

Section 2 Council Correspondence 2019.04.25

April 15, 2019

Mayor Mike Hurley and Council
City of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC V5G 1M2

Dear Mayor Hurley and Councillors,

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC congratulates you and your council on receiving a municipal child care planning grant. As one of 55 local BC governments that support the \$10aDay Plan you know that families and communities need a quality, affordable child care system. You also know that the \$10aDay Plan provides the made-in-BC, evidence-based pathway for moving from the current child care chaos to this very system.

Now that the provincial government has made significant child care commitments, generally consistent with the \$10aDay Plan, you can finally begin a planning process to guide child care expansion in ways that meet the needs of families in your community.

We are pleased to share a few suggestions that we hope will assist you in this planning process. These suggestions integrate specific requirements of the planning grant with key elements of the community-led \$10aDay Child Care Plan ([2019 edition attached](#))*. We trust this integration supports you to meet the planning grant requirements in ways that move your community towards the system envisioned in the Plan.

1. The importance of and need for quality, affordable child care is well established in research and evidence. Rather than revisit this question, **we encourage you to focus on identifying specific priority needs and opportunities for growth in your community.**
2. The planning grant calls on you to engage with local stakeholders including Indigenous organizations and child care providers. The \$10aDay Plan fully supports and respects the rights and processes of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples to restore their own authorities for their children, families and communities. The Plan calls on the federal and provincial government to ensure Indigenous peoples have the resources required to develop the services that meet their communities' needs. **We encourage you to ensure this is a grounding principle in your local planning process.**

*Available in Clerks Office

Referred to:

Environment and Social Planning Committee (2019.05.06)

Copied to:

City Manager, Dir. Corporate Services, Dir. Planning and Building, Dir. Finance

The 2019 edition of the \$10aDay Plan also recommends the creation of **local child care councils** that bring together key public and community partners to assume responsibility for child care planning. If your community does not already have such a body – this grant is the perfect time to create it. **We encourage you to work with your local school districts and other key partners to convene a child care council to advise on this planning process and to play a local leadership role in guiding its implementation.**

3. The local planning grant requires that you undertake at least one community engagement process, including the option of a parent or provider survey. Be aware that the results of parental surveys about child care needs and preferences are highly influenced by access and affordability issues. Families are unlikely to identify a preference for a child care service they can't afford or have never experienced. **We encourage you to frame any parent surveys within the provincial commitment to move to universal, affordable child care.**

The grant also encourages you to examine current child care utilization rates in existing facilities. You may find that some providers are licensed for more spaces than they currently offer. This is usually because their fees are too high for many families, and/or because providers cannot recruit and retain qualified staff. The \$10aDay Plan recognizes that space creation must go hand in hand with a coordinated strategy to develop the workforce and reduce parent fees. **We encourage you to acknowledge and highlight the need for the provincial government to expedite this integrated approach in your planning process.**

4. The local planning grant asks you to consider co-locating child care facilities with other public and community facilities such as schools, postsecondary institutions, libraries, recreation facilities, and family support programs. The \$10aDay Plan supports this approach and, overall, strongly recommends that all public capital funds are only used to create publicly-owned child care facilities. In the short-term, the Plan calls for a provincial program to design and purchase high quality modular child care facilities for placement on public lands. **We encourage you to focus on child care expansion with public partners in their facilities or on their lands and to support our modular purchase proposal.**
5. The local planning grant asks you to identify which organization(s) will be responsible for leading the creation of child care spaces. Based on international evidence, the \$10aDay Plan invites existing providers in as it grows a new public system. If you have a strong non-profit child care provider(s) in your community, consider contracting with them to deliver new child care services. If not – **we encourage your local government or school district to become the licensed operator of new child care – a step on the way to a public system.** A majority of BC School Districts have also endorsed and supported the \$10aDay Plan.
6. Finally, **we encourage you to ensure that the staff/consultants who work on your local action plan have the required child care expertise and a strong commitment to a quality affordable system as envisioned in the \$10aDay Plan.**

In closing, be assured that the \$10aDay Plan recognizes that no one community can solve the child care crisis alone. While local governments have an important role to play, this cannot lead to downloading of responsibility for child care without adequate financial and other resources in place.

That is why we have called on the province to create a Child Care Transformation Team to support communities. Building a new child care system requires specific expertise in planning, development and operational delivery. We encourage you to join with us in making this request of government.

We wish you well in your planning process and look forward to working with you and your community now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sharon Gregson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sharon" and last name "Gregson" clearly distinguishable.

Sharon Gregson
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC