

Community Services Standing Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2026

Time: 9:00 o'clock a.m.

Location: Council Chambers, 1st Floor, Windsor City Hall

All members will have the option of participating in person in Council Chambers or electronically and will be counted towards quorum in accordance with Procedure By-law 98-2011 as amended, which allows for electronic meetings. The minutes will reflect this accordingly. Any delegations have the option to participate in person or electronically.

MEMBERS:

Ward 2 - Councillor Frazier Fathers

Ward 3 - Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Ward 4 - Councillor Mark McKenzie

Ward 5 - Councillor Ed Sleiman (Chairperson)

Ward 6 - Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item # Item Description
1. CALL TO ORDER

READING OF LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We [] would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi. The City of Windsor honours all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable past and present contributions to this land.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

- 3.1. Adoption of the Community Services Standing Committee minutes of its meeting held June 3, 2026 **(SCM 194/2026)**

4. REQUEST FOR DEFERRALS, REFERRALS OR WITHDRAWALS

5. COMMUNICATIONS

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7. COMMITTEE MATTERS

- 7.1. Minutes of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group of its meeting held May 7, 2026 **(SCM 165/2026)**
- 7.2. Report No. 135 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee **(SCM 119/2026)**
- 7.3. Report No. 136 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee **(SCM 211/2026)**
- 7.4. Report No. 137 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee **(SCM 212/2026)**

8. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- 8.1. 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan **(S 75/2026)** *Author: Alicea Fleming, Senior Manager of Children's Services*
- 8.2. Over Street Banner Policy – City Wide **(S 76/2026)** *Author: Samantha Magalas, Manager, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Programming*

9. QUESTION PERIOD

10. ADJOURNMENT



Committee Matters: SCM 194/2026

Subject: Adoption of the Community Services Standing Committee minutes of its meeting held June 3, 2026

Community Services Standing Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Time: 9:00 o'clock a.m.

Location: Council Chambers, 1st Floor, Windsor City Hall

Members Present:

Councillors

Ward 2 - Councillor Frazier Fathers

Ward 3 - Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Ward 4 - Councillor Mark McKenzie

Ward 5 - Councillor Ed Sleiman (Chairperson)

Ward 6 - Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

PARTICIPATING VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE ARE THE FOLLOWING FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Sandra Gebauer, Council Assistant

ALSO PARTICIPATING IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ARE THE FOLLOWING FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Dana Paladino, Commissioner, Human & Health Services

Michael Chantler, Commissioner, Community Services

Jamie Scott, Executive Director, Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Jen Knights, Executive Director, Recreation & Culture

Emilie Dunnigan, Manager Development Revenue & Financial Administrator

Kelly Goz, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Support

Michelle Staaedegaard, Manager, Culture & Events

Samantha Magalas, Manager, Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Jennifer Tanner, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Supports

Michelle Oake, Project Manager

Anna Ciacelli, Deputy City Clerk

Delegations—participating in person

Item 8.1 Jennifer Matotek, Executive Director, Art Windsor Essex

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair calls the meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee to order at 9:00 o'clock a.m.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None disclosed.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

3.1. Adoption of the Community Services Standing Committee minutes of its meeting held May 6, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Frazier Fathers

THAT the minutes of the Community Services Standing Committee (CSSC) of its meeting held May 6, 2026 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 153/2026

4. REQUEST FOR DEFERRALS, REFERRALS OR WITHDRAWALS

None requested.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

None presented.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

8.1. Temporary Exhibition Look Again! Outside! Extension and Expansion - City Wide

Jennifer Matotek, Executive Director, Art Windsor Essex

Jennifer Matotek, Executive Director, Art Windsor Essex appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the administrative report dated May 15, 2026, entitled "Temporary Exhibition Look Again! Outside! Extension and Expansion - City Wide" and expresses thanks for the ongoing support by the City for the gallery. She provides an overview of the success of 2025 including the number of artists and visitors who enjoyed the exhibition. Further, she looks forward to the continuation of the program and seeks approval to renew the majority of the existing reproductions while working with city staff and councillors to identify

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opportunities for select relocations and new installations in order to contribute to the cultural vibrancy of Windsor and to broader strategies such as Strengthen the Core.

Councillor Mark McKenzie suggests a collaboration with Windsor Public Library and asks about the durability and lifespan of the artworks. Ms. Matotek responds that when the project first started in 2021, fabricators built the pieces to last up to three years. The majority of artworks have outlasted the anticipated lifespan. There have been a few that needed to be replaced with new images.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires about the cost of the artworks to the Gallery. Ms. Matotek responds that a new artwork will cost about \$6000 from reproduction to installation, while relocation costs about \$2000.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires about maintenance by gallery staff. Ms. Matotek responds that the artworks are inspected bi-annually and with many in BIAs, nearby business owners report issues or if they need attention.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires whether there are any installations in the county. Ms. Matotek responds that there are a number in Amherstburg, with a strategy for future growth and there will be a proposal for 2027 to tourism soon.

Councillor Ed Sleiman asks about relocation of the art during the winter season. Ms. Matotek responds that relocation is time-sensitive, when the ground is frozen, it is not possible. Relocation and installations are typically completed in spring or fall.

Moved by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Seconded by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Decision Number: **CSSC 323**

- I. THAT the request from the Art Gallery of Windsor (the "AGW"), operating as Art Windsor-Essex ("AWE"), to extend the *Look Again! Outside!* temporary exhibition (the "Exhibition") of up to twenty-five (25) framed reproduction artworks (the "Reproductions") within the City Right-of-Way for a period of up to one (1) year beginning upon issuance of the applicable Right-of-Way permits **BE APPROVED**; and,
- II. THAT the request from AGW to install an additional two (2) framed Reproductions to be located on City-owned consent lands at Budimir Library Branch and along the Ganatchio Trail (and not within the City Right-of-Way), resulting in a total of up to twenty-seven (27) Reproductions City-wide, for a period of up to one (1) year beginning upon execution of the Consent Agreement **BE APPROVED**; and,
- III. THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and City Clerk **BE AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE** a Consent to Enter Agreement (the "Consent Agreement") with AGW to permit AGW's employees, agents and contractors to enter lands along Ganatchio Trail and Budimir Library Branch (the "Consent Lands") for the purpose of installing and maintaining the two (2) additional Reproductions to be located on the Consent Lands, approved as to form and content by the City Solicitor, and in content by the Executive Director, Culture, and the Executive Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities, including the following terms:

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- (i) The term of the Consent Agreement shall be for a period of up to one (1) year beginning upon execution of the Consent Agreement;
 - (ii) The cost for the Consent to Enter Agreement will be granted for nominal consideration of \$1.00;
 - (iii) AGW will be responsible for ensuring there is no damage to the Consent Lands and, upon termination of the Consent Agreement, any disturbance of the Consent Lands resulting from the installation, maintenance, or removal of the Reproductions will be restored by AGW at its own cost to the satisfaction of the Executive Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities, or designate;
 - (iv) AGW will be required to provide the City with indemnification and require proof of insurance with the following minimal coverage, satisfactory to the City: \$5,000,000 Commercial General Liability coverage, with "The Corporation of the City of Windsor" listed as an additional insured and cross-liability coverage and 30 days' notice of cancellation. The coverage must not exclude the Consent Lands and must specifically acknowledge the Consent Lands are included on the proof of insurance. The City reserves the right to amend, restate and/or supplement the above requirements as determined by the City's Risk and Insurance Department from time to time.
- IV. THAT City Council **AUTHORIZE** the waiver of fees of up to \$7,450 for the permits to renew the twenty-five (25) existing Reproductions within the City Right-of-Way (the "Right-of-Way"), as well as the refundable indemnity fee associated with those Right-of-Way permits; and,
- V. THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and City Clerk **BE AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE** a renewal and amending agreement with AGW for the renewal of the twenty-five (25) existing Right-of-Way Reproductions and inclusion of the two (2) new Reproductions for a period of up to one (1) year beginning upon issuance of the applicable Right-of-Way permits, approved in legal form by the City Solicitor or designate, in financial content by the City Treasurer or designate, and in technical content by the Manager of Right-of-Way and the Executive Director, Culture, and the Executive Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities.
- Carried.

Report Number: S 53/2026
Clerk's File: SR/13926

7. COMMITTEE MATTERS

7.1. Minutes of the Community Public Art Working Group of its meeting held March 24, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac
Seconded by: Councillor Frazier Fathers

Decision Number: **CSSC 319**

THAT the minutes of the Community Public Art Working Group (CPAWG) of its meeting held March 24, 2026, **BE RECEIVED**.
Carried.

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Report Number: SCM 137/2026

7.2. Minutes of the Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee of its meeting held December 1, 2025.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires about the timeline for receiving the minutes of this committee. Anna Ciacelli, Deputy City Clerk appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the committee report entitled “Minutes of the Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee of its meeting held December 1, 2025” and responds that the minutes are added to the agenda when they are received.

Michelle Oake, Project Manager, CDHS appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the committee report entitled “Minutes of the Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee of its meeting held December 1, 2025” and adds that the WECSWB meetings are held quarterly. The minutes from the previous meeting, held in December, were not approved until April’s meeting mid-month and were then added to the standing committee agenda thereafter.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac asks about who approves the financial contributions from the City to the committee. Dana Paladino, Acting Commissioner, Human & Health Services appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the committee report entitled “Minutes of the Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee of its meeting held December 1, 2025” and responds that the budget is set at budget time and all expenditures are within the delegated authority.

Moved by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac
Seconded by: Councillor Frazier Fathers

Decision Number: **CSSC 320**

THAT the minutes of the Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee (WECSWB) of its meeting held December 1, 2025, **BE RECEIVED**.
Carried.

Report Number: SCM 157/2026

7.3. Minutes of the Meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, Willistead Manor Inc., held April 9, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac
Seconded by: Councillor Frazier Fathers

Decision Number: **CSSC 321**

THAT the minutes of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, Willistead Manor Inc., of its meeting held April 9, 2026 **BE RECEIVED**.
Carried.

Report Number: SCM 161/2026

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7.4. Report No. 125 of the Board of Directors, Willistead Manor Inc. of its Meeting Held April 9, 2026

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 322**

THAT Report No.125 of the Board of Directors, Willistead Manor Inc. indicating:

That the Annual Report and Financial Statements on the affairs and operations of Willistead Manor Inc. for the year 2025, attached as *Appendix A*, BE ACCEPTED as presented; and,

That upon acceptance of the Willistead Manor Inc. 2025 Annual Report by City Council, copies BE FORWARDED to a list of appropriate parties as approved by the Board; and further,

That in accordance with Sections 6 (c) of *the City of Windsor Act, 1981*, an amount of \$ 52,515. BE PAID OVER to the City of Windsor Willistead Capital Restoration Reserve Fund.

BE APPROVED.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 162/2026

8. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

8.2. Fireworks at Optimist Memorial Park – Ward 4

Councillor Mark McKenzie thanks staff for the quick turnaround with this report and looks forward to the event this year and comments that this organization left the park cleaner than when they found it after the event last year.

Councillor Ed Sleiman inquires about how the application comes to the City. Michael Chantler, Commissioner, Community Services appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the administrative report dated May 15, 2026, entitled “Fireworks at Optimist Memorial Park – Ward 4” and responds that each request for fireworks displays goes through the fire department and then through the Special Events division of Parks & Recreation. The report then moves forward to standing committee, then to City Council for final approval before the applicant is notified that their event is approved.

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Decision Number: **CSSC 324**

THAT City Council **APPROVE** the request from Elton Robinson on behalf of the Optimist Club of South Windsor to host a fireworks display at Optimist Memorial Park on Saturday August 29, 2026 (rain date Sunday August 30, 2026).

Carried.

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Report Number: S 54/2026
Clerk's File: SR2026

9. QUESTION PERIOD

None registered.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee is adjourned at 9:18 o'clock a.m. The next meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee will take place on July 8, 2026.
Carried.

Councillor Ed Sleiman (Chairperson)

Deputy City Clerk / Supervisor of Council Services

Item No. 7.1



Committee Matters: SCM 165/2026

Subject: Minutes of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group of its meeting held May 7, 2026

AGE-FRIENDLY WINDSOR WORKING GROUP (AFWWG)

Meeting held Thursday, May 7, 2026

A meeting of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. in Room 522a, 350 City Hall Square West, there being present the following members:

Gerald Corriveau
Larry Duffield
Andrea Grimes
Cindy Matchett
Roxanne Tellier
Tom Wilson

Special Guest in attendance:

Councillor Angelo Marignani

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Kait Authier, Chair, Coordinator, Parks Recreation and Facilities
Laura Ash, Project Lead Parks Development
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Kait Authier, Chair calls the meeting to order at 9:33 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A, attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Declaration of Conflict

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Cindy Matchett, seconded by Roxanne Tellier,
That the minutes of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group of its meeting held November 26, 2025, **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Transit Windsor Update

The Chair remarks that David Calibaba, Manager, Sales and Marketing, Transit Windsor will participate in the upcoming AFWWG Speaker Series.

The Chair reports that Transit Windsor is introducing new technologies and new processes on the buses currently and suggests deferring the community information session until this information is made public. She adds that the Speaker Series will include information relating to senior fares, how to read the bus routes, and how to pay the fare on the bus, or at a transit station at a community centre.

Larry Duffield states that Transit Windsor should encourage more seniors to ride the bus. He remarks that the City of Ottawa provides a free bus ride for seniors two days a week.

The Chair reviews the Transit Windsor fee structure. The Chair to reach out to Transit Windsor for their timeline as it relates to the Speaker Series.

4.2 Speaker Series & Community Engagement (2026 Planning)

The Chair asks the AFWWG what they envision the community engagement to look like. The following suggestions and comments are provided by the Committee:

- Provide updates on scamming, fraud, technology, and safety. Could reach out to Windsor Police and Frank Fazio as speakers.
- Concerned with the number of elderly folks being hit by cars.
- Issue with riders on E-scooters who disregard pedestrian safety. Asks if data has been collected.
- Transit Windsor could provide information relating to the services they provide.
- The event would be approximately one to two hours.
- Look at a community centre or a library as a location for the event.
- June is Seniors Month.
- Earmark funds for advertising, public service announcement.
- Communications and Customer Services Department can assist with creating Media/Press releases for the event.
- Date for the event to be determined.
- Suggestion for the event to include information relating to Parks and Recreation, i.e. walking trails, and ways to get people active.

Tom Wilson suggests combining the Community Speaker Series with the Flag Raising ceremony on the same date which will promote more attendance from the public.

That **APPROVAL BE GIVEN** to hold a Community Speaker Series Event on June 15, 2026, at City Hall, consisting of a Flag Raising, a Presentation by Parks & Recreation and a Presentation on protecting yourself from Fraud.

Carried.

It is generally agreed that upcoming Community Speaker Series be held on:

- September 17, 2026 (Transit Windsor)
- October 1, 2026

4.3 Website/Communications Subcommittee Update

Andrea Grimes asks if the subcommittee has established a website.

Cindy Matchett advises the assumption was to piggyback on a page in the City's website. She adds that a write-up regarding AFWWG was created. The Chair responds AFWWG has a page and asks her to e-mail the write-up which will be posted to the page.

Larry Duffield remarks that the city's award from the Ontario Government for its work as an Age-Friendly Community has been discovered at Life After Fifty.

4.4 Follow-up Items from the November 2025 meeting

The Chair advises the City of Windsor has a volunteer portal for any city led event and any person who has a profile receives an e-mail. This may include such volunteer opportunities such as Open Streets, Bright Lights etc.

The Chair remarks in terms of city departments and their roles, she asks that members specify what information is being requested as it relates to a specific department or area.

The Chair refers to the question regarding recreation services that are particular to seniors and advises that services offered are for "adult programming" and not specific to seniors only. Tom Wilson states that the City of Windsor provides programming for approximately 1,000 seniors in the community (funded by the City of Windsor).

Andrea Grimes leaves the meeting at 11:02 o'clock a.m.

5. New Business/Other Items

5.1 2025 Annual "Year in Review" Report.

The Chair reviews the 2025 Annual Report.

Larry Duffield commends the positivity of the 2025 Annual Report which reflects well on the Committee. He thanks the city for taking on the responsibility related to its membership in the World Health Organization Age Friendly Network.

Tom Wilson advises this Committee is more than just creating some info sessions a few times a year. It is about looking at what we have heard and gained from the seniors in the community and to share that with AFWWG, the City Councillors, Parks and Recreation and Transportation.

Councillor Angelo Marignani provides the process for a Council member to request a report from Administration. He remarks that questions posed by the committee can be forwarded to him which in turn will be sent to Council for a report.

5.2 2025 Budget Discussion and Next Steps

The Chair reports the AFWWG Operating Budget is \$10,000 and adds \$6,000 has been set aside for the public engagement event. She requests that additional budgetary expenditures be brought forward for discussion at the next meeting.

5.3 Age Friendly Communities Outreach Program – Virtual Conference Update

The Chair advises she attended a virtual Age Friendly conference held in March 2026 and notes the “resource package” will be sent to the members.

5.4 Art Your Service

The Chair explains that Art Your Service offers virtual programming to folks ages 55 to 95 and for those aging in place in their home. She remarks that upon applying for membership, they will receive access to lectures, virtual hikes through different cities, health talks, arts and crafts and fitness training. A monthly schedule is provided outlining the various amenities. She suggests looking into a partnership with Art Your Service and adds there is also a membership at a cost of \$3,000 a year (which would provide 500 memberships to people in their homes).

5.5 Flag Raising for Seniors Month (June) – Updates on status of application

Moved by Larry Duffield, seconded by Cindy Matchett,

That **APPROVAL BE GIVEN** to an expenditure in the upset amount of \$200.for the purchase of a Flag for the Flag Raising for Senior's Month to be held on June 15, 2026.

6. Round Table

Roxanne Tellier expresses concern regarding speeding and seniors being hit.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:38 a.m.



