



Directed Growth Plan

Appendix 1 of the 2023 to 2027 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan

Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) directed growth plan details as of December 2023

Directed Growth Plan – The Regional Municipality of Durham

This document is attached to and represents Appendix 1 of the Durham Region Children’s Services Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan 2023 to 2027. This Appendix will be updated annually as required to ensure the most current data is used for future planning and will replace previous versions.

This document provides up-to-date details that will inform planning and approvals of space expansion for The Regional Municipality of Durham that is eligible for Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC). The most up-to date version of this information will be available at durham.ca/ChildrensServices.

Responsibility of child care business owners/licensees wishing to enrol in CWELCC

Current and prospective licensees as independent business owners are solely responsible for ensuring the most current directed growth plan data is used to inform expansion plans and business activities in connection with the creation of new spaces eligible for CWELCC. Approval or denial of CWELCC eligible child care spaces will be provided by the Region of Durham. Only new child care spaces licensed with prior approval by the Region of Durham are eligible to receive CWELCC funding, inclusive of funding to lower fees for families and to increase wages. Licensed child care spaces created by licensees who advised that they will not seek enrolment in CWELCC will not be eligible for CWELCC funding.





Ministry directives

In 2022, during Phase 1 of the implementation of CWELCC, the Ministry of Education focused on enrolling existing licensees into CWELCC. This focus shifted in 2023 to a directed approach for growth. [Ontario's Action Plan](#) for child care commits to creating 86,000 new child care spaces before December 2026 (relative to 2019 spaces).

A targeted growth approach will ensure that funding is available to support new spaces in communities most in need of access to high quality, affordable child care. To support this focus, current and prospective licensees interested in participating in the CWELCC system must demonstrate that their program aligns with Durham's directed growth plan for child care expansion.

In alignment with the provincial directives provided through the Access and Inclusion framework, Durham's Region's 2023 to 2027 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan, and the CWELCC funding guidelines, this document will guide child care growth for our Region.

Directed growth planning

Ministry targets for annual growth and auspice requirements

The Ministry of Education has provided municipalities with space targets for CWELCC-funded growth. Durham Region received the mandate to expand the CWELCC system by 2,029 spaces in schools and community-based locations between 2022 to 2026.

Chart 1: Space targets by year and location

Provided by the Ministry of Education for The Regional Municipality of Durham

Total Spaces						School-based spaces						Community-based spaces					
Total	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
2029	404	503	511	49	562	1103	404	172	405	49	73	926	0	331	106	0	489

In addition to the targets set above, directed growth must be maintained at or above the existing ratio of non-profit to for-profit spaces.



Community analysis

In 2019, the Children's Services Division began development of an in-depth and enhanced community analysis process, with the support of other divisions such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Planning and Information Technology Services. This community analysis is used by our division to make data-driven, evidence-based decisions on where expansion of child care is most needed. In the Region of Durham, data for planning programs and services is sorted and summarized by Health Neighbourhood and analyzed to determine priority neighbourhoods. Sociodemographic variables are defined by the Ministry of Education. Data gathered includes types as listed in Chart 2 below.

