lack of part-time and drop-in spaces mean that parents often pay for full-time placements even though they do not need it; this then limits access for other children. These challenges to accessing flexible care are compounded when parents need to secure space for more than one child. This was also echoed through one-on-one interviews.

It should also be noted that care for school-aged children is an area of high need.



When asked what supports parents need to thrive, flexible care was the top theme that emerged.

- Parent & Caregiver Survey

## FINDING ALTERNATIVES

As a result of this shortage in space – particularly with the infant / toddler age group – parents are looking for care alternatives. Thirty-four percent (34%) of survey respondents indicated that they use a family or a friend for care. This was echoed during in-person community engagement where grandparents were cited as the family member parents frequently ask for help.

Other forms of care include the use of nannies and families making the decision for one parent – often the mother – to stay home to care for their children.

## PREFERRED CHILD CARE TYPES

Families in the Central Okanagan who responded to the parent and caregiver survey indicated that the main factors influencing their choice in child care are:

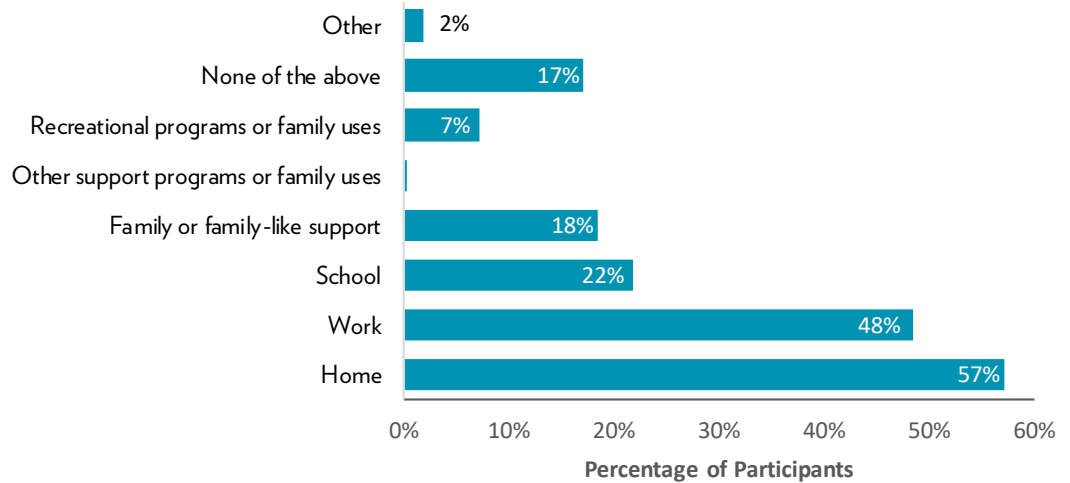
- License or registration of a child care provider (81%)
- Education / certification(s) of child care provider (84%)
- Convenience of location (85%)
- Flexible working hours (70%)

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of parent respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the care they receive and 37% stated that if given the choice, they'd chose an alternate care arrangement that provided more flexibility, was more affordable and was licensed.

Families continue to seek out programs that align with family care values. The need for both licensed group care and licensed-not required care illustrate that families are looking for different care options - such as those small care programs offered in a provider's home or a larger care centre within a facility, among others.

It should also be noted that 21% of parent respondents indicated the importance of care that recognizes family culture, programming in a language other than English (9%) and accommodation of siblings (66%).

Is your child care located close to any of the following?



## HOURS & LOCATION

### Hours

When it comes to service hours, parents are looking for greater flexibility in the care that they receive. This need for flexibility is highlighted in the need for part-time care, care on evenings and weekends and extended mornings and nights. This is especially the case for parents who work shift work, as typical child care is offered during regular business hours, Monday to Friday.

It can be challenging for parents to secure care that works around the School District’s calendar and to find care on pro-d days, Christmas, spring and summer breaks.

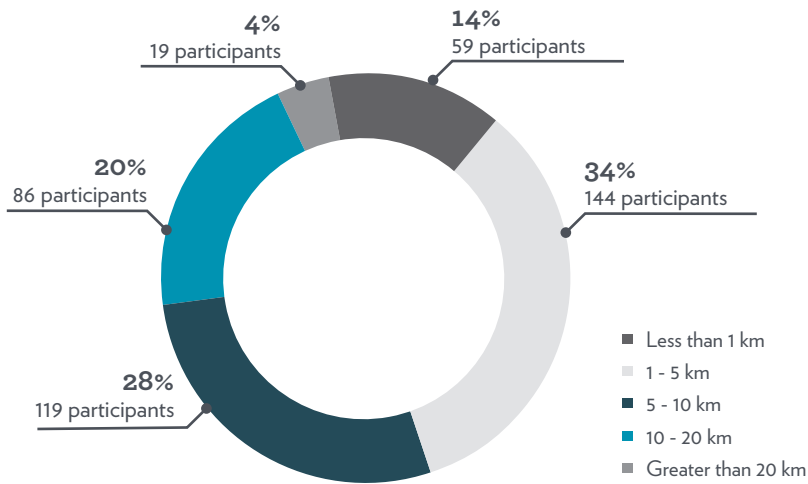
Though parents and caregivers have expressed frustration with the timing of available child care, it is often difficult for care providers to accommodate requests for flexibility in timing, as staff are already maxed and experiencing burnout.

### Location

Throughout the parent and caregiver survey and the one-on-one interviews, families shared that the preferred location for child care is close to work or home. Fifty-seven percent (57%) and 48% of Central Okanagan parents and caregivers surveyed indicated that their current program is located near either home or work, respectively.

Parents shared that the logistical challenges experienced around commuting to work, home and child care means that a choice of convenience (close to home or work) is preferred. At the same time, 22% indicated the service provider location being near school and 18% near family or family-like support is also preferred.

This trend is echoed throughout Kelowna, Lake Country and West Kelowna. In Peachland, respondents indicated that their child care tends to be located closest to work (50%) and family or family-like support (50%).



What distance do you travel to your child care provider's place of work?

## DISTANCE

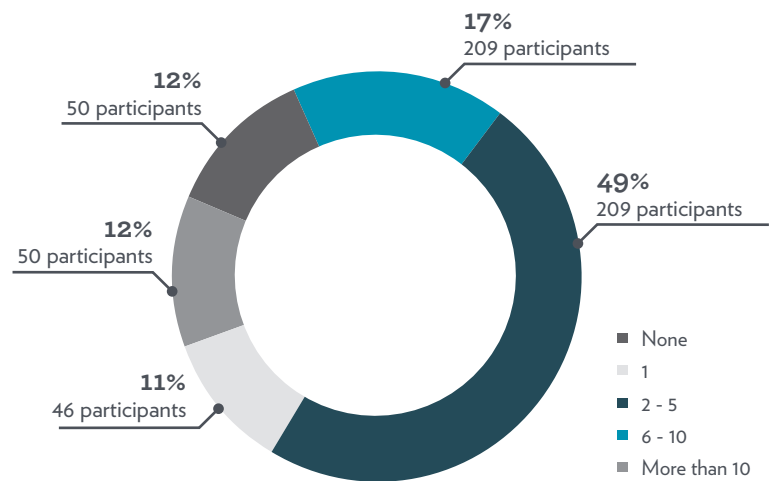
Parents and caregivers from the Central Okanagan travel between 1 and 5 kilometers (34%) and 5 and 10 kilometers (28%) to their child care program location. In West Kelowna and Peachland, families travel between 10 and 20 kilometers to access care. The parent and caregiver survey showed that 89% of respondents from the Central Okanagan do not travel outside of their municipality or jurisdiction. At the same time, most of the survey respondents were based in Kelowna, where most of the services are located.

Peachland is the only jurisdiction where most parents and caregivers travel outside of the District for care (88%).

## LOCATION ISN'T ALWAYS A CHOICE FOR CHILD CARE OPERATORS

Providers must consider where there is physical space available and affordable to them, which does not always correspond to the space with the highest demand. Rental and lease costs in the Central Okanagan also tend to be high and so are outdoor space requirements for a child care.

## Approximately how many child care waitlists have you been on?



### WAITLISTS

Forty-nine percent (49%) of survey respondents across the Central Okanagan indicated that they had been on 2 – 5 waitlists prior to accessing care. Many expressed a sense of frustration with waitlist times and highlighted the stress around not knowing when they would be able to secure care. During interviews, service providers, parents and caregivers shared that it is extremely important for families to sign up for waitlists as early as possible – often when they find out they are expecting.

As per the parent and caregiver survey, it takes between one month and two years for families to find care in the region. It was noted by some parents that being persistent and a “squeaky wheel” with child care providers often speeds up the process to finding care.

Parents often put themselves on many lists at a time (typically between 2 – 5), which alters indicators of community need. This also means that from a provider’s perspective, waitlists are administratively difficult to manage.

Through engagement with Peachland parents, it was heard that many choose to avoid waitlists all together due to the extreme limits in care availability. As a result, parents often look to other forms of care as a first step in their search for child care.

Anecdotally, frustration was expressed that some care providers were charging families a waitlist fee, which limits access for some families – especially with those on lower incomes.

### Child Development Waitlists

Like child care space availability, support services within the Central Okanagan also have long waitlists to support the developmental needs of children. For example, child development programs such as Starbright have long waitlists – typically between 80 and 90 children – which can sometimes lead to undiagnosed behavioral needs in underserved populations. Children can wait between ten months and one year for service and there are some who won’t ever get the support that they need<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Source: One-on-one interview with Starbright Children’s Development Centre

# IMPACT OF CHILD CARE ON THE COMMUNITY



## CHILD CARE PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

Throughout the service provider interviews and workshop, care providers shared that the challenge of recruiting and retaining Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) is a systemic issue:

- ▶ Increasing quality of care and staff retention requires increased pay
- ▶ Increasing pay for ECEs can result in greater cost for parents
- ▶ Increasing cost for parents makes child care more inaccessible
- ▶ Lack of ECEs leads to high burn out and staff shortage
- ▶ Shortage of staff leads to an over-stretched system and compromised access to care

In addition to compromising access to care, parents and providers indicated that these systemic issues are impacting the children who access care.



## Recruitment & Retention

The number one issue facing child care providers in the Central Okanagan is the shortage of ECEs available to provide care. It was echoed over and over that increasing the number of spaces within the Central Okanagan is only one piece of the puzzle and that an extreme staff shortage will prevent many operators from expanding or starting up.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents in the provider survey indicated that staff leave the sector to go to another profession for the following reasons:

- Pay is too low for the responsibility with little to no benefits (92%)
- High burnout due to the demanding nature of the position (28%)
- Either long hours or not enough consistent hours (25%)
- Lack of respect in the industry (8%)

An extreme shortage results in competition between service providers to retain talent and an unhealthy culture where staff move from location to location. This plays a role in a child's day-to-day experience, which may – depending on the child – have negative impacts due to the lack of consistency in care.

## Education & Training

The structure of the training programs for those looking to get into the field of child care is also impacting the child care providers' experience. The following illustrates the types of training offered in British Columbia:

Type of Training	Hours to Obtain Designation
Responsible Adult Training (RAT)	20 hours
Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA)	~400 hours
Early Childhood Educator (ECE)	~900 hours
IT / Special Needs Specialization	~250 hours (+ECE certificate)

The notion that a Responsible Adult designation can be completed in 20 hours vs two years for an ECE designation (which requires continuous professional development), and that the rate of pay between designations is negligible, creates a system of fragmentation and unstandardized care, which leads to variation in quality.

From community engagement, it was heard that some care providers and members of the child care community are calling for a standardized education designation and the ECEA and RAT be eliminated completely. One provider suggested a complete overhaul in child care education and that the training should be in the form of an accredited degree program with a college or university.

As per child care provider engagement, other challenges within the education system include:

- Not enough people entering programs that provide ECE training
- Time delays for qualified ECE staff to obtain licenses to work
- Expensive for ECEs to finish a 2-year, unpaid practicum program
- Low wages mean that the job does not make sense after the investment

The need to find ways to make ECE a sustainable profession with more financial and professional stability is key to addressing the child care shortage. This will need government commitment and efforts have already begun to improve recruitment and retention in British Columbia.<sup>6</sup>

Having more facilities does not address the gap created by a shortage of ECE staff whose importance is not widely understood by the community.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Investing in our Early Childhood Educators: Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy, Province of British Columbia: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/6337\\_earlycareandlearningrecruitment\\_andretentionstrategy\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/6337_earlycareandlearningrecruitment_andretentionstrategy_report_web.pdf)



### **Government Support for ECE Training**

The province currently supports ECE students with a bursary for their training program. As of late 2019, that funding had been spent.

### **Licensing**

Licensing represents an important challenge for child care providers. Licensing is more focused on the act of enforcement rather than how you can look at the intent of the act and ensure child safety and quality of care while still allowing more child care spaces to open. “The inability to move licensing at all on their interpretation of regulations is another barrier to opening new spaces and maintaining spaces.”

### **Barriers to Space Creation**

Through the provider survey, operators shared key barriers to starting up:

- Challenges with licensing, regulatory challenges, including health and safety
- Challenges experienced with shared space arrangements
- Staff shortages
- Financial challenges in starting up
- Difficulty in navigating the funding system

- Difficulties in finding an appropriate, affordable location
- Difficulty in navigating municipal processes
- Lengthy start-up period
- Financial limitations of the business model; after paying the lease, wages and incidentals, the margin can be small

These items have been used to inform this action plan.

### **Potential Supports from Local Government**

Through engagement, care providers shared that there are certain local government supports that they can benefit from, which include:

- Provide facilities and land for spaces
- Provide some level of financial support for families and providers (training, wages, operations)
- Act as community, provincial and federal advocates
- Review, update and create policies and plans that support child care
- Promote partnerships with organizations that care providers can co-locate with

“I think a lot of people think daycare is babysitting. They don’t think about what their kids are learning... We need to develop children so they are ready to be successful when they get to kindergarten.”

-- Child Care Provider

### Perception of Child Care Providers

Through the engagement process, child care providers highlighted the complexity of the child care system in the Central Okanagan and the many factors to that consider to address child care needs. Providers identified that there is tension between providing quality service, having enough staff and providing accessible care while also remaining financially sustainable and responding to a high demand.

This complexity is intensified by the lack of qualified staff, challenges with licensing requirements and a lack of understanding of the importance of early childhood education. Care providers expressed frustration with the complex and interconnected challenges they face; they shared a sense of having their hands tied since each challenge seemed to reinforce the next.

### IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Throughout the one-on-one interviews, parents described the kind of care and support their children need in order to thrive:

- Love
- Strong support system
- Compassionate care
- Supportive and structured environment where they can play with others
- Teachers that the parents can trust
- Access to different and new experiences

- Ability to find what they are good and enjoy
- Access to outdoors activities

Parents also indicated that the challenges that exist in the child care system are impacting their children.

### High Demand for Child Support Programs Impacts Child Care Access

Long waitlists for child development programs in the Central Okanagan may lead to undiagnosed behavioural challenges. Growth in the Central Okanagan means that child development centres are seeing a growth in the number of children who require support. One of the factors impacting waitlists is, like in child care, a staff shortage. Staff shortages may limit a child’s ability to enter a care program.

“We are in the news because we are a needed service, and that service is inadequate at best. That’s because we aren’t quite recognized as a profession.”



“Child care is a nightmare for shift workers.”

- Parent

## IMPACT ON PARENTS

The well-being of parents and caregivers is directly influenced by the well-being of the children they care for and love. As such, parents are key to understanding the state of child care in the Central Okanagan. Through the parent and caregiver survey and the one-on-one interviews, parents and caregivers shared that they value:

- Support for children’s emotional and physical needs
- Time together as a family that is stress free
- Confidence that their children are well taken care of

When it comes to challenges, there was a recurring sense of frustration at the lack of choice that parents have, particularly with Infant/Toddler care (0-36 months). The challenges that parents face influence their overall mental health and a families’ well-being.

Other challenges include:

- High staff turnover which leads in inconsistency in care
- High cost of child care for one child and increased cost for multiple children
- Difficulty securing flexible care, part-time care or care outside of regular business hours or after school care

- Stressful waitlists and having to pay to be listed on some
- Need for care support
  - ▶ For example, when a parent or caregiver does not have access to care, over half of parents indicated that a family member would help out (54%) or that a parent would take time off of work (57%).

Throughout engagement with parents and caregivers, it was frequently shared that the stress of finding and accessing proper child care negatively impacts parents, caregivers and families.

Parents and caregivers who do not have access to a strong support system of family and friends are especially vulnerable when struggling to secure proper care. Shift workers, for example, are within this more vulnerable group, given that there are not enough flexible options that accommodate for their shifting schedules. Families with more than one child find themselves piecing together different types of care with the added pressure of finding care within different age groups and in multiple places.

“As parents, we have made the difficult choice to have my wife work part-time, just to be able to drop off and pick up the kids at school. Even though my wife has been offered lead day shift nursing opportunities, we do not have options on how to make this work. She’s only part-time on afternoons for this reason.”

## GENDERED IMPACT

The gendered impacts of child care in the Central Okanagan were recognized throughout engagement. Participants highlighted the different ways in which gendered roles around child care manifest. They shared how women are more often directly impacted personally, professionally and socially by the child care challenges the region faces.

Traditionally, gendered roles determine that women bare most of the responsibility when it comes to child care. Though this is changing in meaningful ways, this unequitable division of child care continues to have a multi-dimensional effect today.

- **From parents and caregivers:** It was shared that women are the ones who, overwhelmingly, have a difficult time going back to full-time employment after taking maternity leave (should they wish to do so). Given the cost of care, families find themselves in a situation where having one parent stay home makes the most financial sense. Participants also shared that, most often, women are the ones who stay home, which can impact their career trajectory, earning capacity and economic growth.
- **From underserved populations:** We had the opportunity to speak with young parents who were predominantly women. They shared a sense of overwhelming stress when trying to secure care for their families. They also expressed a lack of understanding of the resources available to them and how to navigate the child care system. They explained that they do their best to reach out to their families, but are left vulnerable when they do not have a strong support system.
- **From care providers:** They shared that the majority of their ECE staff is made up of women. This is the same staff with a high rate of burnout and turnover. Care providers explained that, given a lack of understanding around the importance of ECEs, there can be a lack of respect for the profession. This translates into a lack of investment, supports and job security for those who engage in this work.



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# ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN CHILD CARE

There are several community support services within the Central Okanagan:

- ▶ Starbright Child Development Centre
- ▶ Metis Society
- ▶ Strong Start
- ▶ Childhood Connections
- ▶ Project Literacy
- ▶ KiLowna Friendship Centre
- ▶ Bridge Youth and Family Services
- ▶ YMCA Okanagan
- ▶ Okanagan Centre for Autism Intervention
- ▶ Okanagan Boys and Girls Club
- ▶ Ministry of Children and Family Services
- ▶ School District 23
- ▶ THRIVE Kids Canada

# ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN CHILD CARE



All levels of government have the ability to play a key role in improving the state of child care in the Central Okanagan.

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

### Licensing

An important aspect of any licensed child care is to ensure compliance with the Community Care and Assisted Living Act Child Care Licensing Regulation. This ensures that child care providers meet provincial government requirements for:

- Health and safety
- Staffing qualifications
- Staff-to-child ratios
- Space and equipment
- Program standards

The child care provider typically works with the provincial government licensing officer to ensure all conditions are met. In expanding or creating new space, it is recommended to work with the licensing officer and child care provider at the start of the project to support co-designing spaces.

Each age group that care is licensed for has separate requirements related to the categories identified above to ensure their safety. The [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#) should be referred to at all times and is only presented in this report for information purposes.

Table 2 outlines the requirements applicable to all child care facilities, while Table 3 provides a breakdown of regulations pertaining to each type of child care program.



Table 2. Universal child care facility requirements in British Columbia.

Usable Floor Area	Bathrooms	Diaper Change Stations	Sleeping Area	Outdoor Area
<p>3.7 sq. m., excluding hallways, built in storage areas, bathrooms, and fixed appliances</p>	<p>One toilet and wash basin for every 10 children or less must be on the same floor of the child care facility</p>	<p>Must be located outside of food preparation areas, next to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ covered container for soiled clothing</li> <li>▶ wash basin</li> </ul>	<p>Must be located away from any activity area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Must have 6 square meters of outdoor play area for each child, or if providing more than one type of care, an outdoor play area that meets the requirement of the various groups care is being provided for</li> <li>▶ Must be enclosed to ensure that children are free of harm</li> </ul>

Table 3. Provincial regulations for child care facilities in British Columbia by type of child care.