Committee Matters: SCM 119/2026

Subject: Report No. 135 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee

REPORT NO. 135
of the
WINDSOR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAAC)
Meeting held March 19, 2026

Members present: Sally Bennett Olczak, Co-Chair
Peter Best, Co-Chair
Councillor Fred Francis
Danica McPhee
Nicholas Petro

Moved by Danica McPhee, seconded by Nicholas Petro,

That \$40,000 **BE APPROVED** as a pre-commitment of the Capital Funds for the deployment of acoustic panel enhancements in the auditorium at Huron Lodge from Project 7086008 Accessibility-ODA Requirements.

Carried.

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| Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee | On file | |
| Kristen Karam Financial Planning Administrator | | |



Committee Matters: SCM 211/2026

Subject: Report No. 136 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee

REPORT NO. 136
of the
WINDSOR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAAC)
Meeting held June 18, 2026

Members present:

Sally Bennett Olczak, Co-Chair
Peter Best, Co-Chair
Riccardo Pappini
Danica McPhee
Nicholas Petro

Moved by Nicholas Petro, seconded by Riccardo Pappini,

THAT AN UPSET AMOUNT OF \$100,000 (plus HST) BE APPROVED as a pre-commitment of funds for accessibility improvements to the west and south entrances and the ground floor washrooms at All Saints Church from project 7086008 Accessibility Requirements.

Carried.

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| Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee | On file | |
| Kristen Karam Financial Planning Administrator | | |
| Alicea Fleming, Senior Manager Housing & Children's Services | | |

Item No. 7.4



Committee Matters: SCM 212/2026

Subject: Report No. 137 of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee

REPORT NO. 137
of the
WINDSOR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAAC)
Meeting held June 18, 2026

Members present:

Sally Bennett Olczak, Co-Chair
Peter Best, Co-Chair
Riccardo Pappini
Danica McPhee
Nicholas Petro

Moved by Danica McPhee, seconded by Nicholas Petro

THAT AN UPSET AMOUNT OF \$80,000 (plus HST) BE APPROVED as a pre-commitment of funds for the renovations to the stairs, upstairs washrooms, and downstairs washrooms at the Riverside Branch of Windsor Public Library from project 7086008 Accessibility-ODA Requirements.

Carried.

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| Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee | On file | |
| Jen Knights | Chief Executive Officer Windsor Public Library | |
| Kristen Karam Financial Planning Administrator | | |

Subject: 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan

Reference:

Date to Council: July 8, 2026
Author: Alicea Fleming
Senior Manager of Children's Services
519-255-5200 ext. 5230
afleming@citywindsor.ca
Housing and Children's Services
Report Date: 6/19/2026
Clerk's File #: SS/13629

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

Recommendation:

WHEREAS the City is the designated Service System Manager for childcare and early years services in Windsor-Essex County,

THAT City Council **APPROVE** the 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan for Windsor-Essex County, as required by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Executive Summary:

N/A

Background:

The City of Windsor, as a Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), is the Service System Manager (SSM) for child care and early years services in Windsor-Essex County as mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), the City of Windsor through its Children's Services division, is responsible for:

- a. Developing and administering local policies respecting the operation of child care and early years programs and services;
- b. Establishing, administering, operating and/or funding child care and early years programs and services;
- c. Coordinating the planning and operation of child care and early years programs and services with the planning and provision of other human services delivered by the SSM
- d) Providing financial assistance to families for licensed child care,

authorized recreational and skill building programs and other relevant programs;
and

- d. Assessing the economic viability of the child care and early years programs and services in the service area and, if necessary, making or facilitating changes to help make such programs and services economically viable.

Per the CCEYA, the SSM is required to have a child care and early years service plan for its service area which is approved by municipal Council. The creation of a new service plan has been undertaken to replace the previous 2020-2025 Service Plan.

Since the previous plan, Windsor-Essex has experienced rapid population growth, increasing child care workforce shortages, and rising vulnerability rates among young children across all domains (physical health and wellbeing, social knowledge, emotional health and maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills). At the same time, transformational investments through the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement, which began in 2022 and caps child care fees in Ontario at \$22/day, have significantly improved affordability and expanded access to licensed child care.

Key achievements since the 2020-2025 Service Plan include:

- Parent fees for licensed child care have been reduced by over 50%, with an average daily fee of approximately \$17 in Windsor-Essex (lower than both the provincial cap and provincial average).
- More than 1,500 new licensed child care spaces in Windsor-Essex are on track to be created by the end of 2026.
- The local Registered Early Childhood Educator workforce grew by over 60% between 2020 and 2025, far outpacing provincial growth.
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres continue to provide free, high-quality programming across all Best Start Neighbourhoods, supporting tens of thousands of visits annually.

In 2025, the Government of Canada and Government of Ontario announced a one-year extension of the CWELCC Agreement to December 31, 2026, sustaining the program and protecting the gains made to date while they continue to negotiate a longer-term agreement beyond 2026.

Discussion:

The new 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan provides a clear, forward-looking strategy for strengthening services, supporting families, and stewarding provincial and federal investments in Windsor-Essex County. It builds on the progress achieved under the previous plan while remaining flexible enough to respond to new pressures and initiatives that may emerge within the early years ecosystem in the coming years.

The plan was developed through a comprehensive engagement process that included families, child care operators, EarlyON providers, Indigenous partners, and system

stakeholders. Over 800 engagement interactions informed the plan, ensuring it reflects lived experiences, operational realities, and community priorities.

The Strategic Framework outlined in the 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan includes the following:

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| Vision: A coordinated, inclusive, high-quality early years and child care system where all children and families in Windsor-Essex thrive. | |
| Values: Equity, Inclusion, Quality, Family Voice, Accountability, Collaboration | |
| Strategic Pillar 1: System Coordination and Data-Informed Planning | |
| Goal: A transparent, accountable system with strong leadership, shared planning, consistent communication, and integrated data to guide decisions and meet Ministry reporting requirements. | Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase data sharing and knowledge dissemination across child care and early years system partners. 2. Strengthen shared accountability through coordinated, cross-sector planning tables. 3. Improve system navigation for families through consistent communication and common tools. |
| Strategic Pillar 2: Workforce and Sector Capacity Building | |
| Goal: Strong recruitment, retention, and professional learning to support a stable workforce equipped to deliver high-quality, inclusive child care and early years programs. | Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance the local sector's ability to attract and retain qualified educators and child care workers. 2. Adopt a shared definition of high-quality programs and services across child care and early years programs. 3. Increase access to foundational and specialized training opportunities for local educators and child care workers. |
| Strategic Pillar 3: Inclusion, Belonging and Family-Centred Practice | |
| Goal: Welcoming, respectful, and culturally responsive programs that reflect the diversity and strengths of all families. | Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of where and how to access information about child care and early years programs across Windsor-Essex County. 2. Enhance service options to meet diverse family needs across child care and early years settings. 3. Strengthen family leadership and voice through the ongoing collection and use of feedback in service/program planning activities. |
| Strategic Pillar 4: Integrated Supports for Children with Exceptional Needs | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Goal: Timely, coordinated, and equitable access to special needs supports across child care and early years program settings.</p> | <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase utilization of available system navigation and community connection services across the sector. 2. Increase capacity of child care system to support early identification and proactive information sharing for families. 3. Improve transitions between programs and into school. |
|---|--|

This plan allows Windsor-Essex to build on recent momentum, better address system complexities such as workforce pressures and access challenges, while remaining positioned to effectively respond to emerging opportunities and priorities over the next 5 years.

Risk Analysis:

Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, all Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) are required to maintain a Council-approved Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan. Failure to have an approved and current plan available upon request by the Ministry of Education presents a risk of non-compliance with provincial legislation.

Climate Change Risks

Climate Change Mitigation:

N/A

Climate Change Adaptation:

N/A

Financial Matters:

Funding for the child care and early years portfolio is provided through a cost-shared model between the Federal and Provincial governments, with the majority of program costs supported by upper levels of government. In 2026, over \$150 million was allocated to the City in combined Federal and Provincial contributions, including CWELCC and ELCC funding streams. The municipal contribution (comprised of both City and County), approximately \$4.4 million, is required under Provincial cost-sharing formulas and is primarily directed toward eligible program areas such as administration and portions of service delivery.

All activities outlined in the 2026-2030 Service System Plan will need to be funded annually within approved operating budgets with any increase in municipal funding being identified as part of future operating budget approval processes.

Consultations:

Carrie McCrindle, Manager, Intergovernmental Funding - Housing & Children's Services

Windsor-Essex Child Care Operators

Child and Youth Service Providers within Windsor-Essex County

Conclusion:

To meet the City of Windsor’s legislated requirements to have a service system plan to guide the work of the Children’s Services division, it is recommended that the 2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan for Windsor-Essex County be approved.

Approvals:

| Name | Title |
|------------------|---|
| Carrie McCrindle | Manager, Intergovernmental Funding |
| Kirk Whittal | Executive Director, Housing and Children’s Services |
| Dana Paladino | Commissioner, Human & Health Services |
| Janice Guthrie | Commissioner, Finance & City Treasurer |
| Ray Mensour | Chief Administrative Officer |

Notifications:

Sandra Zwiers, CAO - County of Essex

Appendix:

2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan

WINDSOR-ESSEX CHILD CARE AND EARLY YEARS SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN



2026-2030



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1

OVERVIEW

- Background
- Reflection on 2020-2025 System Plan
- Service System Plan Development Process
- Contextual Considerations



BACKGROUND

The City of Windsor is the Service System Manager (SSM) for child care and early years services in Windsor-Essex County, as mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education and legislated through the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA). The child care and early years ecosystem is composed of several programs and services, including the following:



Under the CCEYA, the City of Windsor’s Children’s Services division plays a key role in planning, funding, and administering child care and early years services across Windsor and Essex County, while also directly operating programs for families in the region.

As the SSM, the City of Windsor’s Children’s Services division has the following responsibilities:

- System planning and cross-sector coordination for child care and early years programs and services.
- Managing Provincial funding to support children, families and service providers in the sector.
- Developing and administering local policies for the operation of child care and early years programs.
- Being accountable to the Ministry of Education and families for the child care and early years system.
- Monitoring service quality and supporting professional development for the sector.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Windsor-Essex Children and Youth Planning Committee (CYPC) is a long-standing, cross-sector planning and engagement table comprised of representatives from more than 40 agencies and community partners with expertise across the child and youth continuum. The CYPC brings together organizations serving children and families from birth to 12 years, including early years, child care, education, health, and social services. Members collaborate through various subcommittees that focus on key components of the child care and early years system.

The CYPC plays a central role in supporting the City of Windsor's Children's Services division in its responsibilities as service system manager. Through ongoing engagement, the CYPC provides feedback, subject-matter expertise, and strategic advice at all stages of child care and early years system planning. An important function of the CYPC is to identify opportunities for alignment, coordination, and collective action among system partners to strengthen service integration and improve outcomes for children and families.

The 2026–2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan is intended to align with and complement the strategic priorities of CYPC member organizations. Through this alignment, the Service Plan seeks to enhance collaboration, reduce duplication, and contribute to broader community outcomes for children, youth, and families across Windsor-Essex.

REFLECTING ON THE 2020-2025 SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN



In developing a new service system plan for the Windsor-Essex County region, it's important to reflect on the progress made since the previous plan. The following feedback and themes were identified as priorities in the previous plan, and details are provided on what we have accomplished to date.

| Key Themes | What We Heard | What We've Achieved |
|--|--|--|
| <p>ACCESS & FLEXIBILITY</p> | <p>Need for more flexible child care hours, mobile services, increased number of licensed child care spaces, increased number of infant spaces, and more transportation options.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created 130 new infant spaces. • On track to create over 1,500 new licensed child care spaces across all age groups by December 2026. |
| <p>SYSTEM COORDINATION</p> | <p>Need for integrated services, aligned policies, consistent resources, and improved referral pathways.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented HEADS-ED Under 6 as a referral tool in EarlyON Child and Family Centres. • Resource Consultant Services available to all licensed child care centres. |

| Key Themes | What We Heard | What We've Achieved |
|---|---|---|
| <p>INCLUSION & SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT</p> | <p>Need for sustained investment in program supports and customized training for educators to address increasing complexity of child and family needs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle of Security training offered across the sector. • Self-regulation training offered across the sector • Accessibility in Child Care Series: Creating Inclusive Environments for All Children - A professional development event designed to support early childhood educators and assistants in creating inclusive and accessible child care environments for all children, using the concepts of Universal Design. • All EarlyON facilitators offered a micro-credential in Infant and Early Years Mental Health. |
| <p>CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS & INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP</p> | <p>Need for Indigenous-led hubs, culturally grounded programming, and increased focus on Indigenous workforce capacity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported creation of an Indigenous Hub and expanded Indigenous-specific licensed child care (both centre and home-based care options). • Supported EarlyON CFC and system navigators at Ska:Na Northway site. |
| <p>WORKFORCE CAPACITY</p> | <p>Need to increase the number of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), to deliver professional learning, and work to address workforce retention challenges across the sector.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented the WERECE Workforce Campaign, including new partnerships with local colleges and school boards and launch of a dedicated job search website. • Delivered extensive paid professional learning opportunities open to all in the sector. • Implemented a wage floor for RECEs. |

| Key Themes | What We Heard | What We've Achieved |
|---|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a community mentorship program for RECEs. • Increased the number of RECEs working in licensed child care from 1,166 in 2022 to 1,651 in 2024. |
| <p>AFFORDABILITY & FUNDING</p> | <p>Need for lower parent fees.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased parent fees by over 50%, ensuring a maximum of \$22/day fee for all licensed child care spaces for children 0-5 years. • Sustained an average fee of \$17/day in Windsor-Essex (lower than the provincial average). |
| <p>AWARENESS & NAVIGATION</p> | <p>Need for families to have access to information about available services, including program types, hours, and financial supports (e.g. child care fee subsidy).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved use of OneHSN for locating and learning about licensed child care options, registering for child care, and navigating wait lists. • Launch of a fully digital Fee Subsidy information and application process (now including document upload) through OneHSN. |



SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan (Service System Plan) is a mandated multi-year road map to guide funding and delivery of child care and early years programs and services from 2026 to 2030. The Service System Plan builds upon the sector's focus on an increasingly integrated system of services for families and children, and aims to strengthen quality of services and outcomes for children and families.

The development of the Service System Plan followed a comprehensive review and engagement process:

Environmental Scan

- Reviewed service plans of comparator municipalities
- Gathered relevant community data
- Reflected on progress since 2020-2025 Service System Plan

Stakeholder Engagement

- Launched public surveys for both child care and EarlyON Child and Family Centres (CFC)
- Hosted consultations with Children and Youth Planning Committee, Child Care Network, and EarlyON CFC Network
- Hosted family consultation sessions
- Hosted front-line staff focus groups

Data Review

- Reviewed thematic data collected from focus groups and consultations
- Reviewed data from survey responses
- Analyzed relevant community data sets

Recommendation Development

- Synthesized findings into high level summaries for stakeholder review
- Developed recommended Vision, Values, Strategic Pillars, Goals, Objectives, and Sample Activities

Stakeholder Validation

- Validated with stakeholders the Vision and Values guiding the plan
- Reviewed and validated the Strategic Pillars, Goals, and Objectives
- Co-created Sample Activities and potential action plans
- Identified highest priority activities for inclusion in the plan

Contextual Considerations



1. TRANSFORMATIONAL MILESTONES

Over the past 15 years, the child care and early years system in Ontario and across Canada has experienced significant transformation. This timeline provides a snapshot of key milestones across the sector experienced at both the provincial and local levels.

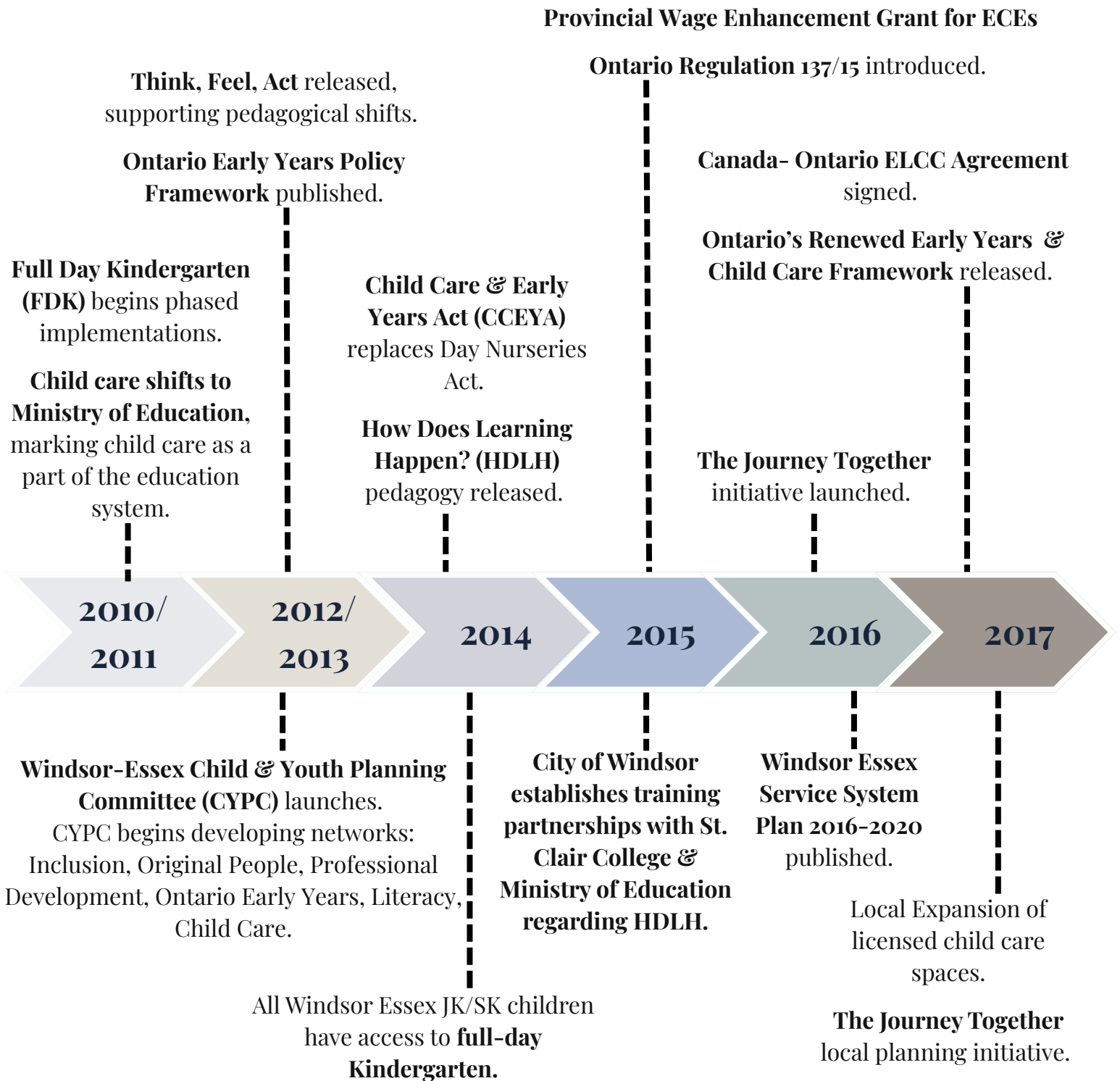
2. CWELCC

The 2021 CWELCC agreement between Canada and all provinces marked a major transformation in child care. This section provides an overview of the legislative changes and the impacts on the local child care and early years sector.

