

Councillor Leatherbarrow has put forward the following notice of motion:

WHEREAS found in the 2021 Census, the enumerated population of the City of Woodstock was 46,705, which represents an increase of 13.6% from 2016;

AND WHEREAS found in the 2021 Census, 8,230 children aged 0 to 14 were enumerated in the City of Woodstock, representing respectively 17.6% of the total population - in comparison, for Canada, the proportion of children was 16.3% in 2021;

AND WHEREAS Oxford County is the designated childcare service system manager responsible for planning and managing licensed childcare services in our community and is committed to working with community partners to enhance the quality of life for all citizens, even the youngest among us;

AND WHEREAS Oxford County is currently developing the next five-year Childcare and Early Years Plan to cover 2025 through 2029, presenting an opportunity for the City of Woodstock to align with the County on this important service;

AND WHEREAS there can be different funding types to support new childcare centres and municipalities have played a strong role in this by identifying structural space for these centres and studies show that for every dollar invested in Early Years and Childcare Programs the broader economy receives between \$1.50 to \$6.00;

AND WHEREAS by recognizing childcare as a necessary service in neighbourhoods and defining solutions to reduce barriers to access, municipalities can directly contribute to supporting employment opportunities for families and fostering economic sustainability at the local level;

AND WHEREAS the Public's Top 2 objective identified in the Strategic Realignment Survey was 'Effectively Deliver Amenities and Services';

AND WHEREAS how a child develops during ages 0-5 affects future cognitive, social, emotional, language, and physical development, which in turn influences school readiness and later success in life;

AND WHEREAS early intervention for children with special needs are crucial for their successful transition to the school system and later success in life;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Woodstock City Council direct staff to prepare a report for Council by September 2024 outlining ways in which Woodstock can partner with various stakeholders to support and facilitate the creation of additional childcare spaces in the City;

AND FURTHER that this report include options for amending zoning provisions to be more permissive for childcare, and utilizing existing and future municipal property as locations for childcare centres, including requiring all future City built infrastructure to consider a childcare component.