Licensing	Child Care Type	Age	Maximum Group Size	Child-to-Staff Ratio	Staff Qualifications	Setting
YES	Under 3 years	From birth to 36 months	12 children	4 children: 1 Infant Toddler Educator (ITE) 5-8 children: 1 ITE, 1 Early Childhood Educator (ECE) 9-12 children: 1 ITE, 1 ECE, 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA)	ITE: ~1300 hrs of training ECE: ~900 hrs of training ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre
	2.5 years to school age	From 30 months to Kindergarten age	25 children	1-8 children: 1 ECE 9-16 children: 1 ECE, ECEA 17-25 children: 1 ECE, 2 ECEAs	ECE: ~900 hrs of training ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre
	School age (before- and after-school care)	Kindergarten age and up	24 children from K and G1 OR G2 and older with no K or G1 children	1 adult for each 12 children from K and G1 1 adult for each 15 children from G2 and older	20 hours of child care training Relevant work experience Valid first aid certificate Clear criminal record check	Community-based facility or centre
	Multi-age	From birth to 12 years	8 children	1 ECE for 8 children	ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training	Community-based facility or centre
	In-home multi-age child care	From birth to 12 years	8 children	1 ECE (who is also the licensee) for 8 children	ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training	In the provider's home
	Family child care	From birth to 12 years	7 children	1 adult for 7 children	20 hours of child care training Relevant work experience Valid first aid certificate Clear criminal record check	In the provider's home

Licensing	Child Care Type	Age	Maximum Group Size	Child-to-Staff Ratio	Staff Qualifications	Setting
	Preschool	From 2.5 years to school age	20 children	1-10 children: 1 ECE 11-20 children: 1 ECE and 1 ECEA	ECE Certificate: ~900 hrs of training ECEA: completion of one ECE course	Community-based facility or centre
	Occasional child care	18 months old and up	16 children (if there are children under 36 months) or 20 children (if no children under 36 months)	Every 4 children (if children under 36 months are present): 1 adult Every 8 children (if no children under 36 months are present): 1 adult	20 hours of child care training Relevant work experience Valid first aid certificate Clear criminal record check	Community-based facility or centre
NO	Registered License-Not-Required	From birth to age 12	Two children or a sibling group who are not related to them	Every 2 children: 1 adult	20 hours of child care training Relevant work experience Valid first aid certificate Clear criminal record check	In the provider's home
	Unregistered	From birth to any age	Two children or a sibling group who are not related to them	Every 2 children: 1 adult	No qualifications required	In the provider's home

Child care providers must apply for a license to operate through their local health authority, Interior Health. They will ensure that all provincial requirements are met prior to granting a license to operate. Interior Health has a [guide posted on their website](#) that outlines the necessary steps for applying for a child care license within their jurisdiction. It is strongly recommended that child care providers connect with their local health authority at the start of their planning to establish a relationship and to ensure they understand the regulatory requirements needed to become a licensed child care provider.

## Funding

The Province of British Columbia also plays a role in funding for child care providers and operators, support services and families in need. The provincial government has recently developed programs to support ECE training (bursaries) in addition to several capital and operating grants, space creation grants, child care planning grants and more.

The province also provides funding supports for programs that support child development and financial support to families through the Affordable Child Care Benefit, the Fee Reduction Initiative, the Young Parent Program and Universal Prototype Sites offering low-cost quality child care.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Before a child care facility is opened, it is important that the business owner determine if the property in which they wish to open their facility allows such uses as per the municipal Zoning Bylaw; child care facilities may not be permitted in every zone of a municipality. If the business owner finds that child care facilities are not listed as a permitted use under their property zoning, they will be required to undertake a Zoning Bylaw Amendment process to legally permit the child care facility on the property.

This process is relatively similar in each of the communities and Council approval is required. A fee from \$1,000 - \$1,900 is necessary for the processing of a Zoning Bylaw Amendment application. Properties that do not meet any other requirements outlined in the Zoning Bylaw, such as number of required parking spaces and minimum yard setbacks, will need to apply for a Development Variance Permit. Fees for processing these applications range from \$450 - \$1500 in the Central Okanagan.

It is also necessary that a business license be acquired before operations commence. These are to be obtained from the municipality on a yearly basis and range in cost from \$28 - \$135 depending on the type of facility.

Undertaking these municipal application processes can sometimes be time-consuming and complex, especially if the applicant is not familiar with the process. It is highly recommended that child care providers connect with their local government at the earliest point possible in their decision-making process to open a child care facility.

The following were reviewed: Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw and Business Licensing. A summary of the findings are below:

### Official Community Plans

Child care facilities are largely not referenced in the Official Community Plans (OCPs) of local governments in the Central Okanagan. Only the City of Kelowna defines child care facilities and permits their use within the Zoning Bylaw. The City of Kelowna's OCP defines these uses as, "An establishment intended to provide care, educational services, and supervision for children or adults during the day or evening, and may include limited overnight accommodation to accommodate shift workers." There are only two policies that speak to the provision of these uses in the City and they aim to ensure that broad community resources are appropriately distributed across Kelowna.

While the City of West Kelowna has not defined child care facilities or indicated in which land use designations they should be encouraged, their OCP does identify the implementation of tools such as community amenity contributions that can be used to encourage the provision of child care facilities. This is a good example of policy that could be similarly incorporated into other OCPs of local governments within the Central Okanagan, as it provides Council with direction for exploring the use of municipal finance tools as a strategy for encouraging more child care spaces in their community.





## Zoning Bylaws

### Definitions

The Zoning Bylaws of Central Okanagan local governments have two strategies for defining child care facilities. Kelowna and Westbank First Nation have more specific definitions for these facilities that imply that the use's primary purpose is to provide child care. For example, Kelowna uses the definition of "child care centre" and Westbank First Nation uses the definition of "daycare facility." Other communities in the Central Okanagan have umbrella definitions for care facilities in their Zoning Bylaws under which child care falls, as well as community care and assisted living facilities.

These definitions are further divided into "major" and "minor" categories, with specific criteria included in the definition that outlines how a "major" facility differs from a "minor" facility. Criteria include the number of patrons permitted, whether or not overnight accommodation for shift workers is necessary, and the type of building in which these uses are permitted.

For example, the District of Lake Country defines a Care Facility, Major as "an establishment licensed as required under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act intended to provide care, educational services, and supervision for children or adults during the day or evening, and may include limited overnight accommodation to accommodate shift workers. This use includes group day care centres intended for 26 or more patrons, out-of-school centres and drop-in centres. This also includes care centre, minor and care centre, intermediate." Whereas a Care Facility, Minor is defined as "an establishment licensed as required under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act intended to provide care, educational services, and supervision for children or adults during the day or evening, and may include limited overnight accommodation to accommodate shift workers. This use includes drop-in centres and group day care centres for up to eight patrons, and up to 10 children for the provision of care, before and after school hours and during school holidays, for children attending school, and pre-schools for up to 15 children."

Creating consistency amongst how child care facilities are defined and classified in the Zoning Bylaws of Central Okanagan communities may be helpful for those providers wishing to operate a facility in more than one municipality. While child care is regulated under the Community Care Act, having a separate definition for these facilities may also improve clarity, since the services they are providing are substantially different than those of an assisted living facility, which falls under the umbrella definition of "Care Facility" used in many communities.

### Zones

Across the Central Okanagan, child care facilities are permitted as secondary uses in most Agricultural, Rural, Residential and Institutional zones, and as primary uses in most Commercial and Institutional zones. Where child care facilities are permitted as primary uses, these facilities will be the main use on the property. Where child care facilities are permitted as secondary uses, these facilities will be supplementing a primary use such as a housing development or community centre. As such, minor facilities are often listed as secondary uses and major facilities listed as primary. Depending on the property's zoning, Zoning Bylaw amendments may be necessary at times to permit major child care facilities in areas where only minor facilities are currently permitted.

### Business Licensing

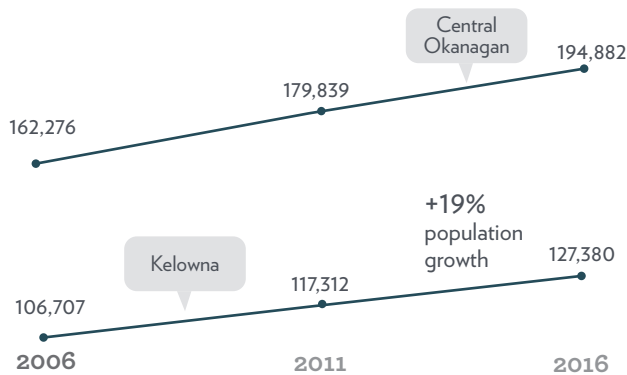
The business license fees range across the Central Okanagan from \$28.43 per year to \$135 per year. This fee is based on the number of children at the facility for Kelowna and Westbank First Nation, whereas the other municipalities apply a flat yearly rate. In West Kelowna, if the child care facility is a home occupation, the fee is less than what is required for a facility that is not provided within a home, however this is only if a fire inspection is not required for the facility. The municipalities that apply the flat fee have the highest business licensing fees for child care facilities in the Central Okanagan, with West Kelowna being the highest at \$135 per year for non-home occupations.

# COMMUNITY PROFILES

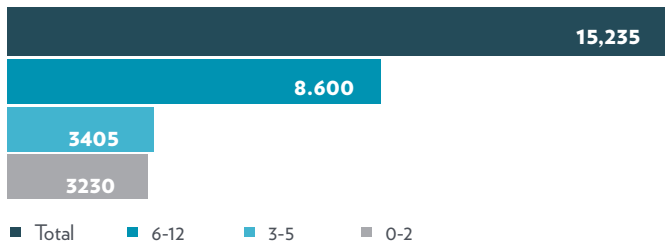
The community profiles provides population insights and community context in the Central Okanagan and the characteristics that support the different types of child care that are needed in the community.