3. TRUTH & RECONCILIATION: REFLECTING ON THE JOURNEY TOGETHER

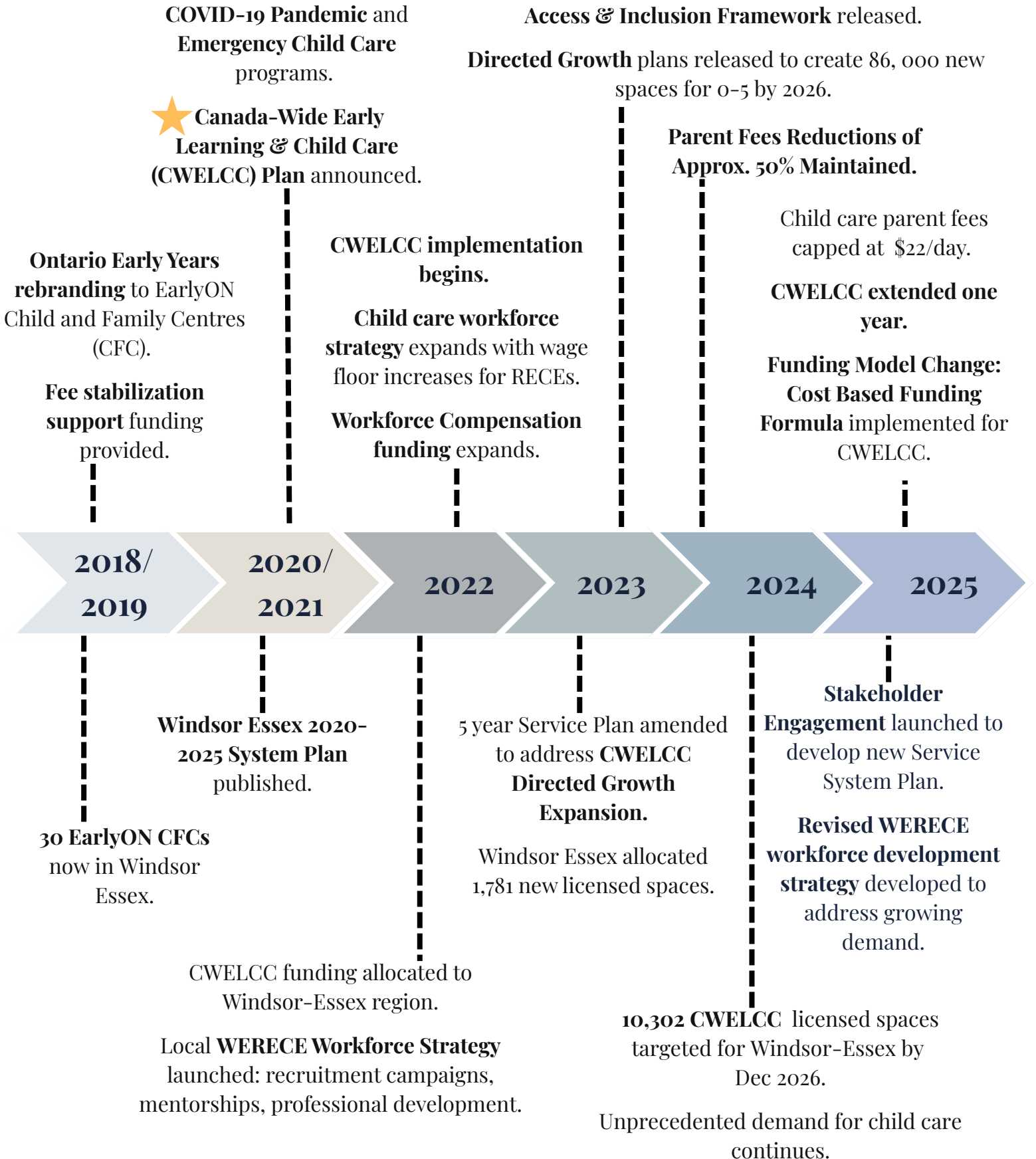
Ontario's Journey Together committed to expanding off-reserve child care and providing culturally relevant programs through urban Indigenous and municipal partnerships. This section provides an overview of local progress on the Journey Together.

Key Moments Across 15



This timeline is organized to show the relationship between provincial direction and local impact. Provincial developments and key milestones are presented along the top half, while the local changes, initiatives, and responses that followed are shown along the bottom half, illustrating how decisions translate into action at the community level.

Years of Transformation



CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE (CWELCC) AGREEMENT

The 2021 announcement of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement between the Government of Canada and all provincial governments represented a generational transformation in the sector. The Government of Canada identified child care as a national priority to enhance early learning and childhood development, support workforce participation, and contribute to economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CWELCC system has two primary components:

1. Fee reduction for parental child care fees
2. Workforce compensation for those working in child care and early years programs

On March 28, 2022, the Government of Canada and Province of Ontario signed the CWELCC Agreement. Under this agreement, Ontario received \$13.2 billion dollars over six years (beginning in 2021-2022) to reduce parent fees for licensed child care for children 0-5 years of age and to create 86,000 new licensed child care spaces for children 0-5 years of age across the Province by the end of 2026.

Since the previous Service System Plan, the City of Windsor's Children's Services division has:

50% +



Reduced parent fees by **50%** since 2022.

1,587



Aimed to create **1,587** new CWELCC spaces through the Province's Directed Growth Plan. (Including spaces projected to be operational by the end of 2026).

98%



Sustained a **98%** enrolment rate for centres in the local CWELCC system.

70%



Maintained a proportion of **70%** not-for-profit CWELCC spaces within the local system.

15,000



Supported **10,000** total CWELCC spaces (for children 0-5) and **5,000** school aged spaces (for children 6-12) across Windsor-Essex (projected by the end of 2026).

\$17



Maintained an average parent fee across Windsor-Essex of \$17 per day (below the \$22 per day fee cap required in Ontario and the \$19 per day provincial average).

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION: REFLECTING ON THE JOURNEY TOGETHER

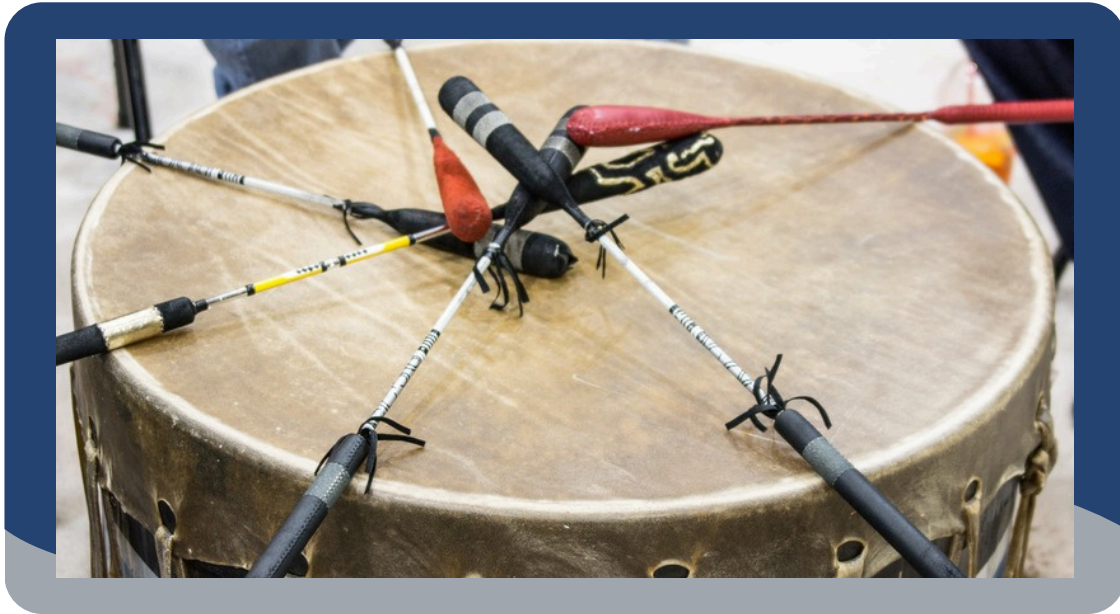
In 2016, Ontario released The Journey Together – Ontario’s Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. The Ministry of Education committed to increasing off-reserve licensed child care spaces and providing culturally relevant programming, delivered by urban Indigenous organizations in partnership with municipalities.

Specific to the early years sector, the primary objectives of the Journey Together framework were to:

- Increase access to culturally relevant early learning programs and licensed child care spaces off-reserve.
- Enhance Indigenous control of service design and delivery.
- Foster opportunities for children to learn culture and language early.
- Support improved outcomes for children and families, including employment and training for parents.

In 2017, the City of Windsor secured provincial funding to support Indigenous-led planning for early learning and care. Guided by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, families, and service providers, Windsor’s vision emphasized collaboration, cultural safety, and the centrality of Indigenous knowledge. Implementation of these planning efforts to date has focused on community recommendations to create a team of Indigenous Specialists to lead service design and delivery and to expand Indigenous-led early years hubs across the city.





In 2024, the City of Windsor's Children's Services division engaged a research team, advised and guided by Ska:na Family Learning Centre, to reflect on our local Journey Together progress since 2017. The review identified several areas in which Windsor-Essex has made significant strides:

- Indigenous staff, Elders, and leadership now guide service design and delivery.
- A multi-service Indigenous-led early years and child care site was established in Windsor's west end (Northway Site).
- Mobile and co-located services increase access for families.
- Indigenous-informed curriculum is being developed and partially implemented.
- Families report greater recognition of culture within early learning.
- Mainstream organizations have begun integrating Indigenous knowledge through training and collaboration.

Despite progress, several persisting structural and systemic challenges were identified:

- **Staff turnover and capacity:** High turnover undermines continuity, making it difficult to sustain Indigenous approaches in mainstream child care.
- **Workforce development:** Recruiting and retaining Indigenous staff remains an urgent challenge, limiting capacity for leadership and succession planning.
- **Unstable funding:** Current project-based or short-term funding prevents long-term planning, relationship building, and sustainable service delivery.
- **Policy barriers:** Eligibility rules, subsidy access, and the limited number of licensed Indigenous spaces continue to constrain growth.
- **Cultural confidence in mainstream organizations:** Non-Indigenous providers often fear "making mistakes," resulting in inaction rather than respectful engagement.

From the 2024–25 community reflections and consultations, the research team described six broad priority areas that emerged.



Priority Areas

| | |
|---|--|
| Relationships, Partnerships, and Collaboration | <p>Prioritize Indigenous-led spaces and partnership in all funding and planning efforts.</p> <p>Appoint cross-departmental coordinators to maintain follow-up, accountability, and inclusion of Indigenous voices.</p> |
| Culture | <p>Create culturally safe childcare environments.</p> <p>Expand land-based learning, language integration, and opportunities to engage with Elders.</p> |
| Education | <p>Provide consistent Indigenous mentorship and training for educators.</p> <p>Establish an Indigenous-led Curriculum Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Host quarterly learning circles and bi-annual reviews.</p> |
| Policy | <p>Advocate for local and provincial policy changes to expand Indigenous spaces and adjust subsidy eligibility.</p> <p>Ensure Indigenous-led planning remains central in decision-making.</p> |
| Resources | <p>Advocate for stable, multi-year funding for Indigenous-led agencies to provide mentoring, education, training, and service delivery.</p> <p>Invest in infrastructure such as outdoor learning spaces, mobile outreach, and curriculum development.</p> <p>Develop a three-year community plan with budget projections tied to sustained provincial and municipal commitments.</p> |
| Observing and Reflecting | <p>Establish clear evaluation frameworks, including cultural indicators and community voice metrics.</p> <p>Publish regular updates (e.g., “State of Urban Indigenous Early Years” report).</p> |

Together, these six priority areas reflect what Indigenous partners, families, and community leaders have identified as essential to advancing truth and reconciliation within the early years sector. They are interconnected and necessary, and meaningful progress across all areas will require sustained commitment, Indigenous leadership, and long-term investment beyond the scope of any single planning cycle. While this 2026–2030 System Plan may not fully address every priority in the timeframe ahead, it recognizes them as critical guideposts for decision-making, advocacy, and partnership.

Windsor-Essex has already made important and tangible progress toward embedding Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within early years services. This plan is intended to build on that momentum, support continued learning and relationship-building, and affirm that reconciliation is not a destination, but an ongoing journey that must remain central to system planning and service delivery.



INFORMING THE PLAN

- Snapshot of Windsor-Essex Data
- Current State Review

Snapshot of Windsor-Essex Data

The Windsor-Essex County region, located in Southwestern Ontario, is Canada's southernmost region, comprising the City of Windsor and seven surrounding municipalities: Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Leamington, and Tecumseh. It acts as a major international border hub with Detroit, Michigan, driving strong automotive, manufacturing, and agricultural sectors, and is also known for its multiculturalism, diversity, and growing community.

As the economic realities of these sectors grow more complex and the region's population rises, the needs of children and families living across Windsor-Essex County continues to evolve.

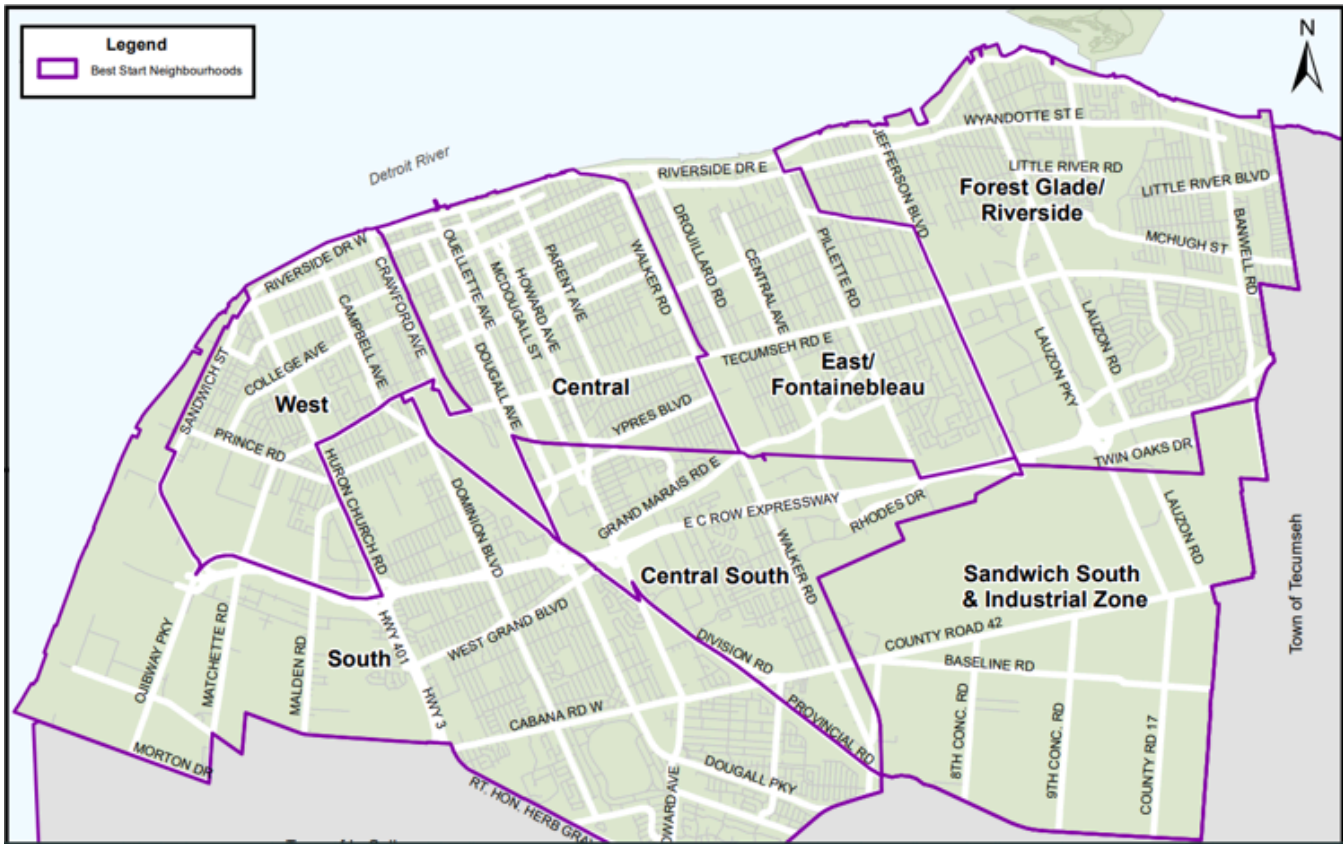
As the Service System Manager, the City of Windsor's Children's Services division monitors community data changes and trends to ensure that child care and early years programs and services meet the needs of the local community.

