City of Prince Rupert

Child Care Assessment & Action Plan Highlights

The City of Prince Rupert Child Care Assessment & Action Plan provides a clear baseline understanding of local child care needs and actions to support space-creation targets. The plan was informed by community engagement, results of a child care inventory and child population trends.

What are the current child care needs in Prince Rupert?

Findings of this assessment reveal the context-specific needs of Prince Rupert, reflecting a demand for additional licensed child care spaces across a range of ages and child care types. Identified child care gaps include:

GAP 1

Centre-Based Infant / Toddler Child Care

While there is a shortage of child care spaces across all programs, most notable is the limited availability of spaces for infants & toddlers. The access rate for dedicated infant & toddler spaces are the lowest of all child care spaces, with existing programs at capacity.

GAP 2

Flexible Child Care Programs

With most child care programs offering care during traditional work hours, there are no licensed child care options available to accommodate the high number of shift workers or those with non-traditional work hours in Prince Rupert.

GAP 3

Child Care Hubs

The majority of child care programs are located in residential areas or as stand-alone facilities. There is a lack of child care "hubs," where child care is co-located with schools, family service organizations, recreation programming and multi-family housing in safe and accessible locations.

GAP 4

Awareness of Programs & Affordability Benefits

There is a lack of awareness on where families can find information on local child care programs / availability spaces as well as affordability benefits provided by government.

GAP 5

Space-Creation Barriers

There are a number of barriers to creating child care spaces. Most prominent is the shortage of trained staff due to higher wage job alternatives. Other barriers include restrictive zoning, lack of child supports (due to staff shortages) and local capacity constraints.

How many spaces are required now and in the future?

Based on recent child projections from BC Stats, Prince Rupert requires an additional 49 licensed child care spaces to meet current local demand and achieve a 25% access rate for children 0 to 12 years old. The two main priorities for space creation are a Group (Under 36 months) infant / toddler centre and a flexible care program to accommodate shift workers and those working non-traditional work hours.

Looking to the future, it is estimated that 1,910 new fulltime jobs will be created in Prince Rupert over the next 10 years. Based on this, space targets and gaps will shift according to actual population changes and pace of growth.



What actions can the City take to support child care space creation?

While the City of Prince Rupert does not have a mandate or legislative role to provide child care, there are steps the City can take to address child care gaps and support new space creation within the existing provincial government framework. Ways the City can support child care space creation are:

1

Strengthen Child Care Policy.
Establishing formal child care space policies within the City's Official Community Plan will guide the City and community in realizing opportunities to address local child care needs within the context of future growth and development decisions. Strong City policy also helps support community programs and funding applications.

2

Remove Regulatory Barriers & Create Incentives.
Enable the creation of new child care spaces in the community by establishing land-use regulations that permit child care spaces in all commercial and public zones. Revitalization tax exemptions are used to create incentives for the development of new child care spaces.

3

Support Space Creation.
The City can provide valuable support and resources to community partners in developing additional child care spaces in the community, including leveraging available funding to create child care space for lease in/on a City-owned facility or property.

4

Communications, Partnerships & Advocacy.
Work in partnership with local organizations to promote access to child care resources and information, advocate to higher levels of government, and encourage continued dialogue in the community to ensure local child care needs stay at the forefront of the community growth conversation.

Looking into the future, achieving child care space targets requires continued monitoring, community dialogue and collaboration in order to work together to collectively meet local child care needs.