## KELOWNA POPULATION 127,380

### Rate of Population Growth



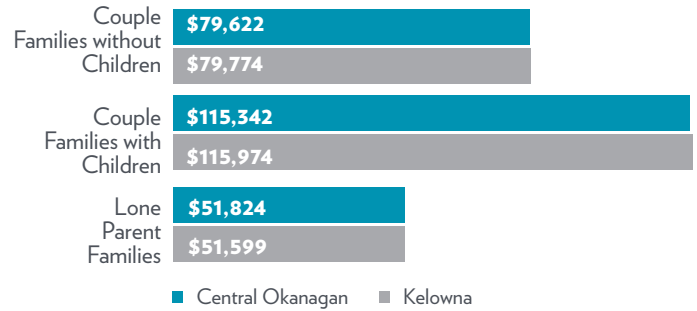
### Child Population



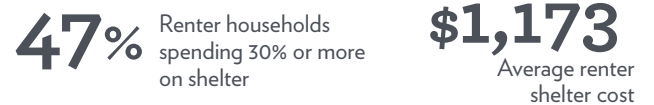
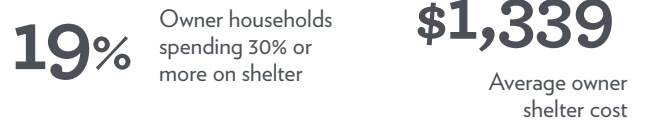
### Child Population Growth (2011-2016) Source (Statistics Canada)



### Income

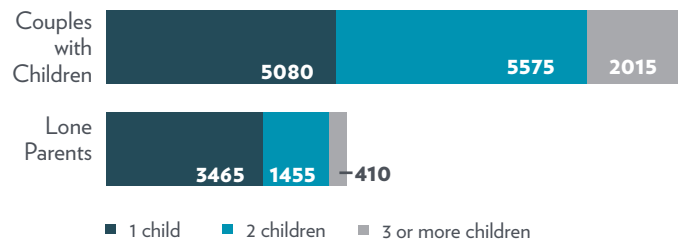


### Housing Affordability (2016 census data)

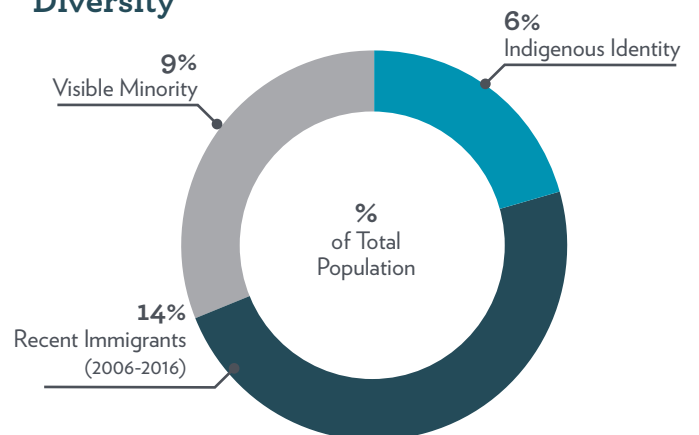


### Household Families

Number of Families: 35, 575



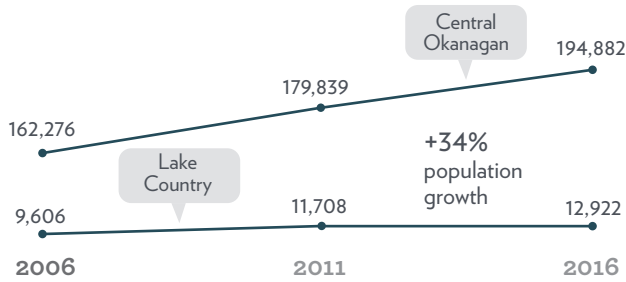
### Diversity



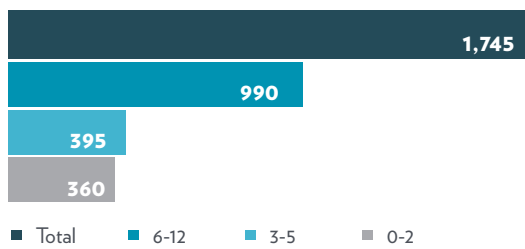
# LAKE COUNTRY

## POPULATION 12,922

### Rate of Population Growth



### Child Population

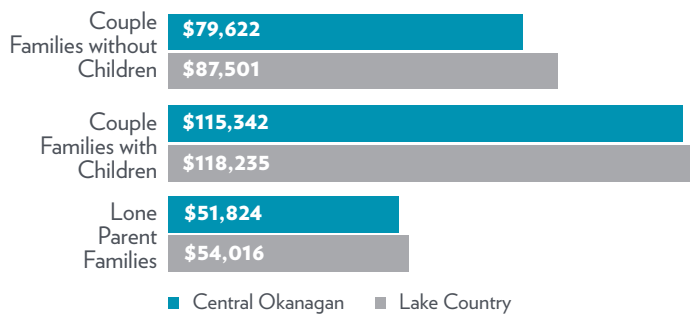


### Child Population Growth (2011-2016)

Source (Statistics Canada)



### Income



### Housing Affordability (2016 census data)

**20%** Owner households spending 30% or more on shelter

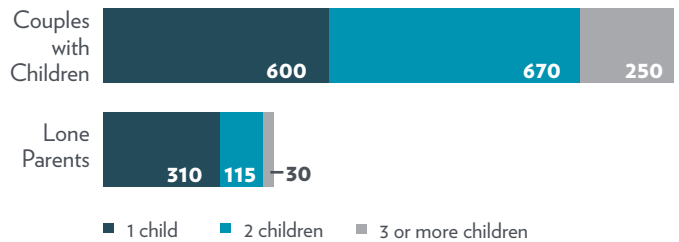
**\$1,492**  
Average owner shelter cost

**39%** Renter households spending 30% or more on shelter

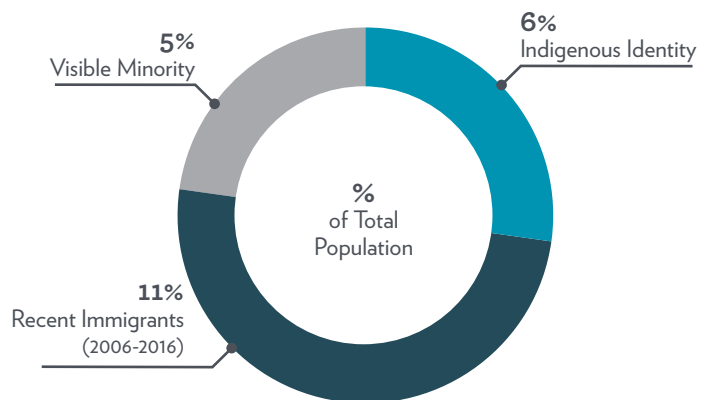
**\$1,082**  
Average renter shelter cost

### Household Families

Number of Families: 3,965



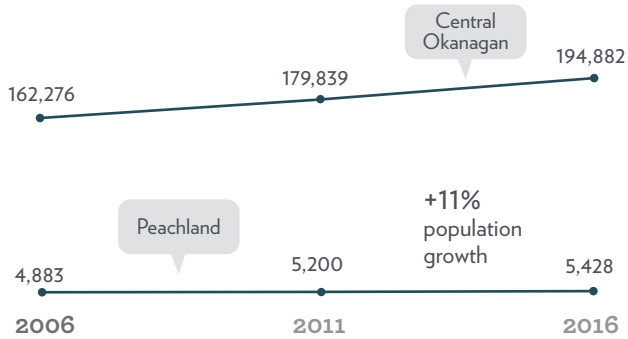
### Diversity



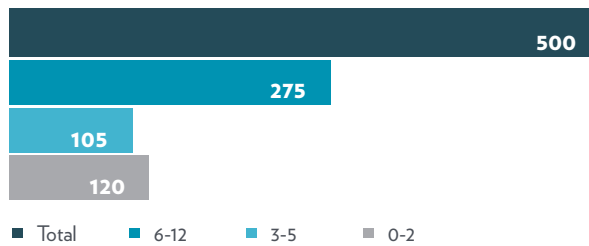
# PEACHLAND

## POPULATION 5,428

### Rate of Population Growth



### Child Population

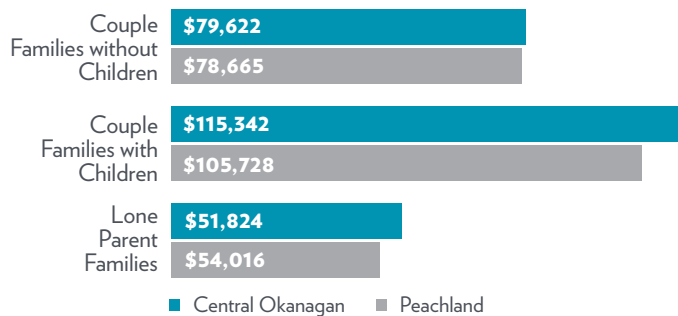


### Child Population Growth (2011-2016)

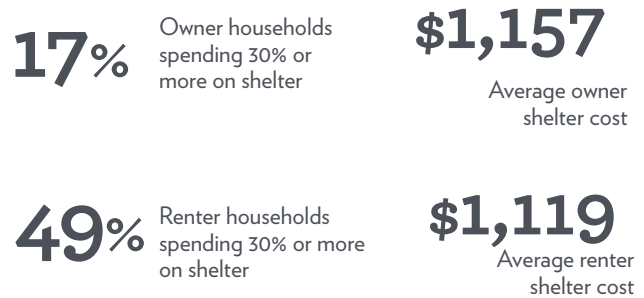
Source (Statistics Canada)



### Income

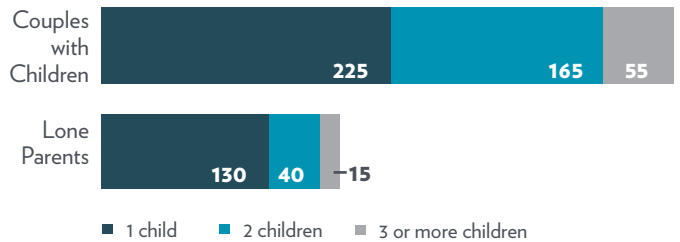


### Housing Affordability (2016 census data)

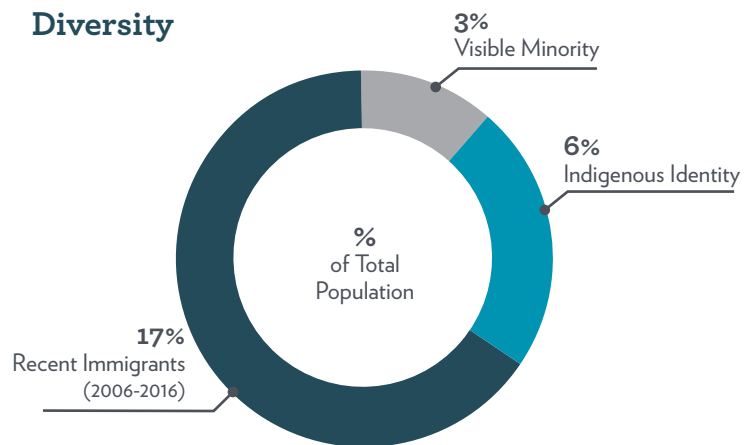


### Household Families

Number of Families: 1,880



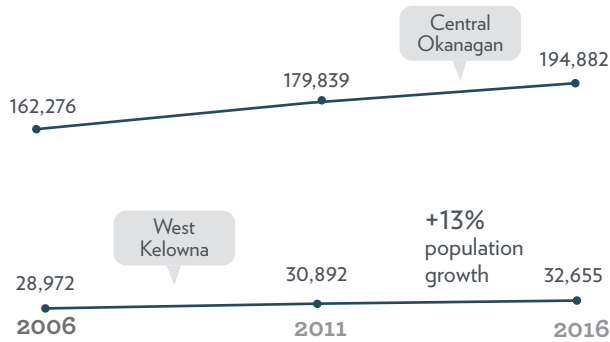
### Diversity



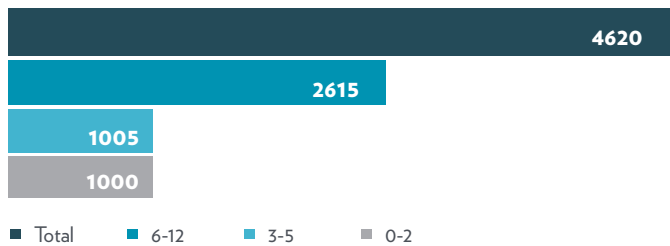
# WEST KELOWNA

## POPULATION 32,655

### Rate of Population Growth



### Child Population

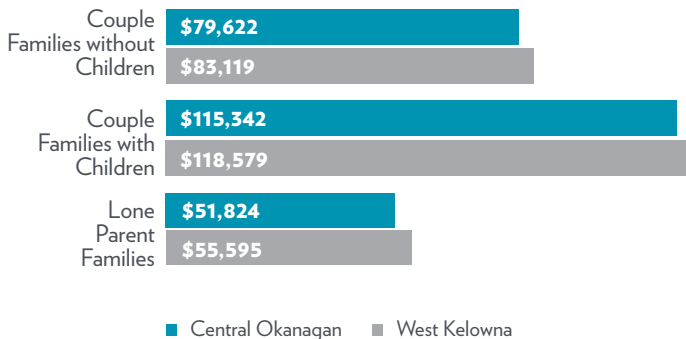


### Child Population (2011-2016)

Source (Statistics Canada)



### Income



### Housing Affordability (2016 census data)

**17%** Owner households spending 30% or more on shelter

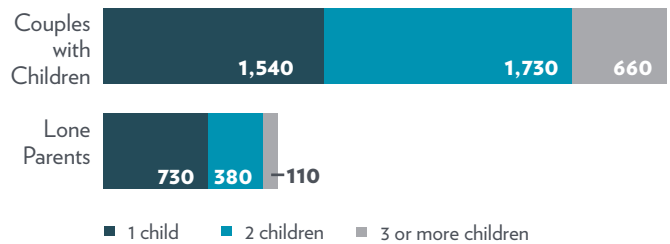
**\$1,369**  
Average owner shelter cost

**42%** Renter households spending 30% or more on shelter

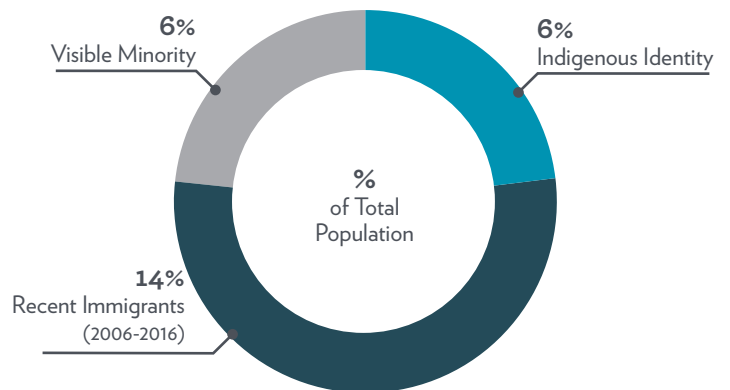
**\$1,331**  
Average renter shelter cost

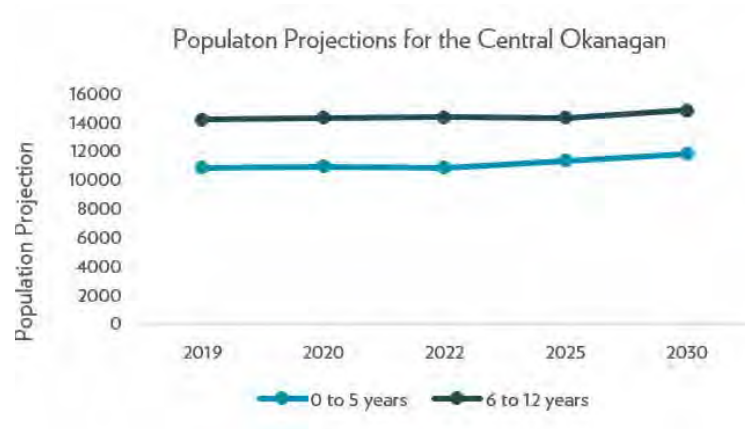
### Household Families

Number of Families: 10,130



### Diversity





## Population

Kelowna is comprised of 127,230 people with a population growth rate of 19% since 2006. Comparatively, Lake Country (12,922), Peachland (5,428) and West Kelowna (32,655) have also seen a growth in population of 34%, 11% and 13%, respectively – all of which are similar or higher than the provincial growth rate of 11.5%.

Child populations in the 0 – 4 age category have increased from 3 – 7% in the Central Okanagan, except for a decrease in Lake County of 4%. Ages 5 – 9 and 10 – 14 have also seen an increase from 2 – 22%, except for in Peachland, where child populations decreased for both age categories by 3% and 5%, respectively.

## Population Projections

Based on the information provided by Statistic BC and P.E.O.P.L.E. 2019 (Population Extrapolation for Organizational Planning with Less Error), the central Okanagan will see an overall increase of 8% and 4% for ages 0 – 5 and 6 – 12, respectively, over the next ten years. The space creation targets for each community take into consideration the population growth rates for the region between the next one, two, five and ten years.

## Family Makeup

According to census data, the number of families in the Central Okanagan totals 51,550. For each community, couples without children outnumber couples with children. In all communities but Peachland, families with two children are greater than families with either one child or three children. Peachland is the only community where just over 50% of families have one child.

Across the Central Okanagan, lone parent families have increased in number by 5.4% since 2011. These families are particularly vulnerable to challenges within the child care system as the need for these parents to access care is likely high and affordability plays a more predominant role.

## Income & Housing Affordability

Income is an important factor to families who need care. In the Central Okanagan, the average cost of child care for one full-time child is \$1200 per month or \$14,400 per year. Lone parent annual income in the region is roughly \$51,000. When taking into consideration the cost of living where between 17% and 20% of owners spend more than 30% of their income on shelter and between 39% and 49% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on shelter, the cost of child care in undoubtedly playing a role in quality of life and affordability.

## Diversity

Culturally, the Central Okanagan is comprised of 3 - 9% of those who identify as a visible minority, 11 – 17% are recent immigrants and 6% identify as Indigenous. New space creation should be informed by the cultural makeup of the region to better meet the needs of community.

# CHILD CARE SUPPLY DEMANDS & TARGETS



## CURRENT CHILD CARE SUPPLY

As of February 2020, the Central Okanagan has 5,752 licensed or registered license-not-required child care spaces made available through 195 program locations (Table 4).

Table 4. Licensed and registered licensed-not-required child care spaces for each category of care in the Central Okanagan.

	<b>Group Child Care</b> (birth to 36 months)	<b>Group Child Care</b> (30 months to school age)	<b>Licensed Preschool</b>	<b>Group Child Care</b> (school age)	<b>Multi-Age Child Care</b>	<b>Family Child Care</b>	<b>In-Home Multi-Age Child Care</b>	<b>TOTAL Child Care Spaces</b>
Kelowna	551	1088	495	1457	293	147	5	4036
Lake Country	24	89	84	125	0	21	8	351
Peachland	0	8	18	44	0	7	0	77
West Kelowna	72	223	266	527	64	105	31	1288
<b>TOTALS</b>	647	1408	863	2153	357	280	44	5752



## Child Care Access Rate

For each municipality, the current child care access rate (number of spaces per 100 children) was determined from child population data and the number of spaces for a given age category. Categories of care (Table 4) and age categories were grouped based on non-school-aged children (ages 0 – 5) and school aged children (ages 6 – 12). Multi-age, in-home multi-age and family child care spaces were split evenly between the 0 – 5 and 6 – 12 age categories, respectively.

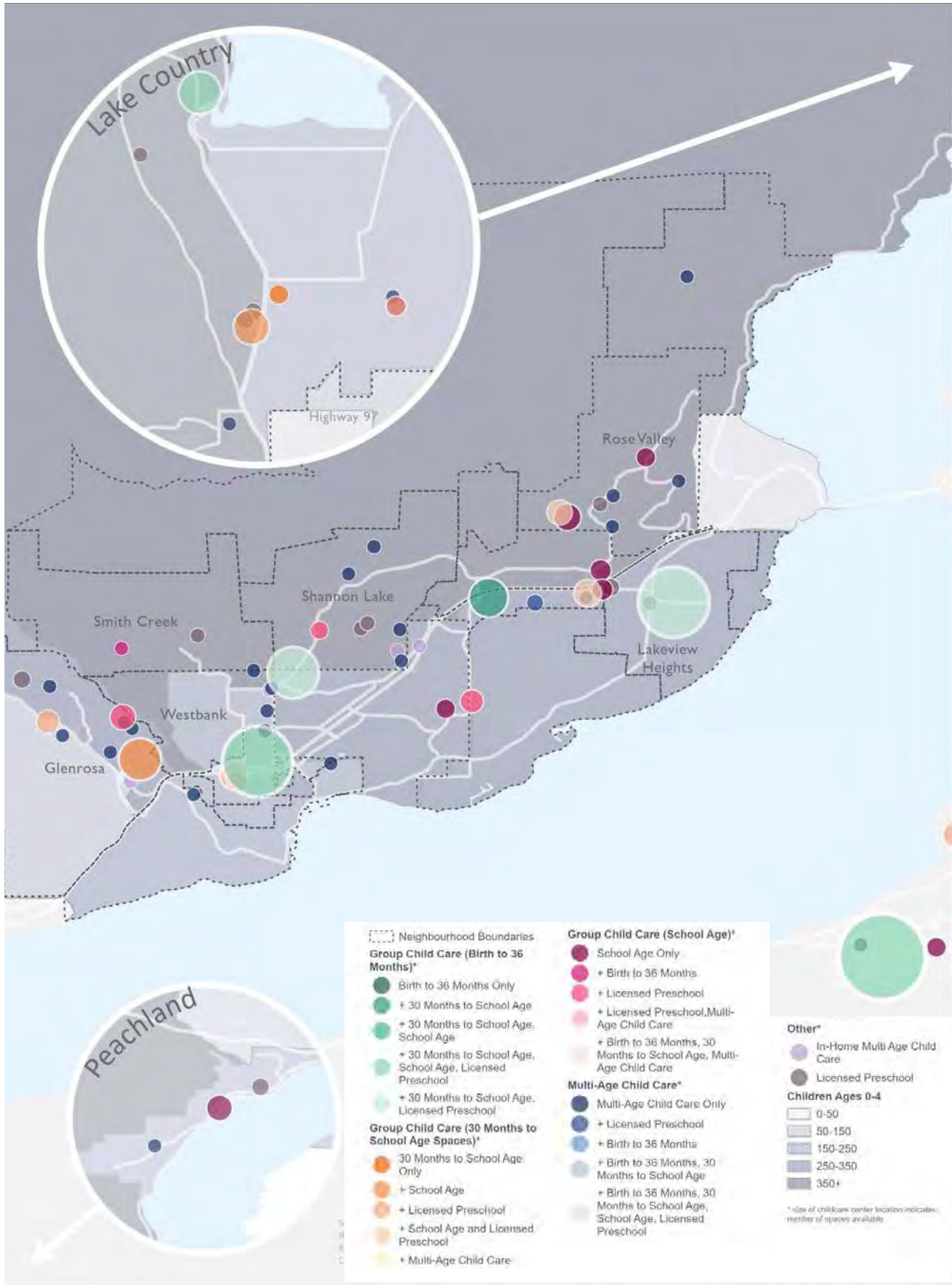
Table 5. Child population, number of spaces and access rate:  
Ages 0 – 5