Best Start Neighbourhoods

Best Start Neighbourhoods (BSNs) were established in partnership with the former Best Start Network (now Children and Youth Planning Committee) in 2006. Best Start Neighbourhoods are geographical areas in Windsor-Essex used by City of Windsor's Children's Services division for planning purposes. A total of seven (7) BSNs have been established for the City of Windsor representing all City Wards, and seven (7) BSNs have been established for Essex County representing all County municipalities.



Best Start Neighbourhoods

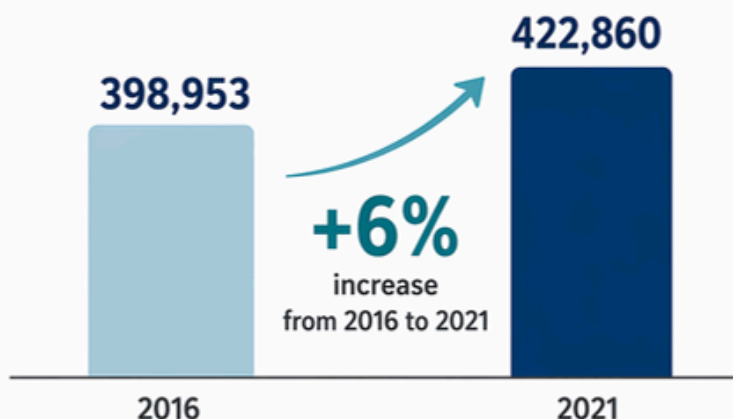


Population Demographics



STEADY POPULATION GROWTH: 2016 TO 2021

WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY POPULATION



COMPARISON TO ONTARIO



+5.8%

Ontario's population
growth from 2016
to 2021.



Windsor-Essex County is
expanding at a pace slightly
above the provincial average.

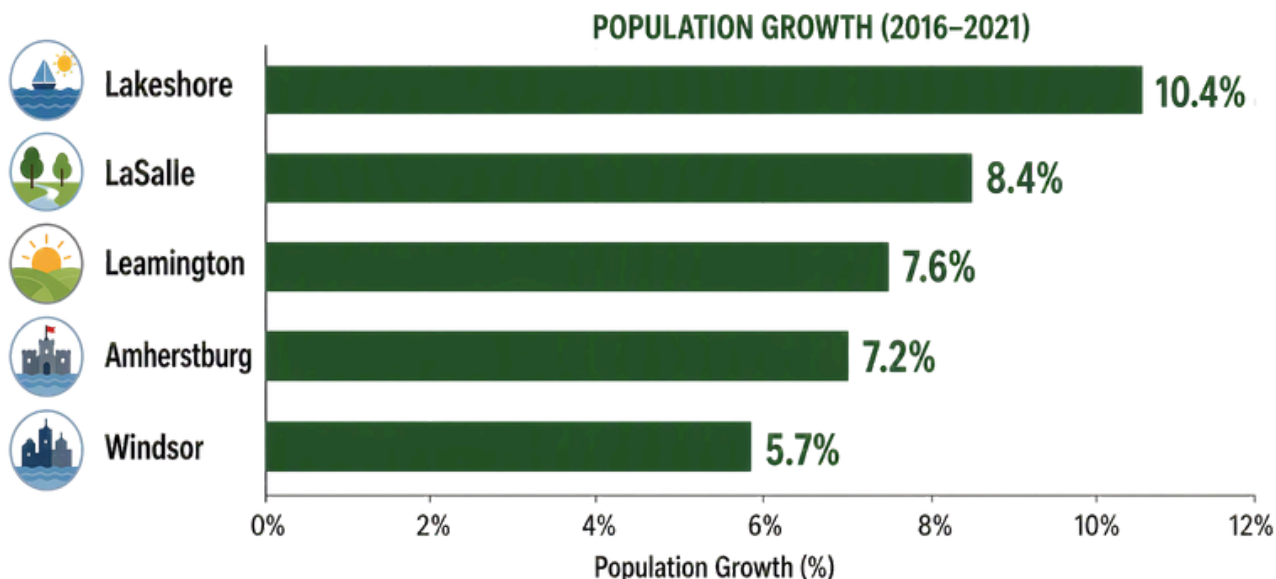


From 2016 to 2021, Windsor-Essex County grew from 398,953 to 422,860 people, a **6% increase**—slightly above **Ontario's 5.8% growth**.



2021 POPULATION GROWTH BY MUNICIPALITY

These five municipalities contributed the largest increases in population across Windsor-Essex County between 2016 and 2021.





WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY: GROWTH SINCE 2021

ACCELERATED GROWTH SINCE 2021

Since the 2021 Census, the Windsor-Essex County population showed increasingly accelerated growth, with 45,159 moving into the region bringing the total to 468,019 (10.6% growth).



+10.6%
growth since 2021

A RELATIVELY YOUNG POPULATION

The region maintained a relatively young population, with 29% under age 25 in 2021, though the proportion of younger residents has gradually declined over the past decade.



29%

of the population was under age 25 in 2021.



CHILD POPULATION (0-9 YEARS) IN 2021

In 2021, there were **43,595** children aged 0-9 in Windsor-Essex County.



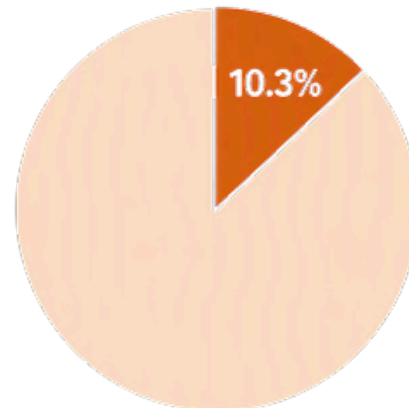
43,595

children aged 0-9 in Windsor-Essex County (2021)

10.3%

of the total population

Children aged 0-9 make up **10.3%** of the total population (2021).



0-9 years: 10.3%

All other age groups: 89.7%



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

Diversity in the Region

Windsor-Essex County is one of the most diverse regions in Southwestern Ontario, with a wide range of cultural and ethnic identities represented in our population.

According to Statistics Canada tables compiled for the region, top places of birth for immigrants arriving between 2016 and 2021 include: India, Syria, China, Iraq, Philippines, United States, Mexico, Pakistan, and Lebanon. In Windsor-Essex, 23% of residents identify as a visible minority and 17% of residents speak a language other than English most often at home. The most common spoken languages at home other than English are: Arabic, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Spanish.

Immigration in Windsor-Essex

1 in 4 residents is an immigrant

Immigrants

96,910

Recent Immigrants (2016-2021)

15,830

Non-Permanent Residents

9,255

Windsor-Essex County includes a recognized Francophone community which includes families with deep historical roots in the region, bilingual households, and newcomers from Francophone countries, and is supported by designated French-language education systems and community organizations that support Francophone cultural and linguistic vitality. Approximately 2% of residents report French as their first official language spoken, and it is estimated that almost 10% of the Windsor-Essex population have knowledge of French.

In addition to those who reported a single Indigenous identity, 265 people reported more than one Indigenous identity and 295 were defined as having an Indigenous identity that was not included elsewhere. It is important to recognize the limitations of Census data in this respect, as Indigenous Peoples are often underrepresented due to migration between geographical locations, unclear definitions of identity groups, and lack of trust for the Canadian government.

Indigenous Population in Windsor-Essex (2021)

12,050 Indigenous people (2.9% of population)

Metis

6,110 (50.7%)

First Nations

5,305 (44.0%)

Inuit

65 (0.5%)

Socio-Economic Factors

In 2020, the median after-tax household income in the Windsor-Essex was approximately \$74,000, lower than the provincial median (\$78,600). This level of income reflects the region's economic structure and contributes to ongoing affordability challenges, particularly as living costs have increased in recent years.

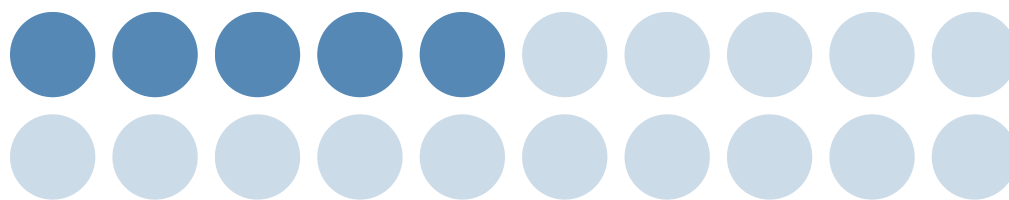
Approximately 9–10% of people in Windsor-Essex are living below the Market Basket Measure (MBM), Canada's official poverty line. The MBM reflects the cost of a defined basket of essential goods and services required for a modest standard of living. Because Statistics Canada reports MBM data at the person level rather than by family, the number of families must be estimated using these rates. Based on this approach, it is estimated that about 10,000 to 12,000 families in Windsor-Essex are living in poverty, meaning they may not have enough income to cover basic needs such as housing, food, and transportation.

Children in Low-Income Households

Windsor-Essex, 2021 Census

85,000

CHILDREN AGED 0-17 IN WINDSOR-ESSEX



17,000 - 21,000

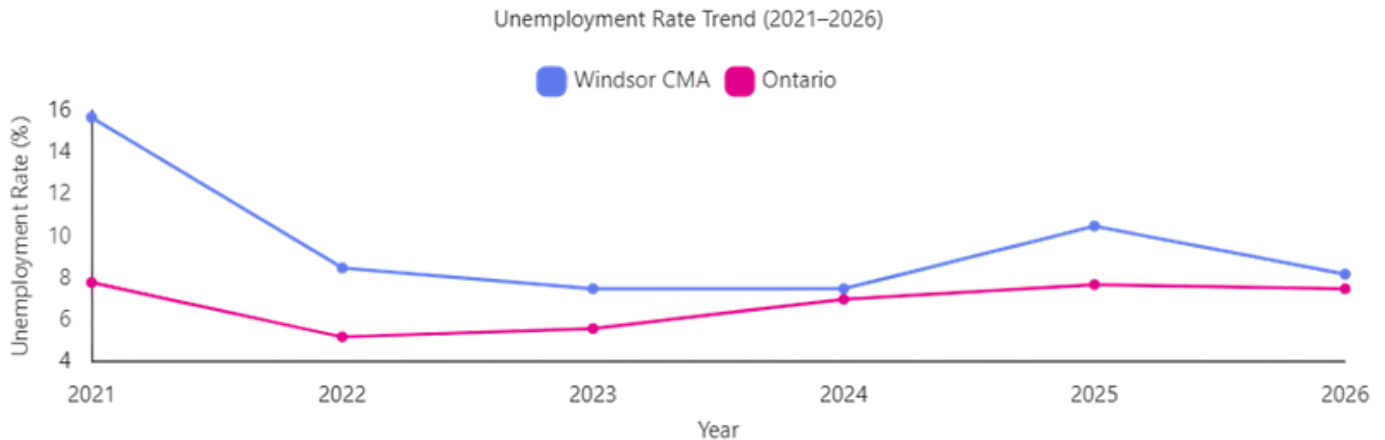
CHILDREN ESTIMATED TO BE LIVING IN
LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

The Low-Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) identifies people living in low income if their household income is less than half of the national average (median) income after taxes, taking household size into account.

This highlights the significant number of children in the region who may face barriers related to income, including impacts on health, education, and well-being.

About one in five families in Windsor are led by a single parent, according to the 2021 Census. These families often face greater financial challenges because they rely on one income, which can increase the risk of housing and food insecurity.

Education and Employment



Over the past five years, Windsor-Essex’s unemployment rate has trended higher than the provincial average. In 2021, Windsor’s rate was 15.7% compared to Ontario’s at 8%. While both improved in 2022 and 2023, Windsor’s unemployment rose again in 2025 to about 10–11%, compared to around 7–8% in Ontario. By 2026, Windsor’s rate dropped to about 8%, but it is still slightly higher than Ontario’s ~7.5%.

In Windsor-Essex, approximately 50% of residents have postsecondary education, including college, trades, or university credentials. The region has a higher share of college and trades training, with fewer residents holding university degrees compared to larger Ontario cities.

Windsor-Essex is expected to experience strong economic growth over the next five years, driven by major investments in the electric vehicle and advanced manufacturing sectors which are projected to create thousands of jobs in the region. At the same time, the area is experiencing rapid population growth and rising workforce demand across key sectors such as skilled trades, manufacturing, and health care.

While employment levels have reached record highs, ongoing labour shortages and the need to increase workforce participation remain key challenges. In this context, access to affordable and high-quality child care will play a critical role in supporting labour force participation, particularly for parents of young children, and will be essential to sustaining economic growth and meeting workforce needs in Windsor-Essex.



Early Development Instrument

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a population-level measure of children’s developmental health developed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University and used by the Ministry of Education. It is a questionnaire completed by kindergarten teachers for each student in senior kindergarten, with results aggregated and mapped by postal code. EDI data enable communities to identify areas of relative strength and vulnerability, monitor trends over time, and better understand how early childhood development relates to later outcomes in elementary school.

EDI Measures Child Development in Five Domains:



Physical Health & Well-Being



Social Knowledge & Competence



Emotional Health & Maturity



Language & Cognitive Development



Communication Skills & General Knowledge

EDI Cycle 6 Results (2022–2023)

Within the EDI framework, children are considered “vulnerable” if they score below the 10th percentile of the Ontario baseline population in one or more of the five developmental domains. When comparing regional vulnerability rates across EDI cycles, higher vulnerability indicates a greater proportion of children experiencing developmental challenges relative to the provincial baseline.

The Windsor-Essex County Cycle 6 EDI results show that, for the first time since EDI implementation in the 2005–2006 school year, vulnerability rates across all five developmental domains are slightly higher than the Ontario baseline. This represents a notable shift from previous cycles, during which Windsor-Essex generally performed at or below provincial vulnerability levels.

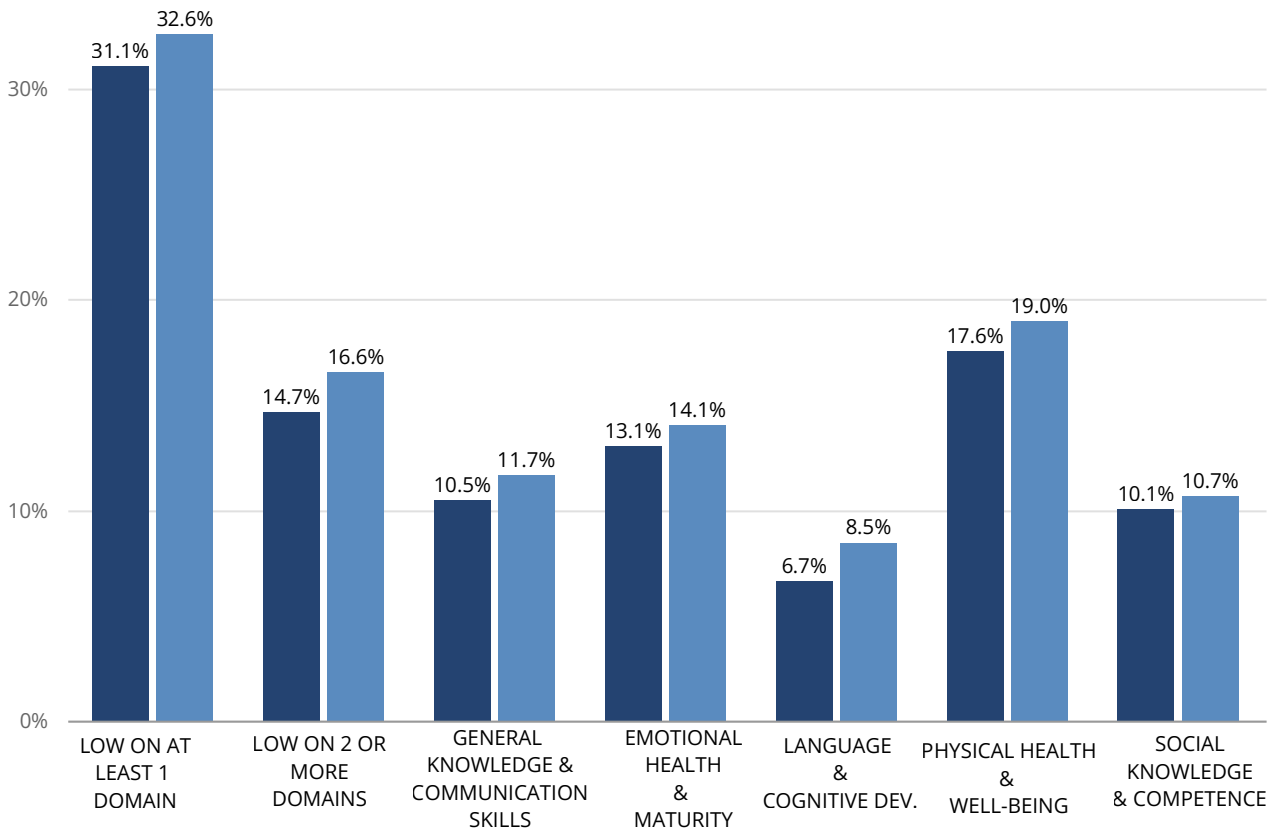
Comparing Cycles 5 (2017/2018) and 6 (2022/2023)

A comparison of the two most recent EDI cycles shows an increase in vulnerability across four of the five developmental domains, as well as an increase in the proportion of children who are vulnerable on at least one domain. These increases exceeded the critical difference threshold, indicating that they represent real and meaningful changes in developmental vulnerability. While vulnerability in Language and Cognitive Development decreased between Cycles V and VI, the change did not meet the threshold for a meaningful difference and is not considered statistically significant.