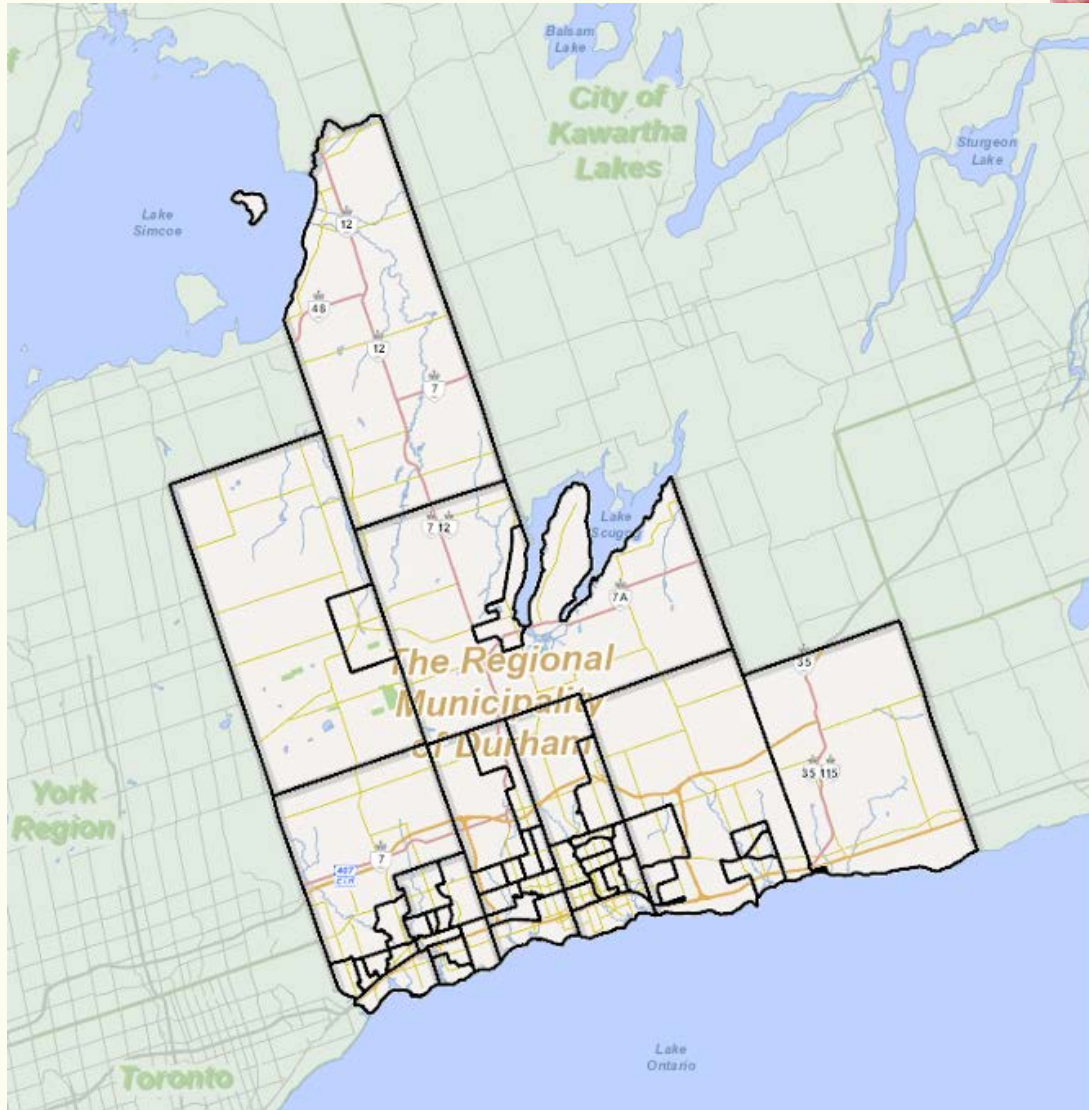
The non-profit ratio for CWELCC-eligible child care spaces in the Region of Durham is 70.5 per cent.

Chart 2 – Community Analysis Data to determine priority neighbourhoods.