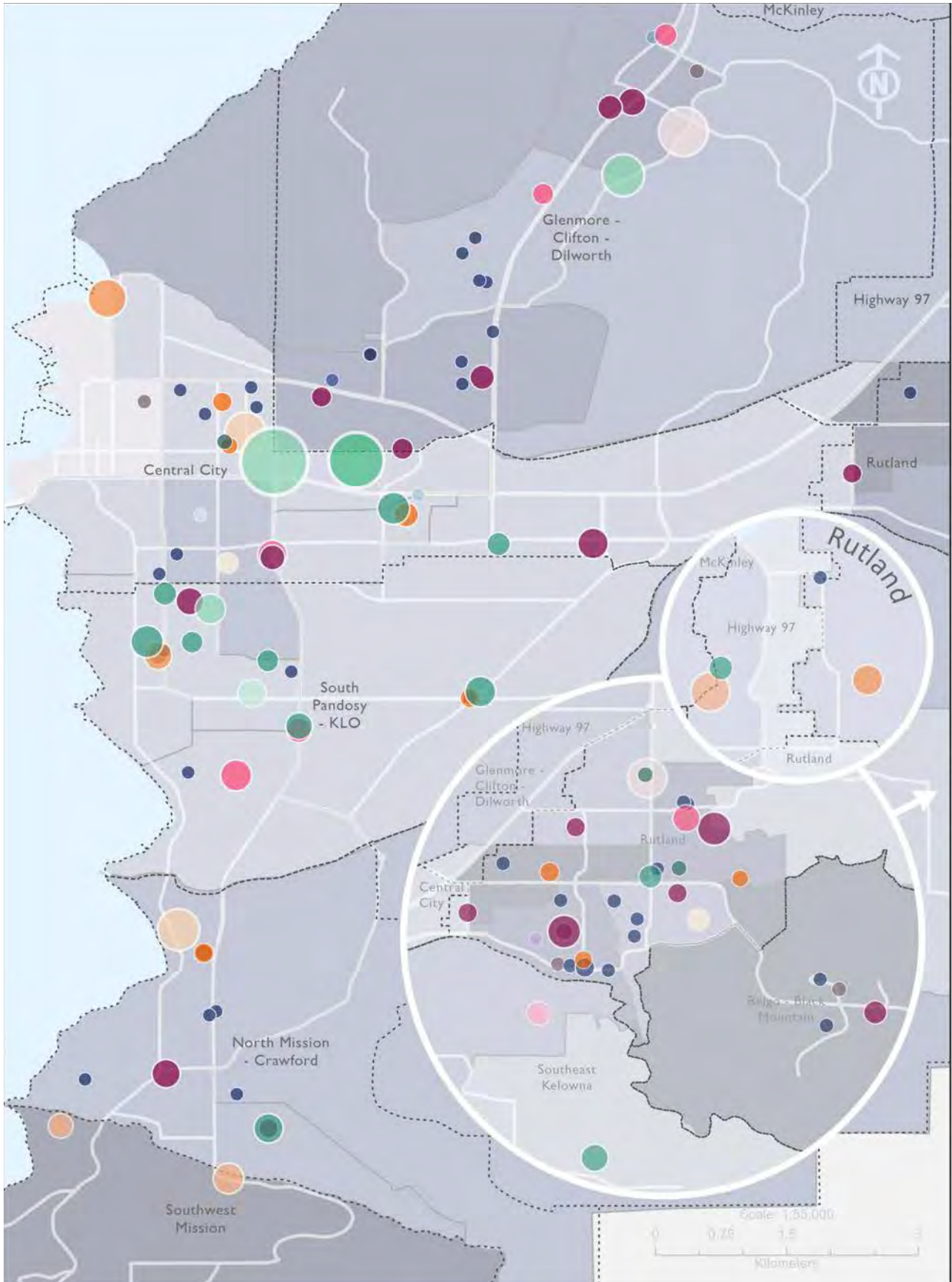
Community	Child Population (0 to 5 years)	Number of Spaces (2019)	Access Rate (spaces per 100 children)
Kelowna	6635	1862	28.1
Lake Country	755	128	16.9
Peachland	225	12	5.1
West Kelowna	2005	395	19.7
<b>TOTALS</b>	9620	2396	Average = 17.4

Table 6. Child population, number of spaces and access rate:  
Ages 6 – 12

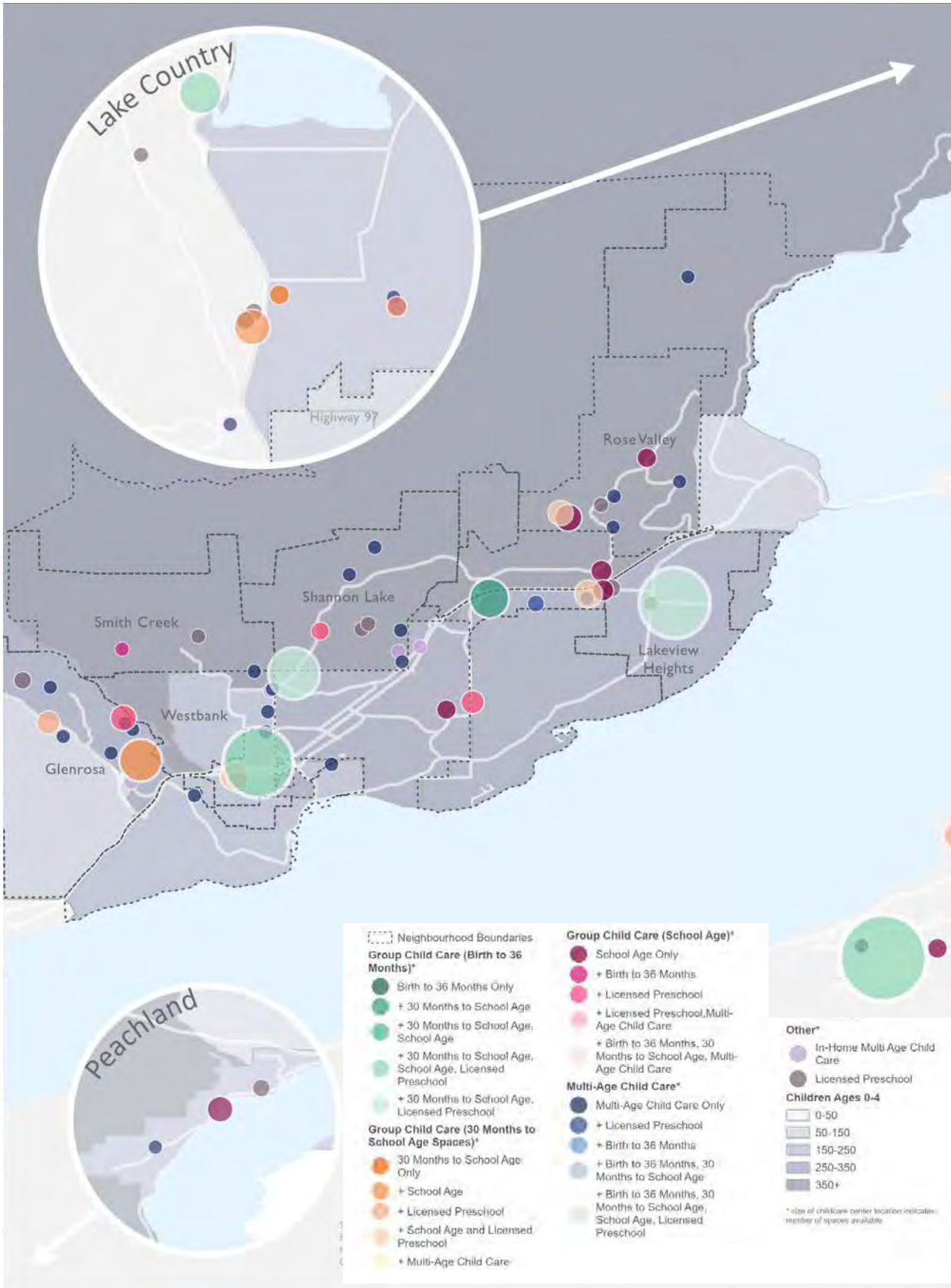
Community	Child Population (6 to 12 years)	Number of Spaces (2019)	Access Rate (spaces per 100 children)
Kelowna	8600	1680	20
Lake Country	990	140	14
Peachland	275	48	17
West Kelowna	2615	627	24
<b>TOTALS</b>	12480	2494	Average = 18.1

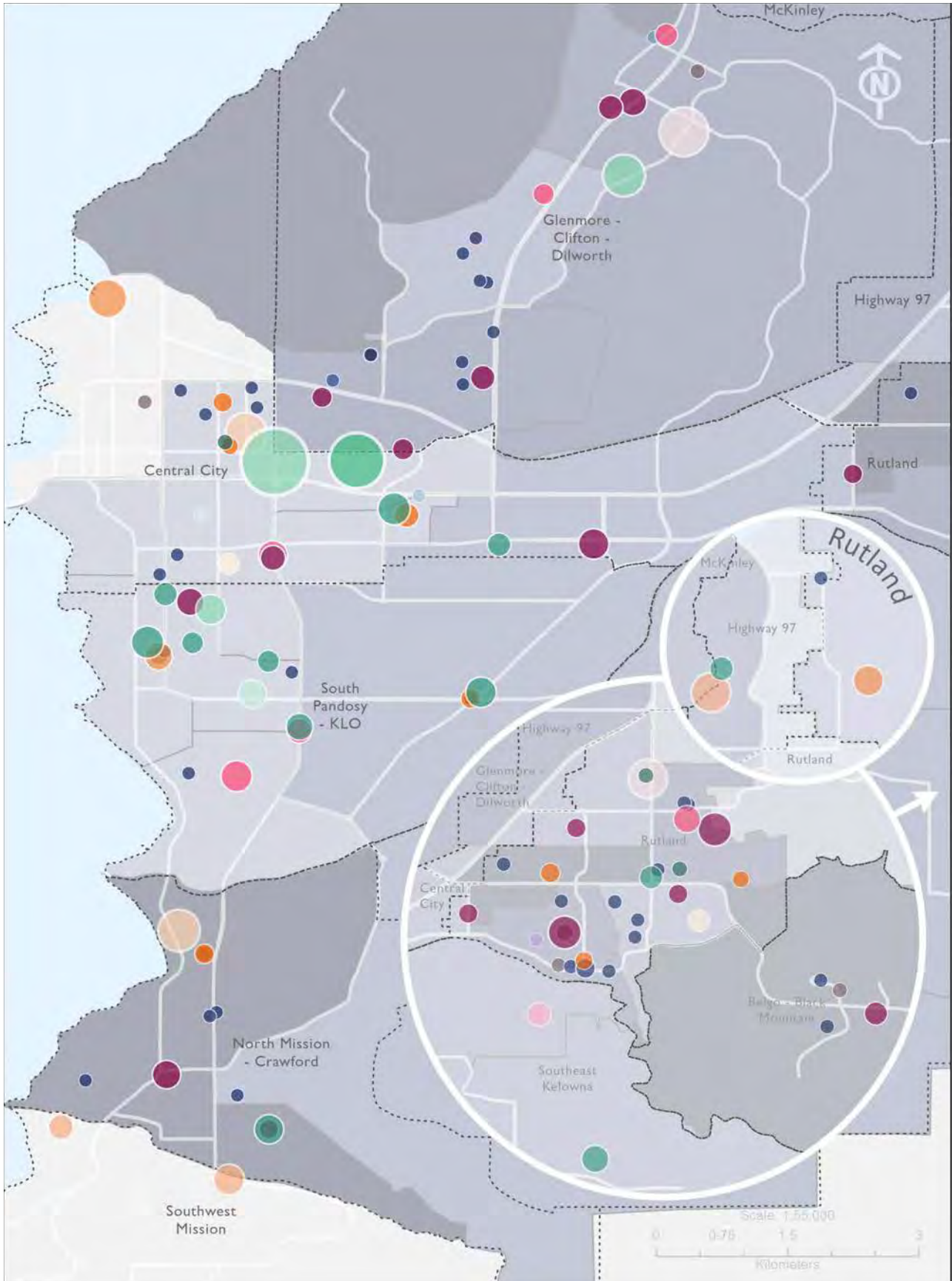
\*Licensed preschool spaces were not used to determine access rates as programs are typically part-time and families may still require additional care to meet their needs.





Central Okanagan Child Care Centers, Child Population Ages 0-4





Central Okanagan Child Care Centers, Child Population Ages 5-9



## CHILD CARE DEMAND & SPACE CREATION TARGETS

Central Okanagan licensed space creation targets are based on population projections from BC Statistics and the current child care inventory. To align with census age data, targets are separated into 0 – 5 and 6 – 12 age categories. For each age group, the following space creation targets were determined:

- Total spaces needed to maintain a municipality’s **current access rate**
- Total spaces needed to maintain a municipality’s **target access rate**

Target access rates have been provided by MCFD and correspond to 30 (or 30% coverage) for ages 0 – 5 and 80 (or 80% coverage) for ages 6 – 12.

Table 7 summarizes the average annual space creation targets for each Central Okanagan community over a ten-year horizon. Tables 8 - 15 show the number of spaces needed in 2020 (1 year), 2022 (2 years), 2025 (5 years) and 2030 (10 years) to meet current or existing access rates.

It should be noted that space creation is reliant on the support and funding from the province.

Table 7. Average annual space creation targets (2020 – 2030)

	Annual Space Creation Targets	
	Ages 0 – 5	Ages 6 – 12
Kelowna	30	1103
Lake Country	11	119
Peachland	6	36
West Kelowna	23	283
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1541</b>

## Space Creation Targets: Ages 0 to 5

Table 8. City of Kelowna space creation targets:  
Ages 0 to 5

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (28.1)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (30)
2019	6635	1862	1991
2020	6686	1879	2006
2022	6639	1866	1992
2025	6923	1945	2077
2030	7209	2026	2163

To meet at target of 2163 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, Kelowna will need an average of 30 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Table 9. District of Peachland space creation targets:  
Ages 0 to 5

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (5.1)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (30)
2019	225	12	68
2020	227	12	68
2022	228	39	69
2025	230	39	69
2030	232	39	70

To meet at target of 70 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, Peachland will need an average of 6 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Table 10. District of Lake Country space creation targets:  
Ages 0 to 5

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (16.9)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (30)
2019	755	128	227
2020	761	129	228
2022	767	130	230
2025	773	131	232
2030	779	132	234

To meet at target of 234 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, Lake Country will need an average of 11 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Table 11. City of West Kelowna space creation targets:  
Ages 0 to 5

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (19.7)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (30)
2019	2005	395	602
2020	2020	398	606
2022	2036	401	611
2025	2052	404	616
2030	2068	407	620

To meet at target of 620 spaces for children ages 0 – 5 by 2030, West Kelowna will need an average of 23 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.



### Space Creation Targets: Ages 6 to 12

Table 12. City of Kelowna space creation targets:  
Ages 6 to 12

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (23.2)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (80)
2019	15235	1680	12188
2020	15381	2999	12305
2022	15424	3008	12339
2025	15372	2998	12298
2030	15884	3097	12708

To meet at target of 12,708 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, Kelowna will need an average of 1103 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Table 13. District of Peachland space creation targets:  
Ages 6 to 12

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (11.8)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (80)
2019	500	59	400
2020	505	87	404
2022	506	88	405
2025	504	87	404
2030	521	90	417

To meet at target of 417 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, Peachland will need an average of 36 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.



Table 14. District of Lake Country space creation targets:  
Ages 6 to 12

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (15.3)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (80)
2019	1745	267	1396
2020	1762	248	1409
2022	1767	249	1413
2025	1761	248	1409
2030	1819	257	1456

To meet at target of 1,456 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, Lake Country will need an average of 119 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

Table 15. City of West Kelowna space creation targets:  
Ages 6 to 12

Year	Projected Child Population	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Current Access Rate (22.1)	Total Spaces Needed to Maintain Target Access Rate (80)
2019	4620	1022	3696
2020	4664	1119	3731
2022	4677	1123	3742
2025	4662	1119	3729
2030	4817	1156	3854

To meet at target of 3854 spaces for children ages 6 – 12 by 2030, West Kelowna will need an average of 283 new spaces per year over the next 10 years.

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS

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## A Note on Implementation

Staff from the City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of Peachland and City of West Kelowna have reviewed this plan and recommendations. This report identifies key recommendations for local government consideration. As a result, there will be additional staffing impacts to support implementation. It will be up to Councils and administration to decide on the allocation of resources to respond to these recommendations through separate staff reports related to future partnerships, policy updates an

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The recommendations set out in this plan are grounded in the province's goal to move towards Universal Child Care - which encourages a move towards **licensed** child care that offers inclusive and culturally-appropriate programming and programming for children with diverse needs.

As identified throughout this report, the state of child care in the Central Okanagan is impacted by many factors that pose complex challenges. These require a multi-dimensional approach to improve child care in the region and to create transformational change. As such, we propose five main recommendation areas that will help move the region towards sustainable child care:

**Process, Policy, Partnerships, Advocacy and Education & Training.**

## PROCESS

Regulatory processes that are easy to understand and navigate is a meaningful way to lower barriers to the creation of more licensed spaces.

The key recommendations are:

- Streamline local government regulatory processes (business licensing and zoning) and work with licensing to improve application and referral steps
- Promote and consider developing municipal incentives for child care providers (i.e. Free business licensing for startups, Permissive Tax Bylaw)

Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Lead	Timeline
Streamline local government regulatory processes (business licensing and zoning processes) and work with licensing to improve application and referral steps	Convene a regional working group to streamline the startup and expansion process that is consistent throughout the region	Business Licensing and Zoning approval application processes are streamlined and consistent throughout the region	Child care providers report that startup process was seamless	Lead: Consultant and/or Community Health Facilitator from Interior Health  Support: Local Government, CCRR, Child Care Providers	1 -2 years
	Create a comprehensive, regional guide and checklist for starting up a new, licensed child care centre (focus on local government and licensing)	Regional guide for starting up licensed child care	Number of child care providers who use the guide and report having a clearer understanding of how to navigate the system	Lead: CCRR or Child Care Council	1 -2 years
Promote and consider developing municipal incentives for child care providers (i.e. Free business licensing for startups, Permissive Tax Bylaw)	Incorporate licensed, non-profit child care providers into permissive tax exemption bylaw and/or provide additional property tax incentives for licensed child care providers	Inclusion of child care in tax exemptions and/or included in municipal tax incentives	Number of providers receiving tax incentive  Increased number of licensed child care providers who report less financial barriers to maintaining their organization	Lead: Local Government  Support: Child Care Council	3-5 years
	Consider progressive fee structure for business licensing to reduce startup costs for licensed child care facilities	Progressive fee structure in place for new licensed child care operations	Number of new providers registered as a business	Lead: Local Government  Support: Child Care Council	3-5 years
	Provide incentives (e.g. first year free business license fees, site or neighbourhood specific property tax reductions) to child care providers who startup licensed child care in underserved locations	High need areas have been identified and incentives are developed to encourage an increased number of care providers serving them	Increased number of child care providers who serve in these areas	Lead: Local Government	5-10 years

