

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 28, 2019</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>LONDON-MIDDLESEX CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN: 2019-2023</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
-----------------------

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, the following actions **BE TAKEN**:

- a) The attached proposed London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2019 - 2023 (Appendix A) **BE APPROVED**; and,
- b) Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to implement the proposed London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
--

- Licensed Child Care Affordability Pilot (November 13, 2018);
- Amendment to By-Law No. A.-7100-150: *Day Nurseries Act To Child Care And Early Years Act, 2014* (May 29, 2018);
- Request For Proposal 18-22 – Design, Construction And Operation of an Indigenous-Led Licensed Child Care And Family Centre (May 29, 2018);
- Ontario Early Years Child And Family Centres Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement and City Ontario Early Years Child And Family Centres Funding Agreement Template (November 7, 2017);
- Child Care Information Update and London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service Plan (July 18, 2017);
- London’s Child and Youth Agenda: 2017-2021 (May 24, 2017);
- Journey Together Early Years Transfer Payment Agreement (February 22, 2017); and,
- Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Planning and Transfer Payment Agreement (January 24, 2017).

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
-------------------

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) requires the City of London, as the Service System Manager (SSM) of London and Middlesex County, to establish a child care and early years programs and services plan (service system plan) that addresses matters of Provincial interest under the Act, as well as local priorities. Service system plans allow for a province-wide opportunity to analyze the impacts of programs and services, identify progress and service gaps, and foster evidence-based decision making to continue to support SSMs and the child care and early years sector.

In August 2017, it was announced that Service System Managers (SSMs) are required to submit a Council-approved service system plan to the Ministry of Education by June 30, 2019.

Planning for the child care and early years system is aligned to the Strategic Plan for the City of London 2019 – 2023 under the Strategic Area of Focus - *Strengthening our Community*, Outcome – *Londoners have access to the supports they need to be successful*; Expected Result – *Increase opportunities for individuals and families*; and Strategy – *Improve access to licensed child care and early years opportunities*.

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1) provide an overview of:
  - a. the service system plan and the London-Middlesex child care and early years service system;
  - b. the service system plan requirements as well as provincial interests, frameworks, and

- pedagogy (a method or way of teaching);
  - c. the community planning process;
  - d. the service system plan outcomes, goals and strategic priorities; and,
- 2) present for consideration and approval the London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan: 2019-2023.

### London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan: 2019-2023

The London-Middlesex service system plan provides a roadmap and local work plan to strengthen child care and early years programs and services in London-Middlesex over the next four years. The service system plan provides an introduction and overview of the current child care and early years sector in London-Middlesex. It builds on the work that has already been achieved in London-Middlesex since 2007.

A family-centred approach is a fundamental component of the service system plan. In alignment with London’s Child & Youth Network and Middlesex Children’s Service Network, the objective of the service system plan is to improve outcomes for families by creating change through a culture shift using a “collective impact” approach. This approach emphasizes collaboration between community partners and residents, interprofessional practice among service providers, and the integration of services for families as a mechanism to improve access to services and supports.

London and Middlesex County are represented within individual sections of the service system plan. This was done to preserve and respect the unique needs and opportunities of urban and rural environments across the region. This report includes highlights from the service system plan. To review the full plan please see [Appendix A](#).

### London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System

The following are a number of key system statistics that reflect the state of the child care and early years service system in 2018. These statistics provide a point-in-time overview of the child care and early years service system in London-Middlesex, as well as context for the scope and scale of the system planning presented in this report.

Measure	London	Middlesex	Combined
<b>Demographic Information (2018)</b>			
Number of Children 0-4 Years	21,025	4,003	24,293
Number of Children 5-9 Years	20,875	4,262	25,577
Number of Children 10-14 Years	20,589	4,494	24,614
<b>Child Care Statistics</b>			
Number of Licensed Child Care Agencies	44	15	55*
Number of Licensed Child Care Sites (0-4 years and School Aged)	166	32	198
Centre-Based Licensed Child Care Spaces (0-4 years and School Aged)	12,153	1,536	13,689
Average Centre-Based Licensed Child Care Daily Rate for Infant Care	-	-	\$57.36
Average Centre-Based Licensed Child Care Daily Rate for Toddler Care	-	-	\$52.73
Average Centre-Based Licensed Child Care Daily Rate for Preschool Care	-	-	\$47.48
Total Unique Number of Children Benefitting from Child Care Fee Subsidy	4,981	277	5,258
<b>EarlyON Child and Family Centre Statistics</b>			
Number of EarlyON Service Providers	6	2	8
Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers to EarlyON Child and Family Centres	42,259	7,394	49,653
Number of Visits Made by Children to EarlyON Child and Family Centres (0 to 6)	61,572	9,590	71,162
<i>*The total number of agencies is not the sum of London and Middlesex because are agencies that provide services in both London and Middlesex</i>			

Information is summarized in this report; see section 1.4.2 in the service system plan ([Appendix A](#)) for additional statistics and detail.

### Service System Plan Requirements

The City of London has a mandate and directive from the Province of Ontario to engage in system-wide planning for licensed child care and early years. As part the service system plan, the City of London is required to include a number of key elements outlined in Provincial guidelines including:

1. An environmental scan that assesses current and future child care and early years service gaps and opportunities;
2. A description of the community planning process used to inform the development of the plan, and a commitment to consult through the life of the plan;
3. Strategic priorities and intended outcomes that are responsive to community need and align with Ontario's vision for child care and early years and provincial interests;
4. A measureable and action-oriented implementation plan that describes how strategic priorities and outcomes will be met; and,
5. Accountability methods including the public posting of plans and reporting in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

### **Provincial Interests, Frameworks, and Pedagogy**

In 2017, the Province released the *Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework*. The framework outlined the strategic direction the Ministry of Education was taking to continue the transformation of the child care and early years system, and is divided into seven key directions:

1. Increasing access to early years and child care programs and services;
2. Ensuring a more affordable child care system and early years system;
3. Establishing an early years workforce strategy;
4. Determining a provincial definition of quality in the early years;
5. Developing an approach to promoting inclusion in early years and child care settings;
6. Creating an outcomes and measurement strategy; and,
7. Increasing public awareness of Ontario's early years and child care system.