Overall, the EDI results indicate that developmental vulnerability in Windsor-Essex has increased in recent years in ways that are meaningful and measurable at the population level. These findings underscore the importance of continued investment in early years supports, prevention-focused services, and coordinated system planning to address emerging developmental needs across the community.

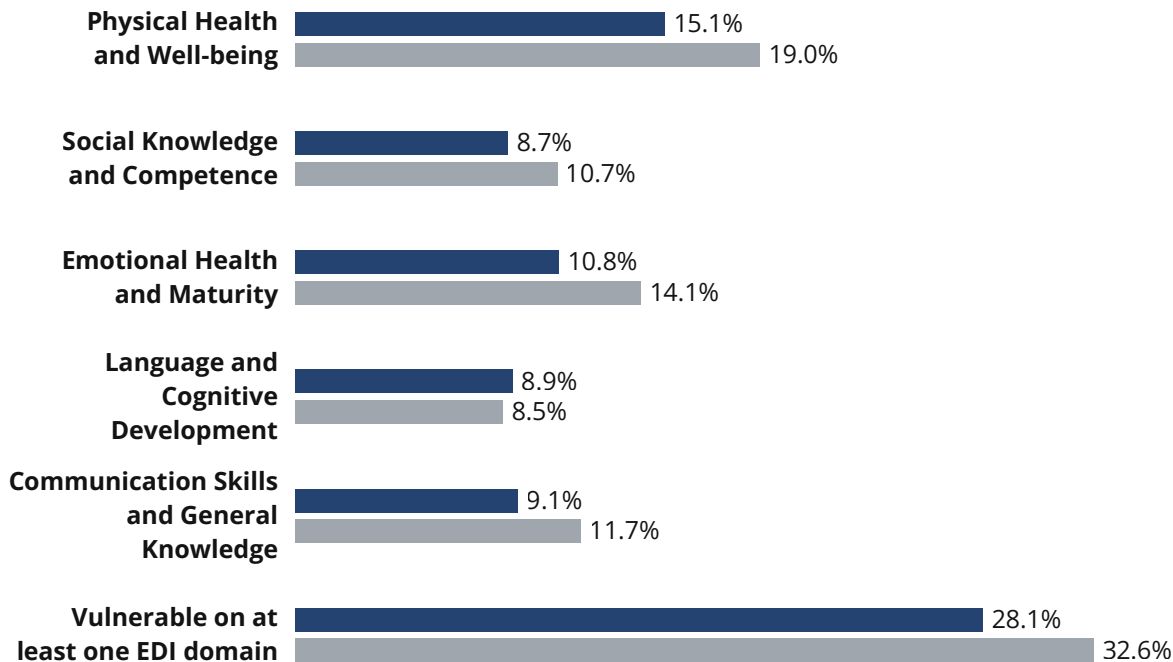
Windsor-Essex County: Six Cycle EDI Results

■ Ontario Baseline (2022-2023)
 ■ Cycle 6 (2022-2023)



Percentage of Children Vulnerable by EDI Domain

■ Cycle 5
 ■ Cycle 6



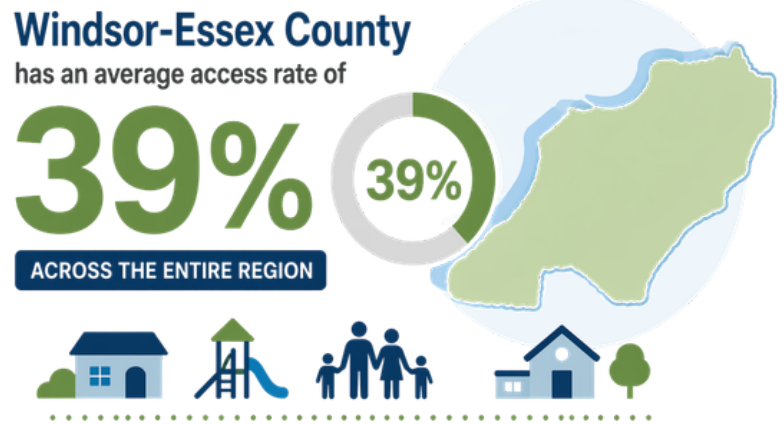
Child Care Access Rates

National data provide important context for understanding child care access pressures that also affect local systems. According to the 2025 Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements, 58% of children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada were in child care in 2025, representing a slight increase from 56% in 2023.

While affordability has improved with the implementation of CWELCC, access challenges persist.

Among parents using child care, the proportion reporting difficulty finding care rose from 46% in 2023 to 50% in 2025. The most commonly reported challenge was finding available care in their community (65%), followed by affordability (42%), and access to subsidized child care (35%).

The demand for licensed child care since the implementation of CWELCC has continued to outpace supply and, as a result, communities across Canada are experiencing wait lists for child care. Among parents not currently using child care, 31% reported that their child was on a waitlist in 2025, up from 26% in 2023. These findings underscore that access challenges are driven not only by cost but also by the availability and distribution of licensed spaces, and that these challenges are not unique to Windsor-Essex County.



| Age Group | Average (weeks) | Range (weeks) |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Infant | 13.6 | 1-58 |
| Toddler | 11.5 | 1-36 |
| Preschool | 9.7 | 1-48 |
| Kindergarten | 10.8 | 1-40 |
| Primary/Junior | 10.4 | 1-60 |
| Junior | 7 | 1-32 |

Average Length of Wait Lists Across Child Care Centres

In Windsor-Essex County, child care operators report a community-wide average of almost an 11-week wait for care across all age groups, with a range from 1 week to 60 weeks depending on the age group and specific child care centre.

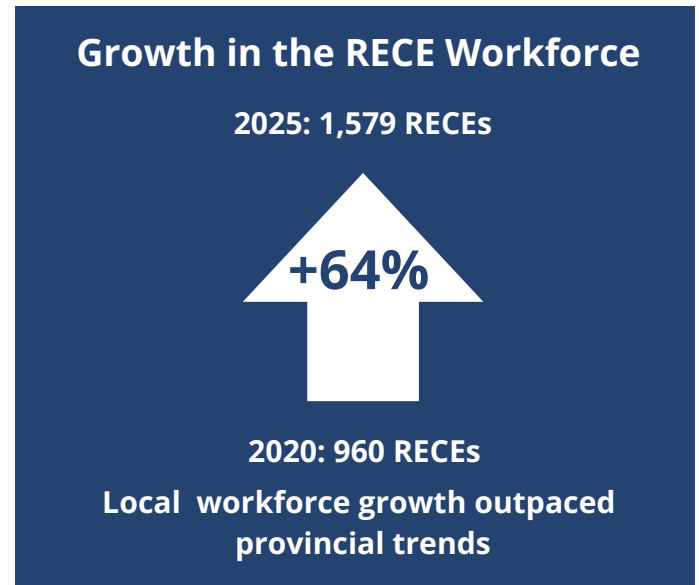
When asked about the barriers impacting their interest in expanding, operators cited challenges with attracting and retaining qualified staff as the greatest barrier.

Expanding access to licensed child care is a central objective of the CWELCC agreement. At the national level, the Government of Canada has set a target of achieving an average access rate of 59% for children under age six by 2026, equivalent to 5.9 licensed spaces for every 10 children. While this target establishes a national benchmark, provinces and territories are responsible for determining how access targets are achieved locally through their own planning and expansion strategies. In Ontario, the Access and Inclusion Framework (2023) establishes a provincial target of 37% access to licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5, reflecting Ontario’s phased approach to growth, inclusion, and sustainability.

Workforce Development

Between 2020 and 2025, the number of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in Windsor-Essex increased from **960 to 1,579**, representing a **64% increase**—significantly outpacing the **15% growth observed across Ontario** during the same period.

This rapid expansion reflects strong local demand for early childhood educators and sustained growth within the child care and early years sector. As a result, Windsor-Essex has increased its share of the provincial RECE workforce, underscoring the region’s growing role in the delivery of early years and child care services.



The composition of the RECE workforce in Windsor-Essex has also shifted notably over this period. Employment in licensed child care settings increased from 470 RECEs (49.5%) in 2020 to 842 RECEs (57.2%) in 2025, reflecting the expansion of regulated child care capacity and increased reliance on licensed programs to meet family demand. While the number of RECEs employed in education settings has continued to grow, their share of the overall workforce has declined, indicating that growth in licensed child care has outpaced growth in school-based roles. Employment in other early years and child-serving settings, such as family support and children’s services, has remained relatively stable but represents a smaller proportion of the workforce over time. Overall, these trends point to an increasing concentration of RECEs within licensed child care, highlighting both the sector’s rapid growth and the importance of proactive workforce planning.

Registered Early Childhood Education (RECE) Workforce Data from the College of Early Childhood Educators:

| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total RECEs in Good Standing in Windsor-Essex | 960 | 1,034 | 1,126 | 1,233 | 1,400 | 1,579 |
| Total RECEs in Good Standing in Ontario | 59,096 | 58,181 | 59,929 | 61,661 | 64,335 | 67,816 |

Despite these gains, continued workforce development will be critical to meet current and future demand driven by population growth, economic expansion, and increased labour force participation among parents, particularly within the context of CWELCC-related access expansion.

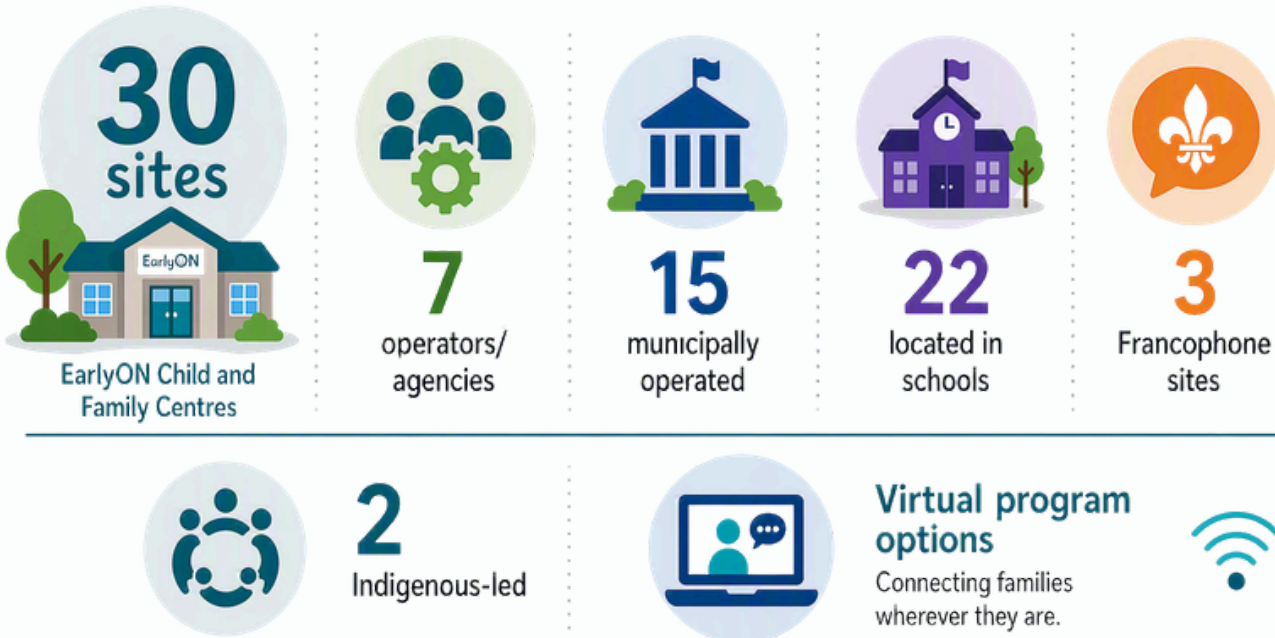
CURRENT STATE REVIEW

The following section provides a concise, data-informed snapshot of the local child care and early years system. It highlights key information on service availability, access, affordability, workforce, and community needs, identifying strengths, gaps, and emerging trends. This section establishes a common understanding of the system today and forms the foundation for future planning and decision-making.



EarlyON Child and Family Centres

Building connections. Supporting families. Together.



EarlyON Child and Family Centres (CFC) offer free high-quality programming for parents and caregivers with children ages birth to 6 years old. All programming aims to foster a sense of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression while meeting the following core services:

- Supporting early learning and development by offering programming to encourage children's learning through play, and to build positive child-adult relationships;
- Engaging parents and caregivers through information sharing about child development, parenting, play, and inquiry-based learning;
- Offering pre- and post-natal support; and
- Connecting families to the community by responding to parents and caregivers inquiring about their child's development. This can include offering screening, making referrals to health professionals or other specialized community services.



