



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	May 29, 2024
SUBJECT:	Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care – 2024 Directed Growth Application to Create New Child Care Spaces (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Brenda Bax, Acting Director, Children's and Community Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	<i>B Bax</i>

This communication update is being sent to advise Council on the status and outcome of the division's 2024 Directed Growth Application process to create new child care spaces.

The province is in its third year of implementing the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan. The goal of this initiative is to ensure more families across Ontario have access to safe, affordable, and high-quality child care. The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan will be phased in by March 2026, with the average cost of child care for eligible children 0 to 6 years, reduced to approximately \$12 per day.

The Ministry of Education also released an Access and Inclusion Framework to support the creation of new child care spaces, focusing on increased access to child care for children of low-income families, vulnerable children, children from diverse communities, children with special needs and Francophone and Indigenous children. In 2024, the Ministry approved a total of 265 community-based spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years of age.

Staff have completed an analysis which demonstrated a need to prioritize 2024 community-based expansion in four wards; 6,11, 5 and 2. Consideration was also provided to wards 7 and 4, which were identified priority wards in 2023 and continue to trend with lower access rates. In addition to access rates, socio-economic indicators are also factored in when determining ward priority. All wards will benefit from new child

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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care spaces over the next three years and additional analysis will be undertaken to ensure the child care needs of all neighbourhoods are considered.

The division has now completed the 2024 directed growth application process and will be communicating back to all Licensee applicants the results of their submissions by end of May 2024. All 265 community-based spaces have now been allocated with the anticipation of all newly created spaces to be open and operational by December 31, 2024.

As these additional child care spaces become operational, child care access rates will increase for the following wards:

Ward	Access Rate %	
	From	To
6	9%	11%
11	19%	20%
5	25%	28%
2	39%	45%
7	21%	26%
4	18%	19%

This will result in an overall child care access rate increase from 33% to 34% city-wide, in our infant, toddler and preschool age groups, bringing the City one step closer to the Ministry's goal to achieve a 37% access rate across Hamilton by 2026.

Staff will complete a phase 2 of community engagement in 2024 to help inform the directed growth goals for 2025. Staff are currently in the process of establishing the priority wards for directed growth in 2025 and anticipate the next opportunity for application submissions to be Q1 of 2025.

Should you require further information on the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care, please contact Brenda Bax, Acting Director Children's Services and Community Services Division at 905-973-4463 or via email at Brenda.Bax@hamilton.ca.