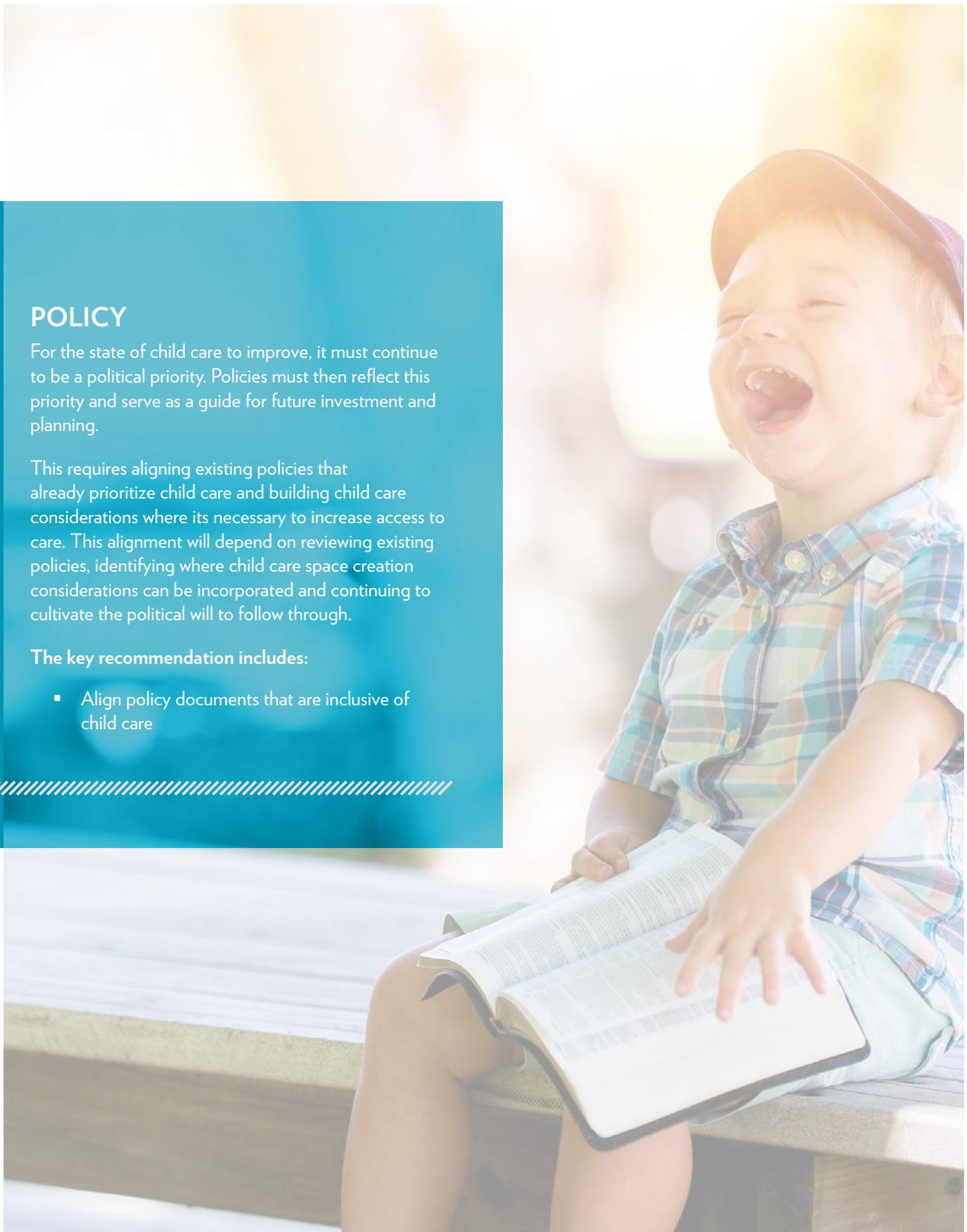
## POLICY

For the state of child care to improve, it must continue to be a political priority. Policies must then reflect this priority and serve as a guide for future investment and planning.

This requires aligning existing policies that already prioritize child care and building child care considerations where its necessary to increase access to care. This alignment will depend on reviewing existing policies, identifying where child care space creation considerations can be incorporated and continuing to cultivate the political will to follow through.

The key recommendation includes:

- Align policy documents that are inclusive of child care



Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Lead	Timeline
Align policy documents that are inclusive of child care	Conduct a zoning bylaw review to ensure child care is accessible in many/all zones	Challenges identified within zoning bylaws to increase child care spaces in high need areas	A plan is developed to increase access in designated priority areas with high needs	Lead: Local Government	3 - 5 years
	Consider parking exemptions in neighbourhoods where child care demand is high	Neighbourhoods where parking exceptions are needed are identified and the feasibility of establishing them is studied	Trial areas where parking exemptions are designated show improved access to child care	Lead: Local Government	3-5 years
	Define child care as a priority in neighbourhood plans within the OCP	Neighbourhood plans incorporate child care and highlight ways in which child care is embedded in to the community's fabric	Approvals process for new child care spaces is smoother and more effective since child care is aligned with OCP priorities	Lead: Local Government	3-5 years
	Consider defining child care as a Community Amenity Contribution (CAC)	Community Amenity Contribution policy includes child care as an amenity for development occurring within specific zones where CACs are applicable	Increase in the number of new developments that contribute child care spaces as part of their required CACs	Lead: Local Government	3-5 years



## PARTNERSHIPS

There are already an abundance of assets that exist within the region. Local government, child care providers, parents and caregivers are all invested in improving access to child care in the Central Okanagan. Leveraging existing assets and creating or strengthening partnerships is a way to build community resilience around this issue.

The following recommendations highlight how partnerships can enable child care space creation:

- Consider joint-use agreements between public institutions to help facilitate the creation of additional child care spaces
  - Identify, review and assess underutilized physical space within the community suitable for child care through community partnerships
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Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Lead	Timeline
Consider joint use agreements between public institutions to help facilitate the creation of additional child care spaces	Convene meetings between municipalities and School District to discuss joint use opportunities for child care and ways to facilitate the increase in spaces particularly in high need areas	Community wide joint use agreement that address child care space needs	Increase in the number of child care providers operating from school district buildings	Lead: Local Government, School District, Non-Profit Child Care Operators	5-10 years
Identify, review and assess underutilized physical space within the community suitable for child care through community partnerships	Create an inventory of public assets that are suitable for potential child care centres  Include: heritage buildings, community halls	A list of public assets can be prioritized for child care spaces and work with Early Childhood Educator sector to create new space opportunities through identifying operators and grants	Increase in the number of spaces created within municipal public assets	Lead: Local Government  Support: Child Care Council, CCRR	5-10 years
	Share the inventory with the CCRR to share with the local child care and business community	Child care providers have a better understanding of where there is a high need for care to respond to this need	Partnerships are established among those child care operators who want to be a part of creating child care centers	Lead: Local Government, CCRR  Support: Child Care Operators	5-10 years
	Consider faith organization locations as potential child care space creation opportunities	Existing partnerships between faith organizations and child care spaces are identified, best practices are outlined and shared	Child care providers and faith-based organizations have a clearer understanding of how to establish these partnerships, which leads to more co-location opportunities	Lead: Child Care Council  Support: Faith Organizations	3-5 years
	Consider senior centre locations as potential child care space creation opportunities	Existing partnerships between senior centres and child care spaces are identified, best practices are outlined and shared	Child care providers and senior centres have a clearer understanding of how to establish these partnerships, which leads to more co-location opportunities	Lead: Child Care Council  Support: Senior Centres	3-5 years
	Work with colleges and universities to consider vacant land as potential child care space creation opportunities	Feasibility studies are conducted on the potential use(s) of identified available land	Partnerships with colleges and/or universities established and plans for use of identified land are created	Lead: Child Care Council  Support: Colleges and Universities	3-5 years



## ADVOCACY

The perspectives heard through engagement highlighted many issues that need to be considered to improve the state of child care in the region. Beyond space creation, advocacy that emphasizes the need for improved working conditions and the need to address the unequitable and gendered impacts of child care challenges, for example, is key to moving the dial.

**The following key recommendations include:**

- Advocate for child care to be included in elementary schools
- Advocate for the implementation of new licensed child care facilities in new school builds
- Advocate to the province for fair wages, benefits, continuing education and structured apprentice program for child care providers (ECEs)
- Support and encourage employers to share responsibility for child care within their communities

Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Lead	Timeline
Advocate for child care to be integrated into elementary schools	Write letter(s) from Councils to the Minister of Education or MCFD	Letter(s) sent from Councils to Ministers	Letter(s) sent to Ministers and response received by Councils	Lead: Local Government	1- 2 years
Advocate for the implementation of new licensed child care facilities in new school builds	Child Care Council and School District 23 to discuss future capital projects and the inclusion of child care to support capital investment advocacy to the provincial government	Capital investment from the Ministry of Education includes the approval of child care spaces in new school builds	New schools constructed with child care spaces integrated into the building	Lead: Child Care Council, Local Government  Support: School District 23	3-5 years
Advocate to the province for fair wages, benefits, continuing education, and structured apprentice program for child care providers (ECEs)	Child Care Council and Councils to make the business case to the provincial government for salary increases and benefits for ECEs as a means of increasing staff retention and lessening burnout	Access to benefits and increased pay for ECEs becomes common practice	Lower rates of staff turn over and burn out, as well as an increased number of people enrolled in ECE educational institutions	Lead: Child Care Council  Support: Local Government	1- 2 years
Support and encourage employers to share the responsibility for child care within their communities	Encourage large businesses to develop onsite child care facilities as a means of increasing access to care for their employees strengthening employee loyalty and retention	Increase in the number of employers supporting employees with onsite child care options	Local employers partner with local child care businesses to support employees, and businesses report an increase in employee retention and labour market participation rates among family populations	Lead: Child Care Council, Businesses  Support: Interior Health Licensing	3-5 years  5-10 years

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

Supporting this streamlined process also requires lowering the knowledge gap that surrounds it – particularly for startup and expansion of child care spaces. Education and training are vital to capacity building and ensuring that those who play a vital role in the child care system know how to navigate and improve it.

### The key recommendations include:

- Explore the development of child care startup workshops to ease the process for new licensed child care providers
- Improve the experience for parents who require flexible care or are looking for different types of child care solutions that align with family care values
- Raise awareness about the importance of Early Childhood Education and the role of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)



Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Lead	Timeline
Explore the development of child care startup workshops to ease the process for new licensed child care providers	Consider identifying a partner that can help with navigating the licensing process and support the child care provider set up the operating model	Capacity building takes place and care providers are better equipped to navigate the licensing program	Number of care providers who are supported and report having the capacity to better navigate the system	Lead: CCRR, Chamber of Commerce  Support: Local Government, Child Care Council, Interior Health, Colleges	3 - 5 years
Improve the experience for parents who require flexible care or are looking for different types of child care solutions that align with family care values	Develop a guide for parents on how to navigate the child care system including information on care types, funding, supports, waitlists etc.  Discuss the potential of an online tool that supports families to understand and find child care	Guide for parents developed  Viability of an online tool assessed	Parents report enhanced knowledge surrounding child care  Funding and capacity in place to start development of online tool	Lead: Child Care Council  Support: CCRR, Parents, Child Care Providers, Tech Community	1-2 years
Raise awareness about the importance of early childhood education and the role of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)	Disseminate information pieces to parents and providers	Mainstream understanding of the importance of ECEs and the need to prevent high staff turnover and burnout	Increased number of ECEs enlisted in colleges and universities and greater staff retention  Parents share that they understand the importance of child care in child development	Lead: CCRR, ECEBC  Support: Child Care Council, Local Government, Child Care Providers	3 - 5 years





**Appendix A**  
**Engagement Summary**

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