2025 EarlyON Service Data

15,888
Children
Served

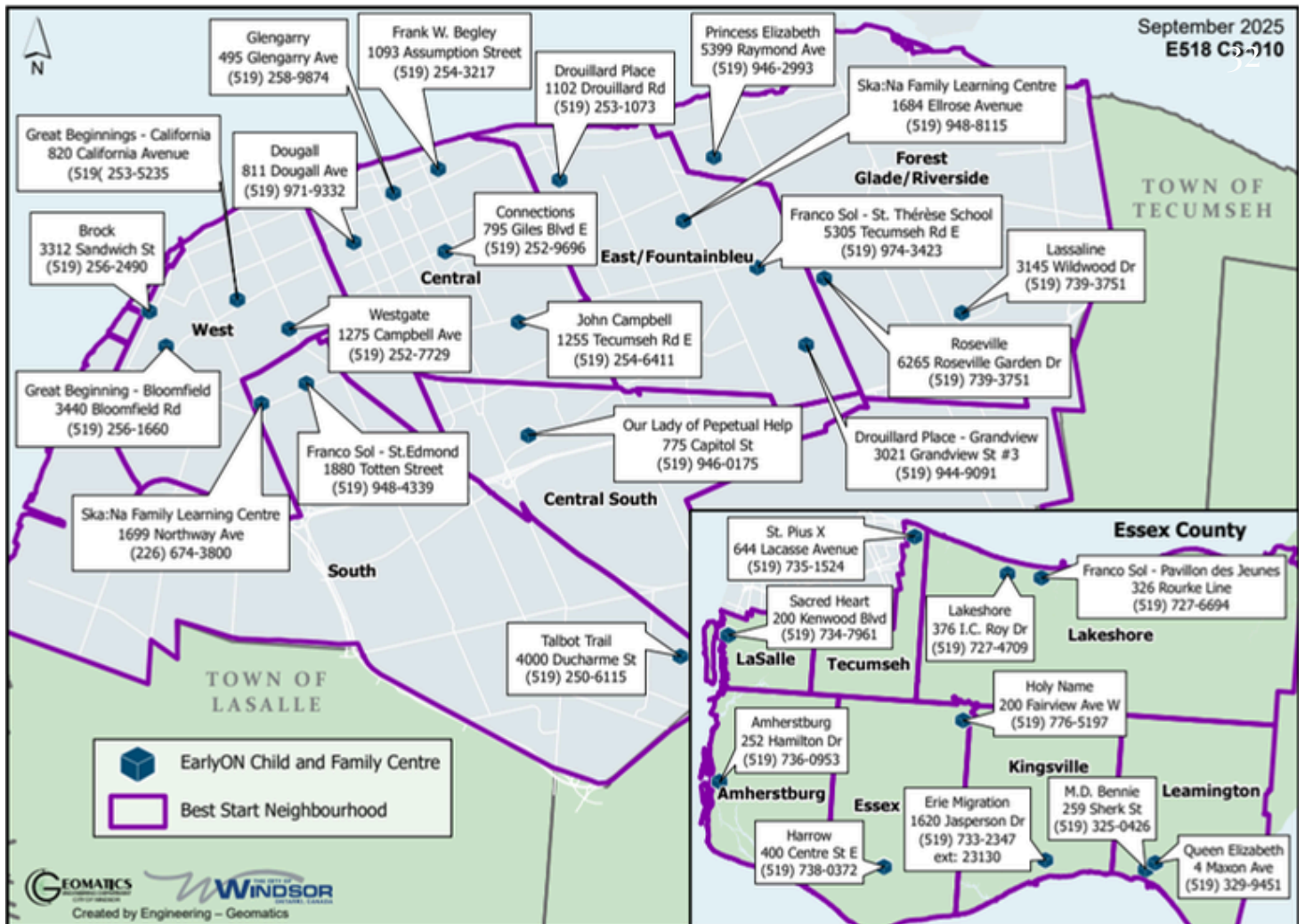
14,845
Parents/Caregivers
Served

3,535
Referrals
Made

79,017
Child
Visits

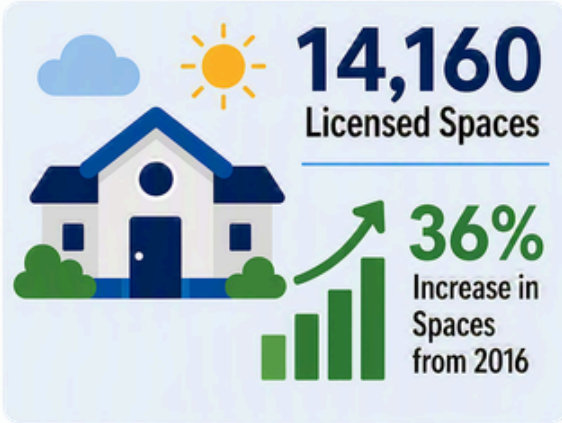
70,459
Parents/Caregiver
Visits

EarlyON Locations Across Windsor-Essex County



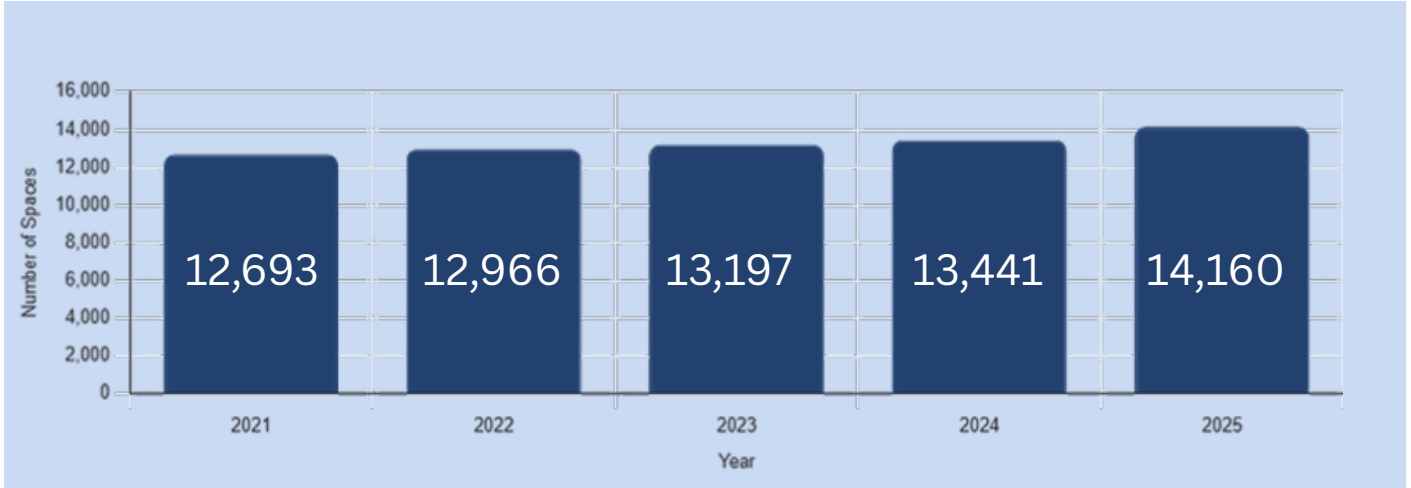
Licensed Child Care

LICENSED CHILD CARE IN WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY

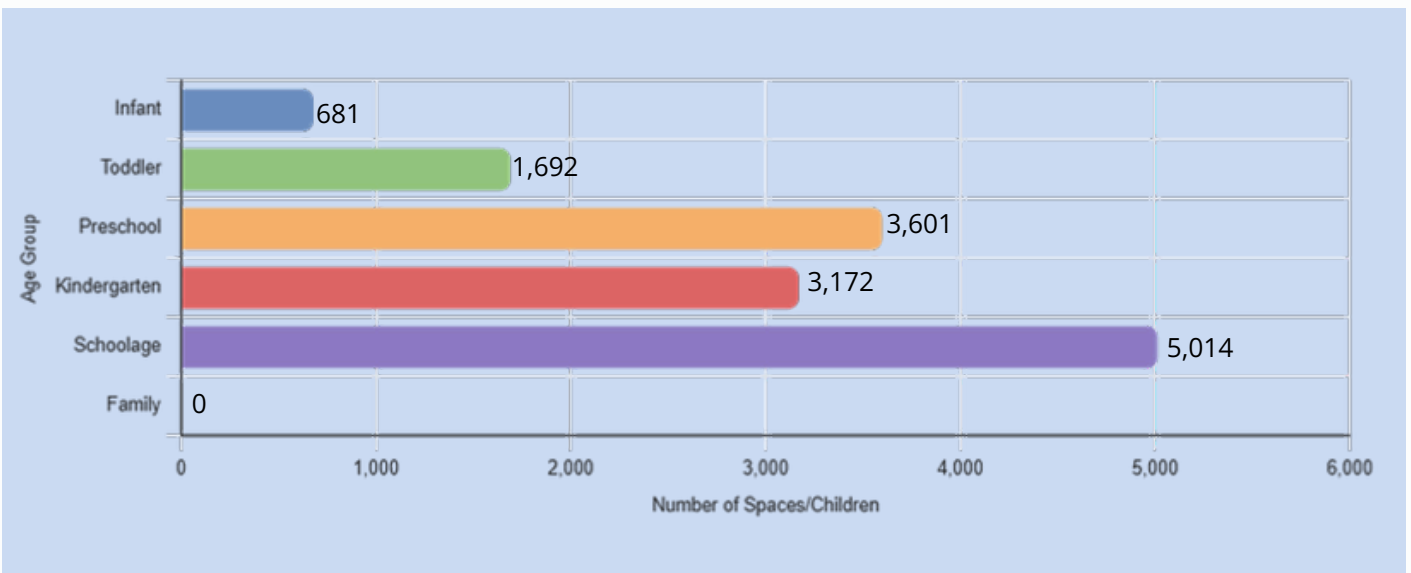


In Ontario, licensed child care refers to child care programs that are regulated under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and overseen by the Ministry of Education. Licensed child care includes centre-based programs and licensed home child care. These programs must meet provincial requirements related to health and safety, staff qualifications, adult-to-child ratios, group sizes, program standards, and oversight, and are subject to regular monitoring and inspection by the Ministry.

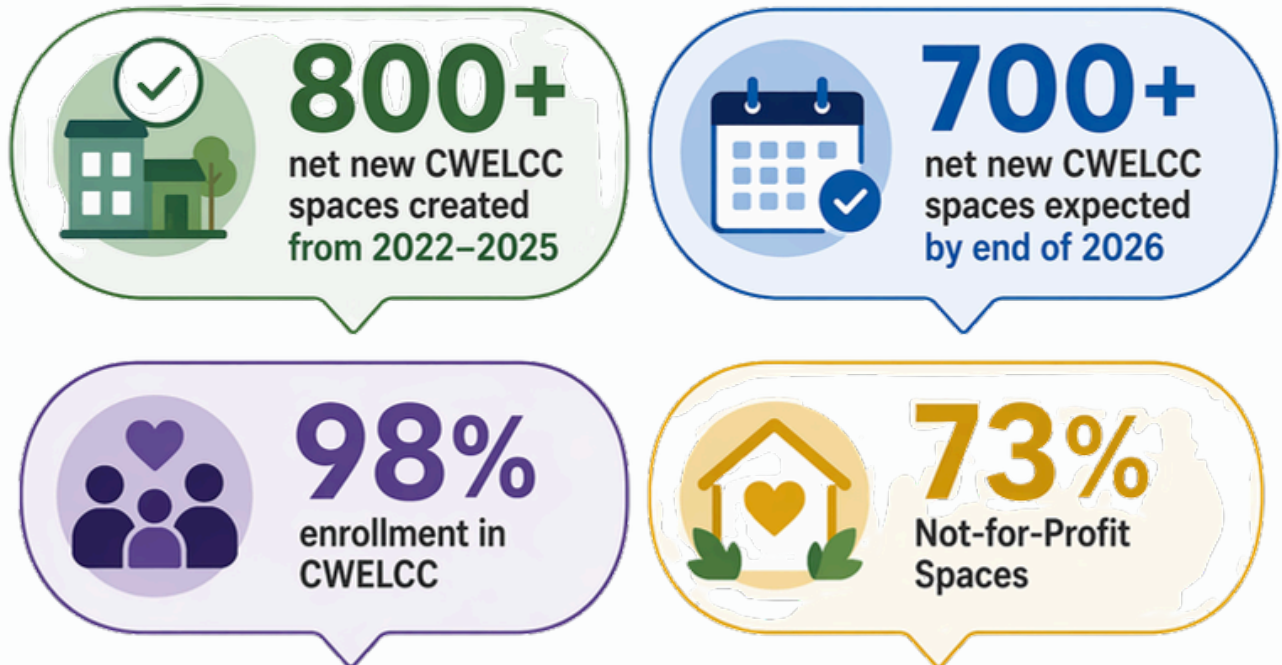
Spaces in Licensed Child Care in Windsor-Essex County (CWELCC and School Age) 2021-2025



Child Care Spaces by Age Group in Windsor Essex, 2024-25 (from Ministry of Education)



Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC)



The 2023 Amendment to the Child Care and Early Years System Plan outlined Windsor-Essex's Directed Growth Expansion Plan under the new CWELCC system. Ontario aimed to create 86,000 new high quality, affordable licensed child care spaces (relative to 2019 levels) across the province predominately through not-for-profit licensed child care providers. The City of Windsor was allocated 1,587 CWELCC expansion spaces through this plan. It is important to note that only spaces for children 0-5 (infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten) are considered CWELCC spaces (i.e., eligible for enrollment in CWELCC and subject to fee reductions).

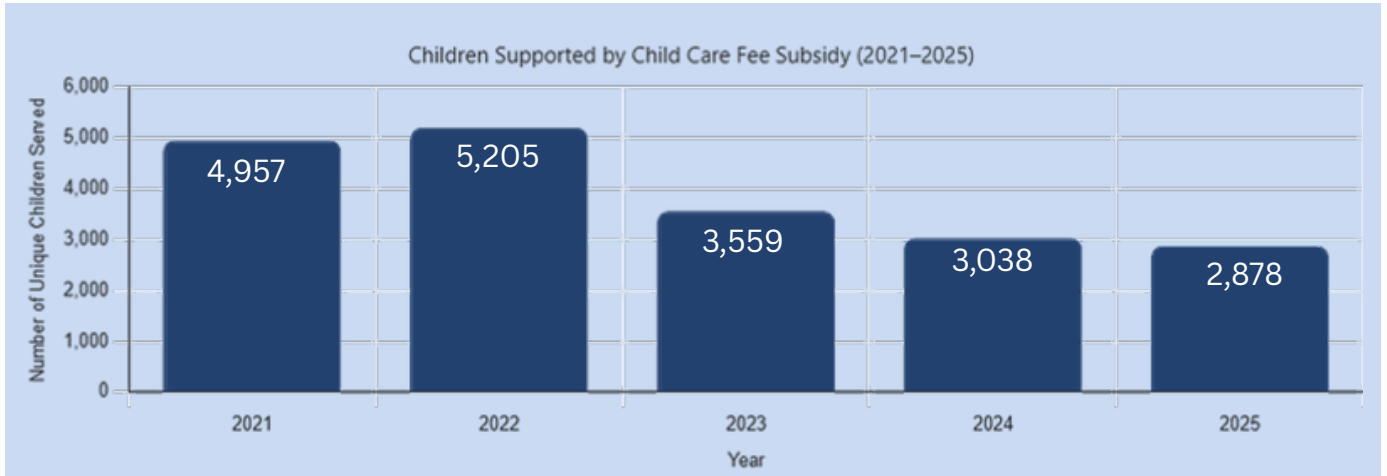
Since that plan was published, the City of Windsor's Children's Services division:

- Reduced parent fees for children 0-5 years of age by over 50%.
- Sustained a 98% enrollment rate for centres in the local CWELCC system.
- Implemented the mandatory fee cap of \$22 per day for CWELCC enrolled centres.
- Maintained an average parent fee across Windsor-Essex of approximately \$17 per day.
- Maintained a proportion of 73% not-for-profit CWELCC spaces within the local system.
- Implemented expansion plans to create over 1,500 new CWELCC spaces expected to be operational by the end of 2026.



Child Care Fee Subsidy

Child care subsidies are provided to help families with their child care costs for children 0-12 years of age in licensed child care programs. Subsidized care is available in Centre-Based, School-Based, and Home Child Care Programs, or Accredited Recreation Programs and Camps for school-aged children 6 to 12 years of age. Subsidies are approved based on financial need and are designed to further reduce or eliminate costs to parents (this includes additional reductions beyond the CWELCC rate caps).



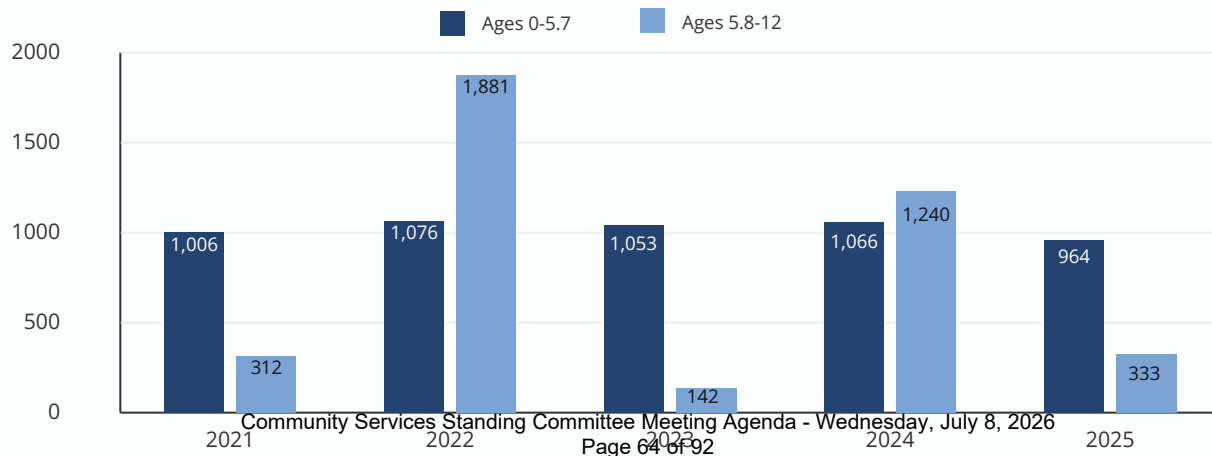
Special Needs Resourcing and Program Support

A key component of the child care and early years system is the delivery of Special Needs Resourcing, which helps support the inclusion of children with exceptional or additional needs in licensed child care settings, including licensed Home Child Care, in EarlyON Child and Family Centres, and in Accredited Recreation Programs and Camps. These supports are available at no additional cost to parents.

The Ministry of Education defines a “child with special needs” as a child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or needs relating to overall development require additional supports in a licensed child care or early years setting. A formal medical diagnosis is not required to receive supportive services, as the focus in these settings is ensuring all children with varying abilities can fully participate in child care programs alongside their peers.

Special Needs Resourcing includes the services of a Resource Teacher/Consultant to support inclusion of children in classrooms, specialized equipment and supplies to support children, professional learning for educators and other individuals working with children with additional needs, and funding for supplementary staffing support to reduce child to staff ratios and support inclusion and quality service delivery.

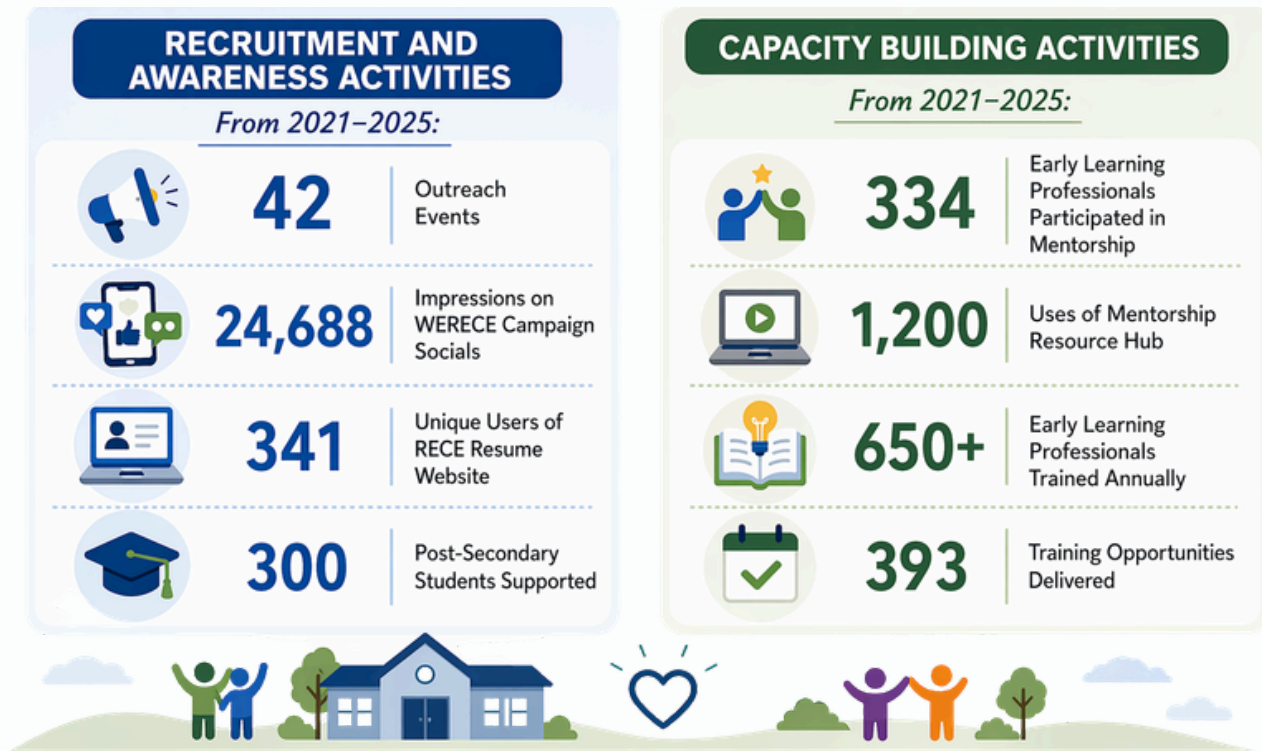
Children Supported in Licensed Child Care with Special Needs Resourcing Funds (2021-2025)



Early Years Workforce Development

Across Ontario, the recruitment and retention of high-quality professionals in the child care and early years sector has become a key focus for SSMs. Since 2022, the province has invested in locally developed community initiatives aimed at sustaining the current workforce, improving access to professional development, and attracting new recruits to the field.

Since the previous system plan, Windsor-Essex County implemented a comprehensive, community-driven workforce development strategy designed to achieve long-term impact and meet the evolving needs of our region.



Local initiatives delivered by the City of Windsor’s Children’s Services division include:

- Established a strong and consistent brand to build community recognition and engagement through the WE-R-ECE (Windsor- Essex Registered Early Childhood Educators) logo.
- Delivered the WE-R-ECE campaign to raise visibility and highlight the value of the profession, through branded apparel, promotional merchandise, bilingual media campaign (TV, radio, cinema, social media, and community events), a print campaign (billboards, bus wraps, banners, and signage across the community), and common signage outside all licensed child care centres and EarlyON Centres.
- Launched the WE-R-ECE Ambassadors program to actively promote the profession through partnerships with school boards, colleges, and employment agencies.
- Developed a structured mentorship program for RECEs and operation of a mentorship hub to support educators with tools, equipment, and resources to support their professional development and service delivery.
- Offered paid professional learning opportunities throughout each year for early years professionals.
- Collaborated with local colleges to increase enrollment in the ECE program and to support new graduates in securing employment in the field (includes scholarship programs, collaborative classrooms for hands-on learning, resource kits, and a lending library).
- Launched WE-R-ECE Resumes, a local resume repository and job search portal that allows early learning professionals to share resumes to local child care operators.

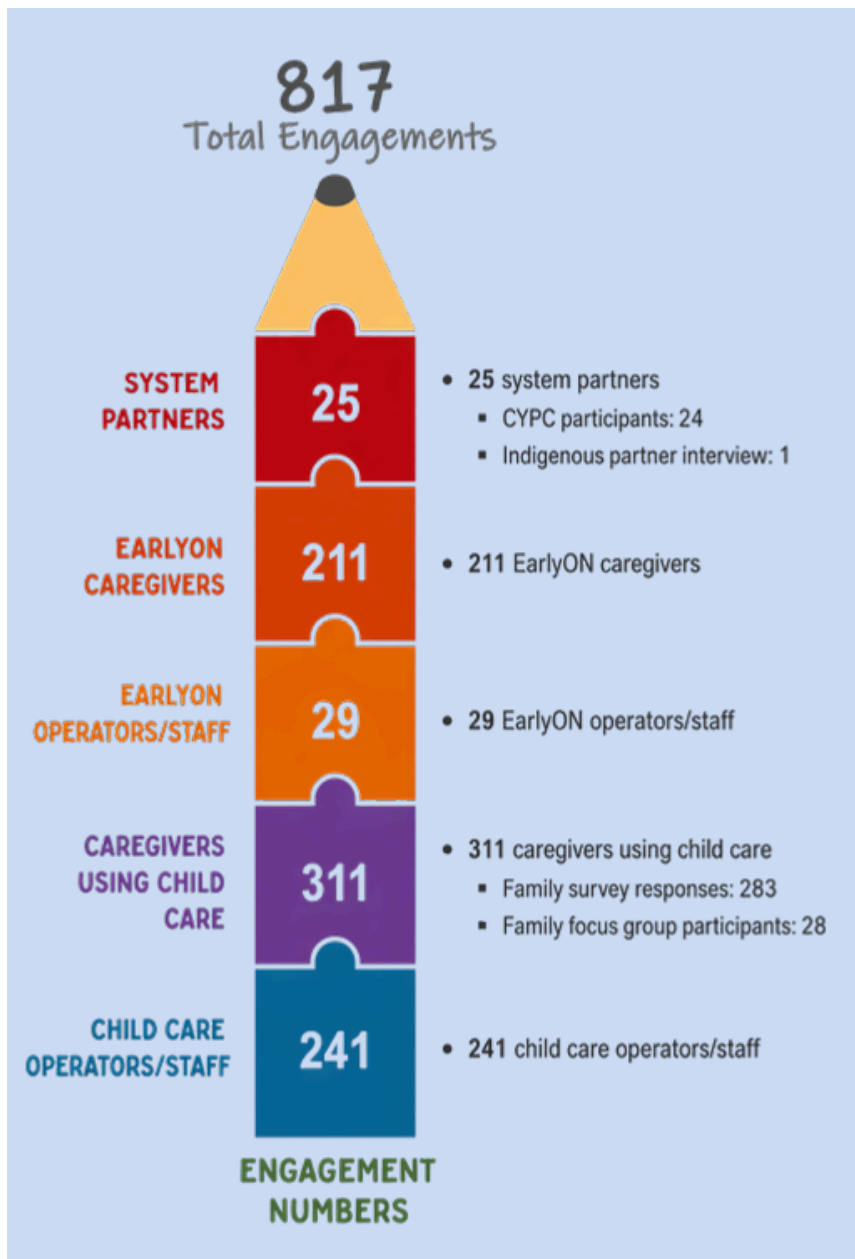


STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Synopsis
- Child Care Engagement Findings
- EarlyON Child and Family Centre Engagement Findings
- System Partners Engagement Findings
- Voice of the Child

SYNOPSIS

A comprehensive, mixed-methods engagement process was undertaken in 2025 to inform the development of the 2026–2030 Child Care and Early Years System Plan. Engagement was designed to capture perspectives from families, child care operators, EarlyON operators, system partners, and Indigenous partners across Windsor-Essex County.



Engagement methods:

- Online surveys for child care operators, EarlyON operators, and parents and caregivers.
- Targeted family focus groups, including families receiving child care fee subsidy, families with children with special needs, and culturally diverse families.
- A key-informant interview providing an Indigenous perspective.
- Facilitated sessions with the Child Care Network and the EarlyON Network.
- Sector partner engagement through the Children and Youth Planning Committee..

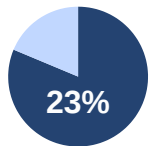


Child Care Engagement Findings

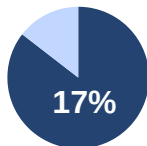
Child Care Parent Survey Highlights

A total of 283 parents and caregivers completed the family survey, with 224 respondents (83%) indicating they are currently using child care. Additionally, focus groups were held with 28 caregivers, gaining further insight into several key aspects of the child care system: special needs resourcing, child care fee subsidy, and meeting diverse family needs.

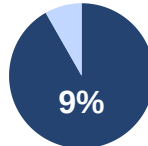
Demographic Insights:



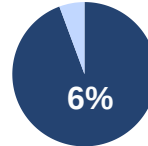
Identified as visibly diverse



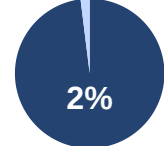
Identified as newcomers to Canada



Included a family member with a disability



Identified as LGBTQ2S+



Identified as Indigenous. First Nations, Inuit or Muts

- **46 languages** were spoken at home beyond English and French, most commonly Arabic and Spanish
- Families reported an **average of two children**, with the largest number of children in care in the **toddler and school-age groups**
- The vast majority used **licensed child care centres**, though many also relied on before-and after-school care and informal arrangements
- 41% of respondents reported after tax family income **below the regional Market Basket Measure threshold of \$54,000**, indicating a significant proportion of families experiencing financial vulnerability



Child Care Parent Survey Highlights

What is Working Well?

Parents and caregivers told us:

- They are aware of the CWELCC system.
- They are aware of the availability of fee subsidies.
- They feel CWELCC and fee subsidies support employment and stability.
- Overall, satisfaction with their child care experience is high.
- They feel Windsor-Essex child care centres excel in being welcoming spaces.

What do Parents Value?

Parents and caregivers told us:

- Parents associate quality with stable, caring, and communicative staff.
- Parents value strong, trusting relationships with staff and clean, safe environments.
- Cultural responsiveness and language access were important to engagement.
- Families wanted clearer communication, transparency, and meaningful opportunities to provide feedback.

What Needs Attention?

Parents and caregivers told us:

- They are concerned about waitlists for child care spaces.
- The fee subsidy program is challenging due to its limited flexibility in eligibility and the burden in meeting application requirements.
- They are concerned about affordability for school-age child care spaces.
- There are challenges finding care that aligns with work hours, especially for shift workers.
- They experience a strong emotional toll navigating supports for their children with special needs.



Child Care Operator Insights

Child care operators across Windsor-Essex provided detailed feedback through surveys and facilitated discussions, highlighting both the strengths of the local system and the pressures facing the sector. In total, 174 staff members of licensed child care centres submitted survey responses representing 80% of centres across the region, and 67 staff members participated in focus groups.

Overall, operators expressed a strong commitment to quality early learning and to supporting families, while emphasizing that the system is under increasing strain due to workforce, funding, and access challenges.

What is Working Well?

Operators told us:

- CWELCC has improved affordability for families and increased demand for licensed child care.
- Engagement opportunities through networks and committees are frequent and valuable.
- They appreciate opportunities to collaborate, share feedback, and contribute to system planning.
- They are committed partners in delivering high-quality early learning and child care services.

What do Operators Value?

Operators told us:

- They strive to provide inclusive support that meets diverse needs of children and families.
- They want professional learning opportunities focused on supporting children with special needs, trauma-informed care, self-regulation, and having difficult conversations.
- They recognize the importance of consistent, system-wide approaches to special needs resourcing and strong coordination with community partners.
- They value improved guidance, shared tools, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities to help address the growing administrative and reporting requirements associated with CWELCC funding.
- They want meaningful involvement in planning decisions related to CWELCC implementation, workforce strategies, and service expansion.

What Needs Attention?

Operators told us:

- Staffing shortages act as a major barrier to expanding licensed spaces, even where physical space exists, and disproportionately affect rural areas.
- They are concerned about rising operating costs and uncertainty about long-term funding stability.
- They are challenged by balancing affordability goals with the need to remain viable employers and maintain quality.
- Demand often exceeds supply, especially for infant, toddler, and before- and after-school care.
- Children's needs are becoming increasingly complex, including developmental, behavioural, and mental health concerns.

EarlyON Child and Family Centre Engagement Findings

EarlyON Parent Survey Highlights

A total of 211 families submitted survey feedback regarding their experiences with EarlyON programming. Overall, parents and caregivers expressed strong appreciation for EarlyON Child and Family Centres, describing them as welcoming, high-quality, and essential community resources that support both children's development and family well-being. Satisfaction with EarlyON was high, with families emphasizing the importance of relationships, accessibility, and inclusive, play-based programming.

"I like that the staff are patient and understanding, and the environment feels welcoming."

What is Working Well?

- Staff are kind, welcoming, professional, and deeply committed to children and families.
- Environments feel warm, inclusive, and non-judgmental.
- Parents enjoy play-based programming and report positive impacts on children's social skills, language development, confidence, independence, and school readiness.
- Learning is embedded naturally through routines such as circle time, songs, and sensory play.
- Families report forming strong social connections with other parents, fostering a sense of belonging. They view this as particularly important for newcomers, first-time parents, and families with limited social supports.
- Centres are generally viewed as inclusive, with diverse materials, celebrations, and supports for children with additional developmental needs, including connections to services such as speech and language supports.

What do Parents Value?

- Free, accessible programming close to home.
- A sense of community and peer support.
- Opportunities for social connection for both children and adults.
- Skilled, welcoming staff who are central to a positive EarlyON experience.
- Flexible program models, including drop-in participation, multiple locations, and varied times of day.
- Practical considerations such as transportation, parking, proximity, and ease of entry that influence attendance.

"The fact that there are many people who attend this location from a variety of ethnicities, cultures and family structures speaks to the fact that this center includes diverse programming."

What Needs Attention?

- Expanded afternoon, evening, and weekend programming to better support working families and those with school-aged children.
- Enhanced inclusion supports for children with special needs, including sensory-friendly and quieter spaces.
- More consistent cultural and linguistic representation across centres, including clearer and more consistent French-language programming.
- Improved communication and outreach to families who could benefit from EarlyON but are not currently attending.
- Addressing space limitations in smaller, highly utilized centres.

EarlyON Operator/Staff Insights

A total of 29 completed surveys were received from EarlyON operators, representing 27 of 30 sites (86%), with an additional 7 EarlyON staff participating in a focus group. Overall, EarlyON operators expressed strong pride in the role EarlyON Child and Family Centres play in supporting families and strengthening communities. They see the program as an essential foundation of the early years system and are deeply committed to its success.

What is Working Well?

- High-quality, relationship-based programming within trusted spaces that support children's development, parenting confidence, and family well-being.
- Dedication and skill reduces isolation, supports early identification of needs, and connects families to broader community services.
- Flexibility in service delivery (including drop-in models, outreach, pop-up programs, and co-located services).
- Collaboration across the EarlyON network.

What do Operators Value?

- EarlyON's free, inclusive model and its ability to serve families regardless of income, immigration status, or service involvement.
- Strong commitment to creating welcoming environments for diverse families, including children with additional needs, newcomers, and equity-deserving communities.
- Being part of a coordinated early years system, where EarlyON can be integrated with child care, health, education, and social services.
- Opportunities for joint training, peer-to-peer learning, and shared tools to maintain quality and consistency across sites.
- Meaningful engagement where their input informs decisions, priorities, and system-level change.

What Needs Attention?

- Workforce capacity and sustainability, including challenges with recruitment, retention, and workload.
- Skills and resources required to address increasing complexity of family needs among those who use EarlyON programs.
- Resources to address requests for evening and weekend programming, transportation barriers, rural access challenges, and space constraints limiting participation for some families.
- Reducing duplication and improving integration with other early years services.

System Partners

Engagement Findings



Children and Youth Planning Committee (CYPC) Insights

What is Working Well?

CYPC partners told us:

- Strong collaboration and information sharing among CYPC members.
- Creativity and resourcefulness in responding to emerging needs and system pressures.
- Ongoing trust-building between families and service-providing agencies.

What do CYPC Partners Value?

CYPC partners told us:

- The CYPC as a forum for cross-sector collaboration and shared problem-solving.
- Opportunities to leverage collective expertise across agencies.
- The potential of CYPC to support shared learning, professional development, and coordinated action.

What Needs Attention?

CYPC partners told us:

- Limited availability of services and capacity constraints across the broader children and youth system.
- Geographic disparities in access to services across Windsor-Essex.
- Fragmentation of services and lack of seamless coordination across the broader system.
- Gaps in formal communication, including uneven access to translation and language supports.
- Limited access to timely, relevant data and lack of clarity on how data should inform planning and decision-making.
- Increasing prevalence and complexity of exceptionalities, behavioural challenges, and family needs across the broader system.
- Need for stronger leadership and modernized structure for the CYPC.
- Opportunities to better use the CYPC as a platform for improved information flow, resource sharing and co-location, as well as joint professional development.
- Need to enhance alignment and reduce duplication across system partners.

VOICE OF THE CHILD

The Voice of the Child shares what children think and feel about their time in child care and EarlyON. Using their drawings and quotes, it gives a simple, authentic look at what matters most to them and helps make sure their voices are part of how services are shaped.

Age: 29 months

Child Care Centre: Skana Northway

Age: 29 months

Child Care Centre: Skana Northway

I feel happy when I come to daycare.

Age: 8

Child Care Centre: d i S C O V E R V

Age: 4

EarlyON CFC Location: Falbot Trail

Julia - A road from my house to EarlyON

Daycare is special to me because I like arts and crafts

Age: 3

Child Care Centre: Discovery Childcare

I am doing good printing

I made flowers. This one is very tall.

Age: 4

EarlyON CFC Location: Talbot Trail

Diap Ishiyaka

EarlyON ON y va

Age: 4

EarlyON CFC Location: Meadow

Maleah - "everyone is happy face at EarlyON" - Circles

EarlyON ON y va

These are hearts for love.

This is a forest of trees and a leaf came off

This is a spider and a web.

These are juice pops.

This is a rainbow flower

This is a cat.

This is a stool to sit on.

6 URBANI

This is me and my brother.

Age: 5

EarlyON CFC Location: Talbot Trail

Age: 28 months

Child Care Centre: Stana Northway

When I get to daycare, I like to I like to spend time with the teacher

Age: 9

Child Care Centre: CE

My favourite thing to do at daycare is play with the garbage truck.

Age: 3

Child Care Centre: Discovery childcare

EarlyON ON y va

"Monster Truck"

"BIG Wheels"

Age: 3 1/2 DOUGALL

EarlyON CFC Location: BIG C

When I get to daycare, I like to toys!

Age: 2

Child Care Centre: Discovery @ Queen E



4

2026-2030 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- Vision and Values
- Strategic Pillars
- Looking ahead

VISION AND VALUES

Vision

A coordinated, inclusive, high-quality child care and early years system where all children and families in Windsor-Essex County thrive.

Pillar 1

System
Coordination
and
Data-Informed
Planning

Pillar 2

Workforce
and
Sector Capacity
Building

Pillar 3

Inclusion,
Belonging,
and
Family-Centred
Practice

Pillar 4

Integrated
Supports for
Children with
Exceptional
Needs

Values

Equity • Inclusion • Quality • Family Voice • Accountability • Collaboration

Equity: We work to ensuring all children and families have fair access to child care and early years services by addressing barriers and directing supports where they are needed most.

Inclusion: We foster welcoming, culturally safe, and accessible early years environments where all children and families can fully participate and belong.

Quality: We support and deliver high-quality early learning and care through skilled educators, nurturing relationships, and continuous improvement.

Family Voice: We value families as partners and actively incorporate parent and caregiver perspectives into program design, service delivery, and system planning.

Accountability: We responsibly steward public resources by setting clear goals, using data to guide decisions, and transparently reporting on progress and outcomes.

Collaboration: We work together across sectors and communities to align efforts, share expertise, and build a coordinated early years and child care system.

Pillar 1: System Coordination and Data-Informed Planning

Goal: A transparent, accountable system with strong leadership, shared planning, consistent communication, and integrated data to guide decisions and meet Ministry reporting requirements.

Objectives:

1. Increase data sharing and knowledge dissemination across child care and early years system partners.
2. Strengthen shared accountability through coordinated, cross-sector planning tables.
3. Improve system navigation for families through consistent communication and common tools.

Key Activities

1. Engage with sector partners to identify data and information needs.
2. Create data dashboards available for public use with relevant data to inform community planning.
3. Update the Terms of Reference and structure of the Children and Youth Planning Committee and associated sub-committees.
4. Implement local child care expansion plans across Windsor-Essex County, using data-informed decision making in alignment with the Ministry's CWELCC goals and the Ontario Access and Inclusion Framework.
5. Strengthen sustainability of EarlyON CFC network through enhanced data collection and collaborative operational planning.
6. Provide annual updates to stakeholders and the community on Service Plan implementation.