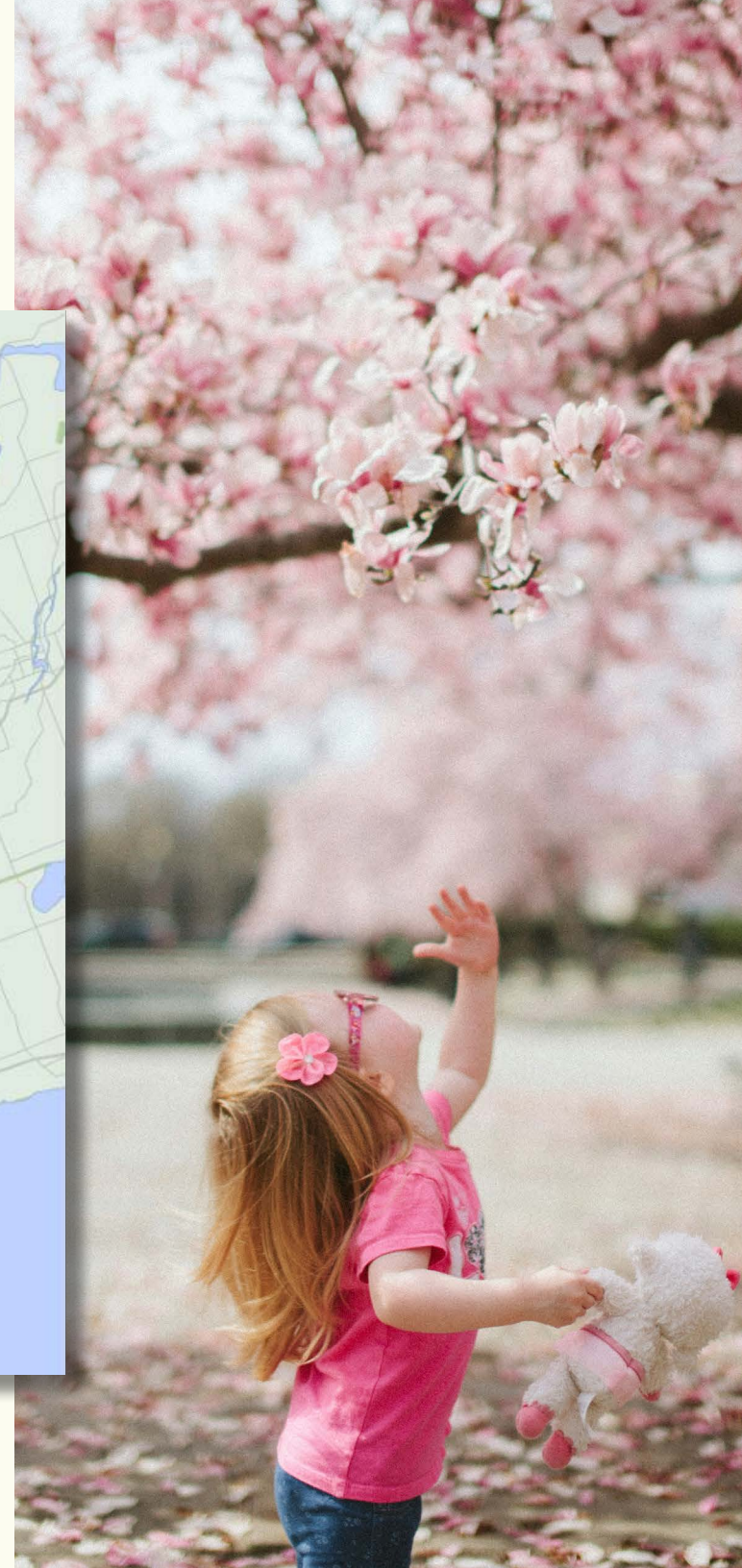
- Licensed and operating capacities of existing child care centres
 - The existing spaces being actively used compared to the maximum number of spaces available by license. The unused available spaces are factored into the vacancy rate.
- Child care vacancy rates
 - The number of actively used spaces with no child enrolled plus the number of spaces available but not active.
- Approved new spaces for future years (school and community-based)
 - New licensed child care spaces planned and approved to operate before 2027. Includes all spaces approved by the Region of Durham to receive CWELCC funding.
- Census data (current 2021)
 - Includes age and sociodemographic data such as: families experiencing low income, francophone children, Indigenous children, Black children, other racialized children and new immigrants.
- Special needs resourcing (SNR) data
 - The number of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports in child care.
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) data
 - Data indicating areas where at least 25 per cent of children are vulnerable in two or more EDI domains, indicating need for increased services to support children to be ready to learn by kindergarten.
- Approved housing development in progress
 - New housing construction projects as approved by local municipalities.

Health Neighbourhood map

Data for community analysis is gathered by Health Neighbourhoods as outlined in Map 1 below.



Map 1 – Map of all Durham Region Health Neighbourhoods.



Directed growth in Durham, 2023

As the service system manager, the Region of Durham developed a five-year directed growth plan that aligned with provincial directives and space targets while meeting the needs of communities across the region. For 2022 and 2023, the approval of new CWELCC-funded expansion met targets for our Region.

In Durham Region, approval of CWELCC-eligible spaces was completed by using existing requests for expansion and leveraging current child care centres to expand in place, thereby maximizing licensed capacities within priority neighbourhoods.

To support directed growth that was efficient and best met community need, applications for expansion within existing child care centres were reviewed with a focus on increasing age-specific spaces in priority neighbourhoods. Applications for new full sites (offering spaces for all ages) were then reviewed to further meet community need within our space allocation targets.

The growth plan for 2023 was created using data available at the time of development and was built on our previous service plan for 2018 to 2022.

As the federal-provincial child care plan evolves, determination of priority neighbourhoods will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect current and new data. In addition to priority data, locations are also subject to availability of existing real estate that meets legislative requirements for a licensed child care facility.



Directed Growth Plan, 2024-2026

Growth for CWELCC-eligible child care spaces for 2024 to 2026 will align with the Children's Services Division's 2023 to 2027 Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan, and follow provincial guidelines.

This plan will be used to inform approvals of applications received in 2024.

Beginning January 1, 2023, child care licensees are required to seek approval for CWELCC eligibility or notify the Region of Durham that they will not be applying for CWELCC. Approvals will be based on:

- The availability of requested child care spaces within Regional targets.
- Maintenance of the Regional auspice ratio.
- The age group to be served by the proposed new spaces (eg., infant, toddler, preschool).
- Whether the location of the proposed new space(s) is in a priority neighbourhood, as determined by the Region's community analysis data.
- Alignment of the new space creation with all other Regional service plan and provincial directives and guidelines.