The framework identified four important pillars which were chosen based on feedback from system partners, and reinforced through the findings of their engagement processes including:

1. Affordability;
2. Access;
3. Quality; and,
4. Responsiveness.

In May 2019, the Province released four new priorities to consider when developing a plan for child care; these priorities include:

1. Making child care more affordable;
2. Increasing choice and availability for families;
3. Reducing red tape and administrative burden; and,
4. Improving quality and delivering high standards of care.

Service system plans must also consider *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* (HDLH). HDLH was released by the Province in 2014, as a resource to guide pedagogy for early years programs. HDLH focuses on how children, families, and educators interact and learn from each other, citing research that demonstrates that children in high quality programs with supportive relationships are happier and more motivated to learn.

### **Community Planning Process**

Throughout 2018 and early 2019 children, families, and service providers were invited to provide feedback on their experiences with the child care and early years system in London-Middlesex. Opportunities to provide feedback included:

- focus groups with children;
- child's voice documentation;
- parent/caregiver surveys;
- parent/caregiver postcards;
- parent/caregiver focus groups;
- licensed service provider surveys;
- unlicensed home child care provider surveys;
- service provider focus groups;
- child care and early years community meetings; and,
- targeted engagement (Francophone and Indigenous service providers and families).

Over 1,730 parents and caregivers in addition to numerous service providers provided input and feedback in the proposed service system plan presented in Appendix A. To review the community engagement results in detail, see Appendices 2 to 6 ([Appendix A](#)).

## **London's Outcomes, Goals, and Strategic Priorities**

London's service system is driven to achieve five outcomes that were identified over 12 years ago with families and are still relevant today:

1. Families are connected and engaged in their neighbourhoods;
2. Families experience reduced storytelling;
3. Families have a better and more consistent experience when accessing services;
4. Families can easily access a full range of services; and,
5. Families experience shorter wait times.

London's service system plan is designed to achieve three goals:

1. Moving beyond collaboration, coordination, and co-location to an integrated, family-centred model of service delivery across the entire service system;
2. Enhancing early years programs and services through the development of a network of Family Centres to provide identifiable, accessible, family-friendly access points to the service system; and,
3. Strengthening the licensed child care sector to enhance the accessibility, responsiveness, affordability, and quality of the system.

To achieve these three goals, six strategic priorities and forty-five local actions have been identified to complete over the next four years. Strategic priorities and actions were identified following extensive engagement and collective planning with families and service providers in London. The six strategic priorities for London's service system plan include:

1. Create a common experience for families accessing the service system;
2. Increase awareness of the service system;
3. Support professional learning and capacity building for educators and administrators to elevate the quality of the service system;
4. Champion community priorities to improve the service system;
5. Use evidence-informed decision-making to respond to community needs; and,
6. Strengthen financial, governance, and accountability structures and mechanisms to move the service system to high-performance.

To review the City of London and Middlesex County's outcomes strategic priorities and actions in detail, see section 2.3.1 in [Appendix A](#).

## **Council's Approval of the Service System Plan**

The proposed London-Middlesex service system plan aligns to the *Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework*, the four Provincial priorities, and will reinforce and integrate the practices and goals of *How Does Learning Happen?* into London-Middlesex. As a result, the service system plan has been developed to display the connection between local engagement results, strategic priorities, and actions to Provincial interests, Frameworks, and pedagogy.

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) requires that service system plans be approved by Municipal Councils. This report presents for consideration and approval the London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan: 2019-2023. Please see [Appendix A](#) for the full service system plan.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

A minimum municipal contribution is required annually by the Province to access funding. The municipal funding contribution from the City of London to support the service system plan is included in the Neighbourhood, Children & Fire Services budget and will be confirmed annually through the multi-year budget and the budget update process. Since 2016, this minimum contribution has totalled \$5.8M annually. In 2018, the child care and early year's budget for the London-Middlesex region totalled \$65.4M. Of that total, approximately 89.5% was provided by the Province of Ontario, 10.1% was provided by the City of London, and 0.4% was provided by Middlesex County.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Pending Council approval Civic Administration will undertake the following key actions:

- submit the *London-Middlesex Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan: 2019-2023* to the Ministry of Education by June 30, 2019;
- post the service system plan to <https://www.london.ca/residents/children-youth/child-care/Pages/plans-policies-issues.aspx>; and,
- annually share progress towards local actions with Londoners.

**CONCLUSION**

Civic Administration is excited to continue to grow and expand the child care and early years service system over the next 4 years by strengthening local strategic approaches in collaboration with service system partners. London aims to create “*happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative, responsible adults tomorrow.*”

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>PREPARED AND REVIEWED BY:</b>
  <b>JOSH ARCHER, MANAGER, POLICY &amp; STRATEGIC ISSUES,</b>	  <b>KRISTEN PAWELEC, MANAGER, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES,</b>
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
  <b>CHERYL SMITH, MANAGER, NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGIC INITIATIVES &amp; FUNDING,</b>	  <b>PAUL D’HOLLANDER MANAGER, NEIGHBOURHOOD OPERATIONS</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	
  <b>LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN &amp; FIRE SERVICES</b>	

C. Douglas Drummond, Financial Business Administrator  
Cindy Howard, Middlesex County

## APPENDIX A