Sample Indicators

- Attendance rates at CYPC and system-planning meetings.
- Percentage of partners reporting improved access to timely information.
- Availability of key system information in multiple languages.
- Partner satisfaction with communication and information flow.
- Development and use of a system-level data dashboard.
- Frequency of data reporting to inform planning and decision-making.
- Partner satisfaction with system transparency and accountability.

Pillar 2: Workforce and Sector Capacity Building

Goal: Strong recruitment, retention, and professional learning to support a stable workforce equipped to deliver high-quality, inclusive child care and early years programs.

Objectives:

1. Enhance the local sector's ability to attract and retain qualified educators and child care workers.
2. Adopt a shared definition of high-quality programs and services across child care and early years programs.
3. Increase access to foundational and specialized training opportunities for local educators and child care workers.

Key Activities

1. Deliver an updated and enhanced WE-R-ECE marketing campaign across Windsor and Essex County.
2. Support and amplify workforce development advocacy efforts across the province for enhanced wages and benefits for RECEs.
3. Strengthen partnerships with local post-secondary institutions and operators to support ECE training pathways.
4. Create consistent and standardized onboarding practices across the local child care and early years sector.
5. Collaborate with operators to create a shared definition of quality and a corresponding Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) framework for both child care and EarlyON networks.
6. Create a shared professional learning framework and align professional development offerings to meet sector needs for both child care and EarlyON networks.

Sample Indicators

- Number of impressions, engagements, or visits generated by the WE-R-ECE campaign across Windsor-Essex annually.
- Annual increase in RECEs in good standing in Windsor-Essex County.
- Annual increase in RECEs working in licensed child care in Windsor-Essex County.
- Percentage of participating child care and EarlyON operators implementing standardized onboarding tools or practices.
- Shared definition of quality and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) framework developed and adopted across child care and EarlyON networks.
- Number of professional development offerings aligned with the shared professional learning framework and number of individuals trained.

Pillar 3:

Inclusion, Belonging and Family-Centred Practice

Goal: Welcoming, respectful, and culturally responsive programs that reflect the diversity and strengths of all families.

Objectives:

1. Increase awareness of where and how to access information about child care and early years programs across Windsor-Essex County.
2. Enhance service options to meet diverse family needs across child care and early years settings.
3. Strengthen family leadership and voice through the ongoing collection and use of feedback in service planning activities.

Key Activities

1. Develop a communication plan that focuses on both general and targeted promotion of child care and early years programs and services.
2. Improve the website experience for families.
3. Expand EarlyON program offerings through evening and weekend program hours and pop-up sites.
4. Support Indigenous and Francophone agencies to provide tailored programming for the communities they serve.
5. Provide meaningful engagement for Indigenous and Francophone partners in system-wide program planning.
6. Create page for caregiver feedback submission and have feedback posters available in all programs/centres.
7. Expand use of multilingual resources in all child care and early years locations.

Sample Indicators

- Increase in website traffic, time on key pages, or completed actions (e.g., service searches, referrals) following website improvements.
- Number of EarlyON programs offered during evenings, weekends, or through pop-up locations.
- Attendance or participation rates in non-traditional EarlyON program offerings (evenings, weekends, pop-ups).
- Number of Indigenous-led and Francophone-led early years programs or initiatives supported annually.
- Adoption of caregiver feedback tools across all child care and EarlyON locations.

Pillar 4:

Integrated Supports for Children with Exceptional Needs

Goal: Timely, coordinated, and equitable access to special needs supports across child care and early years program settings.

Objectives:

1. Increase utilization of available system navigation and community connection services across the sector.
2. Increase capacity of child care system to support early identification and proactive information sharing for families.
3. Improve transitions between programs and into school.

Key Activities

1. Promote Windsor-Essex County's SmartStart Hub across child care and early years settings.
2. Collaborate with partners to develop shared Inclusive Program Standards for the local sector.
3. Develop capacity for implementation of a standardized developmental screening tool across program settings.
4. Update Terms of Reference for the Inclusion Network and develop a new work plan in alignment with the System Plan and Ministry goals.
5. Collaborate with partners to update a shared Transition Protocol for Children with Special Needs to Elementary School.
6. Support and amplify advocacy efforts across the province for enhanced Special Needs Resourcing funding.

Sample Indicators

- Shared Inclusive Program Standards developed collaboratively with partners and formally endorsed.
- Percentage of child care and EarlyON programs implementing or aligning practices with the shared Inclusive Program Standards.
- Number or percentage of programs trained and supported to implement the standardized developmental screening tool.
- Updated Terms of Reference and multi-year work plan for the Inclusion Network approved and aligned with the System Plan and Ministry priorities.
- Updated Transition Protocol for Children with Special Needs implemented across child care, EarlyON, and school board partners.

LOOKING AHEAD



The 2026–2030 Windsor-Essex Early Years and Child Care System Plan is grounded in provincial direction and fully aligned with the Ministry of Education’s expectations for Consolidated Municipal Service Managers, including the Child Care and EarlyON Child and Family Centres Service System Management Guidelines and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement. As the designated service system manager, the City of Windsor has a responsibility to plan, manage, and evaluate a coordinated early years and child care system that advances affordability, accessibility, inclusion, quality, workforce stability, and long-term sustainability.

This plan provides a clear and forward-looking framework to guide action over the next five years. It reflects the voices of families, educators, operators, and community partners, and outlines how Windsor-Essex will steward provincial and federal investments to strengthen services and improve outcomes for children and families. By aligning local priorities with provincial goals, the Plan supports a system that is responsive, equitable, and resilient.

Implementation of this plan will require continued collaboration, shared accountability, and a commitment to learning and improvement. The City of Windsor’s Children’s Services Division is committed to monitoring progress, using data to inform decision-making, and sharing updates with the community. Together, we will continue to build a strong, inclusive early years and child care system that supports children’s development, family well-being, and community prosperity across Windsor-Essex.

“Your patience, passion, and dedication plant seeds of curiosity, confidence, and kindness. With every story you read, question you answer, and smile you share, you help children discover their unique potential. The impact you make today echoes through a lifetime – shaping not just learners, but compassionate, capable individuals.”



Lisa

11 years in the ECE Field

“Build strong relationships first. Children thrive when they feel safe and connected.

Take time to build trust with each child, relationships are the foundation of learning.

Be patient with children and yourself. Not every day will go as planned, and that's okay.

Growth takes time, for both you and the children in your care. Never stop learning. Attend workshops, read about child development and stay curious.

Every child and situation will teach you something new. Stay open.”



Marie

20 Years in the ECE Field

“Relationships are the curriculum: Before letters and numbers, there's trust, connection, and belonging. Build those first.

See the child, not just the behavior: Every tantrum, giggle, or quiet moment is telling you something. Listen deeply.

Patience isn't passive: It's an active choice to meet children where they are and guide them forward at their pace.”



Claudia

7 years in the ECE Field

“Every moment with a child is a chance to inspire growth. Be present, be patient, and follow their lead with curiosity and care. Your impact lasts far beyond the classroom.”



Razan

1 year in the ECE Field

“Set aside the pressure on yourself as an Educator to “teach”—instead, focus on what really matters, what will really make a difference in the lives of children—RELATIONSHIPS!

Help children feel secure, feel loved, learn to trust the adults that care for them and to know that they are capable. The rest will come.

Help them to learn that the world is a wonderful place, and that you ENJOY them just for who they are!”



Gina

38 years in the ECE Field

“In Early Childhood Education, success isn't measured by test scores, but by smiles, curiosity and the safe space you create for children to grow.

We are not just teaching children, we are shaping the foundation of society. Nurture wisely, and always lead with empathy.”



Althea

10+ years in the ECE Field



CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Supporting Learning in the Early Years



Subject: Over Street Banners Suspended Across Roadways Policy – City Wide

Reference:

Date to Council: July 8, 2026
Author: Samantha Magalas
Manager, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Programming
smagalas@citywindsor.ca
519-253-2300 x2730
Parks
Report Date: 6/22/2026
Clerk's File #: SE/15187

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

Recommendation:

- I. THAT Council **APPROVE** the updated Over Street Banner Policy attached as Appendix "A"; and further,
- II. THAT Council **REPEAL** the Policy for Display of Over Street Banners in the City Centre dated July 18, 1997.

Executive Summary:

N/A

Background:

The City has an existing Policy for Display of Over Street Banners in the City Centre, originally approved by CR811/97 on July 19, 1997, which governs over-street banners suspended across a roadway in the City Centre, however it does not reflect that over street banner locations now include approved locations beyond the City Centre (i.e. Erie Street). Administration is seeking approval of a new updated policy relative to over street banners, and to repeal the City's existing policy.

Discussion:

Banner installations contribute to community vibrancy, support event promotion, and create a sense of arrival within the city.

Given the distinct safety, operational, and approval considerations associated with over street banners, Administration has updated the policy to define eligibility, approval authority, applicant responsibilities, and cost recovery requirements. The updated policy is attached as Appendix "A".

Risk Analysis:

Approval of the updated policy provides a framework for regulating over-street banners and reduces the operational and liability risks associated with ad hoc approvals. Without an updated policy, the City would face inconsistent decision-making, potential safety concerns related to installation and clearance, and exposure to costs or disputes arising from unclear responsibilities. These risks are mitigated through defined eligibility criteria, centralized approval authority, technical review, and a full cost-recovery model.

Climate Change Risks:**Climate Change Mitigation**

N/A

Climate Change Adaptation

N/A

Financial Matters:

The updated policy establishes a full cost-recovery model under which all costs associated with banner fabrication, installation, inspection, display, removal, temporary removal, handling, disposal, and any required reinstallation are the responsibility of the applicant. Applicable fees will be established through the City's fee schedule approved by Council annually.

Consultations:

Katherine Donaldson, Corporate Policy Coordinator
Ian Day, Senior Manager, Traffic Operations
Adam Pillon, Manager of Right of Way
Jamie Scott, Executive Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities
Kate Tracey, Deputy City Solicitor
Erika Benson, FPA

Conclusion:

The updated Over-Street Banner Policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for regulating banners suspended across municipal roadways. Approval will support community events and placemaking initiatives while ensuring public safety, operational control, and full cost recovery.

Planning Act Matters:

N/A

Approvals:

| Name | Title |
|------------------|---|
| Emilie Dunnigan | Manager Development Revenue and Finance Administration |
| Jamie Scott | Executive Director – Parks, Recreation and Facilities (A) |
| Wira Vendrasco | City Solicitor |
| Michael Chantler | Commissioner, Community Services |
| David Simpson | Commissioner, Infrastructure Services and City Engineer |
| Janice Guthrie | Commissioner, Finance and City Treasurer |
| Ray Mensour | Chief Administrative Officer |

Notifications:

| Name | Address | Email |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| | | |

Appendices:

- 1 Appendix A – Over Street Banner Policy

Policy Number:

Department: Community Services

Division: Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Adoption Date:

Authority:

Scheduled for Review:

Over Street Banner Policy

1. Policy Statement:

This policy establishes the requirements and approval conditions for the display of over street banners within the City of Windsor.

This policy supports the display of over street banners for The Corporation of the City of Windsor (the "City") led, City-sponsored, or City-approved events, activities, and initiatives that contribute to community vibrancy and increase visibility for residents and visitors.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to the affixture and display of banners suspended over public right-of-way.

This policy does not apply to banners affixed to City-owned streetlight poles or to specialty banner poles located within the public right-of-way.

For guidelines and requirements related to those installations, please refer to the applicable banner application procedure.

3. Definitions:

Applicant means the organization applying to display an over street banner under this policy.

Banner or over street banner means a temporary sign made of fabric, vinyl, canvas, or other non-rigid material that is suspended across a street within the public right-of-way at a location approved by the City.

Eligible organization means a non-profit organization, charitable organization, Business Improvement Area, public sector body, or other organization approved by the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate, for the purpose of this policy, provided that the proposed banner promotes a City-led, City-sponsored, or City-approved event, activity, or initiative.

City-approved means approved for banner display in accordance with this policy by the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate.

Public right-of-way means open portions of highway owned by the City for road, boulevard, sidewalk, or related transportation purposes.

Sponsor means a commercial enterprise, agency, or other entity identified on a banner in recognition of financial or other support provided to an eligible event, activity, or program.

4. Responsibilities:

Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities (or designate)

The Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities (or designate) shall:

- Receive and review all requests to display or temporarily remove over street banners.
- Approve or refuse applications in accordance with this policy.
- Determine applicant eligibility, including approval of applications from organizations outside the standard eligibility criteria where the proposed banner supports a significant community event or initiative aligned with the intent of this policy.
- Establish and maintain administrative processes, application requirements, technical specifications, and fees through a supporting Procedure, if applicable, and the City's then current User Fee Schedule as approved by Council annually (the "User Fee Schedule").

Applicant

The Applicant shall:

- Submit a completed application to the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate, a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the requested display period.
- Demonstrate that the application meets the eligibility and event criteria established under this policy, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate.
- Comply with all City by-laws, including By-law 250-2004 as amended (the "Sign By-law"), and obtain all required permits, approvals, or agreements required by law.
- Comply with all insurance, indemnity, and risk management requirements established by the City in the applicable Procedure or permit conditions.
- Provide an inspection report, assessing all City-owned poles and any existing mounting hardware. Any poles that are not currently equipped with brackets will require a structural assessment. Poles are not to be drilled with new holes. Any costs incurred as a result of installing new hardware shall be borne by the permit holder.

5. Policy:

Banner Specifications. Over street banners shall be purchased, paid for, and owned by the applicant. The City of Windsor assumes no responsibility for the care, maintenance, or condition of an approved banner during or after the display period. Banners shall be constructed of suitable materials, such as canvas or vinyl, and shall meet the technical and installation specifications established by the City in the applicable Procedure.

Banner Content. Banner content shall be accurate, lawful, and appropriate for public display. Banners shall comply with applicable law, municipal by-laws, municipal policies, and any standards established by the City for public display. Both sides of the banner surface shall contain a message and/or decorative design, and blank sides are not permitted.

Banner content shall not include political campaigning, sectarian advocacy, devotional messaging, or other content inconsistent with the public and community purpose of this policy. Where applicable, banner content shall also be prepared in a manner consistent with the City's accessibility, public communication, and other corporate standards. All banners shall be reviewed by Parks, Recreation & Facilities to confirm that the proposed content, design, dimensions, sponsorship recognition, and intended display comply with this policy and the applicable Procedure.

Eligibility and Sponsorship. Over street banners are permitted only to advertise City-led, City-sponsored, or City-approved events, activities, or gatherings that provide a clear public benefit to residents and visitors. Commercial enterprises may be identified only as sponsors of an eligible event, activity, or initiative. No more than twenty percent (20%) of the area on each side of a banner shall be used to identify sponsors. All applicable federal, provincial, and municipal requirements concerning commercial sponsorship shall apply.

Display Period and Fees. The standard banner display period is up to three (3) weeks, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate. Where a display period of less than three (3) weeks is requested, the standard three-week fee shall apply unless otherwise provided in the applicable Procedure. Where the advertised event or activity extends beyond three (3) weeks, and no other approved banner is scheduled for the location, one additional display period of up to three (3) weeks may be permitted, provided the applicable pro-rated fee is paid before the additional display period begins. Over street banner installations shall be provided on a full cost-recovery basis, with applicable fees established in the User Fee Schedule and supporting Procedure. Fees shall be paid in full at the time of application unless otherwise provided in the applicable Procedure.

Installation, Removal, and Location Approval. Banner installation, display, removal, temporary removal requests, and approved installation locations shall be managed in accordance with the applicable Procedure. If a banner becomes torn, damaged, unsafe, or detached, the City may remove it immediately where required for safety or

operational reasons. The applicant is responsible for all costs associated with removal, handling, disposal, and any reinstallation, where applicable. No refund will be issued where a banner must be removed due to banner failure, non-compliance, or damage arising from the condition of the banner.

Removed banners shall be retrieved by the applicant within the time period established in the applicable Procedure, failing which the City may dispose of the banner without compensation. Where temporary removal of a banner is requested for a parade, event, maintenance activity, or other operational reason, the request shall be made in accordance with the applicable Procedure, including any required notice period, written authorization from the affected banner applicant, and payment of the applicable fee for removal, handling, and reinstallation. The temporary removal period will not be deducted from the original banner applicant's rental fee.

Banner installation locations are limited to over street banner approved infrastructure on designated municipal roadways. Applicants may identify a preferred location as part of their application; however, final location selection and approval rests with the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate, in consultation with Traffic Operations and Right-of-Way Engineering. Location approval will be based on public safety, including roadway classification, traffic volumes, and required vertical clearance; structural suitability of the existing infrastructure; operational requirements, including installation access and maintenance; scheduling availability; and potential conflicts with other approved banner installations. Where competing applications are received, the Executive Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, or designate, may determine priority and allocate banner locations and display periods in the City's sole discretion, having regard to such operational, strategic, public interest, or other considerations as the Executive Director considers relevant. The City reserves the right to relocate, refuse, or remove a banner installation at any time where safety requirements, operational constraints, or higher-priority municipal uses require it.

Minimum Banner Mounting Height

1. When projecting over the street, the minimum height above the street as measured from the top of the curb must be a minimum height of 15 feet (4.5 m).
2. When projecting over the sidewalk, the minimum height above the sidewalk must be a minimum of 12 feet (3.6 m).
3. When located on a centre median, the minimum height above the street as measured from the top of the adjacent curb must be a minimum of 15 feet (4.5 m).

6. Additional Legislative Authority:

This policy shall be read together with the applicable Procedure and the User Fee Schedule, the Sign By-law, and any insurance, indemnity, permit, approval, or agreement requirements otherwise required by law.

7. Records and Attachments:

Records generated under this policy may include completed applications, approval records, technical review records, fee payments, correspondence regarding installation or temporary removal, and any related permit, insurance, indemnity, or risk management documentation, to be retained in accordance with the City's applicable records retention requirements.

Related attachments and forms may include the supporting Procedure, the applicable User Fee Schedule, and any required application or temporary removal request forms.