The application process for future CWELCC expansion spaces will open in early 2024, after the 2024 Ministry of Education funding announcement. This application process will include projects that could open in 2024 through to the end of 2026.

Information about the application process will be posted at durham.ca/ChildrensServices; current and prospective licensees are asked to monitor this page for updates. The Children's Services Division receives a high volume of general inquiry calls and emails regarding CWELCC expansion; to support these requests, our division is committed to providing general information and updates on our website.



Community analysis 2024

In early 2023, a community analysis was completed that informed child care expansion for that year. In late 2023, updated data – including the most recent census data (2021), current child care operating capacities and new housing development data – was used to update the analysis and to inform this plan.

This plan will be used for approvals of child care expansion applications to be received in 2024. The Ministry of Education has set a future goal of reaching a provincial CWELCC average of 37 per cent population served for children up to six years of age (CWELCC-eligible). In Durham, the community analysis indicates areas of need across the region. With the number of Ministry mandated expansion space targets in mind, the following neighbourhoods have been noted as priority, as they have demonstrated low or no availability of licensed spaces and align with the other variables outlined in Chart 2 of this report.

Based on this data, the following areas in Durham are considered highest priority and will be considered for the next round of approvals in accordance with the factors listed in this document. Please reference the program locator to see details of existing child care and Health Neighbourhoods at maps.durham.ca/ChildCarePrograms/.

The data provided is not to be interpreted as a guarantee of approval. The priority neighbourhoods listed are to be used as a starting point for new and existing licensees when considering location for child care expansion. Only those projects that fall within the thresholds outlined in this document will be approved.





Community analysis 2024 continued

- Ajax
 - Ajax Northwest (A8).
- Brock
 - Town of Sunderland.
- Clarington – areas in Bowmanville, Newcastle and Courtice, including neighbourhoods of:
 - Courtice North (C2).
 - Bowmanville North (C5).
 - Bowmanville South (C3).
 - Clarke (C7).
- Oshawa – central Oshawa, including the neighbourhoods of:
 - Beatrice North (O10).
 - Beatrice South (O8).
 - Central Park (O4).
 - Stevenson North (O6).
 - Hillsdale (O7).
 - Grandview North (O9) .
- Scugog
 - Rural Scugog (S2).
- Whitby – central/north Whitby, including the neighbourhoods of:
 - Williamsburg (W5).
 - Whitby Brock North (W3).
 - Dryden East (W8).

Current expansion needs in the communities below have been met at this time, and will be reviewed and updated as needed in future years.

- Uxbridge
 - The Municipality of Uxbridge is demonstrating as well-served, with an average of 54 per cent of the population of children (ages 0 to six years) served. Approvals of new licensed home child care agencies serving Uxbridge have been approved to provide choice for families and to serve more families living in rural Uxbridge.
- Pickering
 - The City of Pickering is demonstrating as well served, with planned child care expansion projects already approved for opening in 2024 to 2026 in the neighbourhoods of Brock Ridge (P6) and Pickering North (P7). Additionally, approvals of new licensed home child care agencies serving Pickering have been approved to provide choice for families.

Additional resources for licensees

Applications for CWELCC expansion must be completed by the licensee. To support licensees in gathering the data needed to complete an application, the following links to relevant information can be referenced. The below links can all be found at durham.ca/ChildrensServices.

- [Information for Operators](#)
 - information about operating a child care centre/home child care agency in Durham can be found through this link.
- [Children's Program Locator, including Health Neighbourhood Map](#)
 - A detailed map, including Health Neighbourhood boundaries and the location of existing child care spaces, can be found through this link.
- [Fee Subsidy Information](#)
 - Licensees wishing to offer fee subsidies for the eligible families must apply to the Children's Services Division to be considered for a Fee Subsidy agreement.
- [Quality Child Care](#)
 - To be eligible for a Fee Subsidy agreement as noted above, licensees must meet the expectations for quality as set through the Durham Assessment for Quality Improvement.
- [Opening a Child Care Centre and Ministry of Education Licensing](#)
 - The Ministry of Education is responsible for licensing and regulatory oversight of child care centres and home child care agencies. The link provided provides additional details and the link to the Ministry of Education information on operating a child care centre.

Next steps

The Children's Services Division will continue to work with the Ministry of Education and child care licensees to expand licensed child care and increase access to high-quality early learning programs for families across Durham Region.

