



Increasing Accessibility to and Safety of Child Care in Calgary

Report Back: What We Heard
May 2022

Project overview

Background

Difficulty accessing safe, affordable child care has been identified as a challenge for families. Recent incidents resulting in the neglect, abuse, and death of children in private day homes highlights a need for improved regulation of child care in Calgary.

In July 2021, a Notice of Motion was passed to explore increasing accessibility to and safety of affordable child care in Calgary.

Business Licence Proposal

Currently, businesses operating as a child care service do not require a City of Calgary (City) business licence. They are governed by the Province of Alberta. In Alberta, the Early Learning and Child Care Act provides families with a range of options from licensed facilities and home-based care to unlicensed private day homes; however, provincial child care regulations do not provide proactive oversight or application requirements for home-based child care businesses that choose not to contract with a provincially-licensed family day home agency. The City of Calgary could play a role in addressing these gaps as it has the ability to license home-based child care businesses in the same manner it licenses other businesses to ensure standards for public safety and consumer protection. City administration was tasked by Council with exploring The City's ability to regulate and license home-based child care businesses that choose not to contract with a provincially-licensed family day home agency and will report back to Council through the Community Development Committee in July 2022.

Engagement overview

A project portal page (<https://engage.calgary.ca/childcare>) was open for input from April 11 – May 1, 2022. The portal page was designed to communicate the goals and objectives of the project and to collect feedback. In terms of participation in this project, there were 6675 visitors to the project portal page, 597 contributions to the home-based child care providers survey, and 440 contributions to the parents/families survey.

Targeted stakeholder engagement was offered for both licensed family day home agency representatives and unlicensed child care operators. An online engagement workshop was held for licensed family day home agency representatives and two online workshops were held for unlicensed child care operators. A total of thirteen participants attended the virtual engagement workshops.

Input from the online surveys and workshops are being used to help inform recommendations for the report.



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What we asked

We asked the following questions to gather input for this project.

Questions for Home-based Child Care Providers

1. Are you currently a family day home educator operating under a licensed family day home agency?
 - Yes (If yes, goes to question 7)
 - No (If no, goes to question 2)
2. Have you previously been a family day home educator operating under a licensed family day home agency?
 - Yes (If yes, goes to question 3)
 - No (If no, goes to question 4)
3. Why are you no longer operating under a licensed family day home agency? (Open-ended question)
4. Have you ever considered operating as a family day home educator under a licensed family day home agency?
 - Yes (If yes, goes to question 5)
 - No (If no, goes to question 7)
5. What are the barriers preventing you from becoming a family day home educator under a family day home agency? (Open-ended question)
6. If those barriers did not exist, would you consider becoming a family day home educator under a licensed family day home agency?

BUSINESS LICENCE

Under current provincial regulations, there are two types of child care permitted in Calgary – licensed and unlicensed:

- i. **Licensed providers** include all facility-based programs (e.g. daycares, preschools, out-of-school care) as well as family day home educators who are recruited, trained, and overseen by provincially licensed family day home agencies to offer child care in their own homes for up to 6 children, not including their own.
 - ii. **Unlicensed providers**, such as private day homes, are not monitored by the Alberta government or licensed agencies. They are permitted to provide care in their own home for up to 6 children, not including their own.
7. Would you support introducing a municipal business licence to better regulate unlicensed home-based child care in Calgary?



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8. What minimum qualifications do you feel should be required to obtain a municipal business licence? (select all that apply)

In general, these are the steps to obtain a business licence:

Step 1 – Apply online or in-person at The City of Calgary Planning Services Centre located at the Municipal Building.

Step 2 – Provide any required documentation. For example, you may be asked to provide a valid First Aid Certificate (approximately \$125).

Step 3 – The City reviews your information and may conduct a Calgary Police security clearance which takes 10-15 business days to complete.

Step 4 – Pay the business licence fee which includes the cost of the Calgary Police security clearance (\$172). Note: The City has waived all fees for business licensing and Calgary Police security checks until March 16, 2023.

9. With this process in mind, what do you feel would be the biggest barrier to getting a business licence if a municipal business licence were introduced for private day home operators? Why?
10. If the City of Calgary were to create a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence, do you feel it would help families with their decision-making process when selecting a child care provider?
11. Tell us why you answered as you did for the last question?
12. If you are a private day home operator, would you be interested in advertising your private day home on a City of Calgary database if you met all the minimum requirements?
13. Is there anything else you would like to share as part of this engagement?

Questions for Parents/Families

BUSINESS LICENCE

Under current provincial regulations, there are two types of child care permitted in Calgary – licensed and unlicensed:

- i. **Licensed providers** include all facility-based programs (e.g. daycares, preschools, out-of-school care) as well as family day home educators who are recruited, trained, and overseen by provincially licensed family day home agencies to offer child care in their own homes for up to 6 children, not including their own.
- ii. **Unlicensed providers**, such as private day homes, are not monitored by the Alberta government or licensed agencies. They are permitted to provide care in their own home for up to 6 children, not including their own.



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1. Is your family's main child care arrangement a provincially licensed child care program?
2. Would you support introducing a municipal business licence to better regulate unlicensed home-based child care providers in Calgary? 2b. Why?
3. Would you be more likely to use a private day home operator with a valid municipal business licence than one who didn't have one?
4. What minimum requirements do you feel should be required to obtain a municipal business licence for a private day home operator? (Select all that apply)
5. If the City of Calgary were to create a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence, would you use it to help your decision-making process when selecting a child care provider? 5b. Why?
6. Is there anything else you would like to share as part of this engagement?

Online Workshops

1. Engagement workshop for licensed family day home agency representatives
We met with licensed family day home agency representatives and asked questions to understand the barriers that have prevented the unlicensed home-based child care providers from joining the Licensed Family Day Home Agencies model.
2. Engagement workshops for unlicensed home-based child care operators
We asked questions to understand what barriers have prevented participants from being licensed child-care providers and what they see as barriers to getting a business licence if one were introduced for private day home operators.

What we heard

This section provides a short summary of what we heard from the participants who contributed to the online survey. Responses for the open-ended/short text questions have been categorized into overarching themes to provide a summary of what we heard. Themes presented are those with frequent or recurring mentions. Comments can represent more than one theme area. Verbatim comments are presented as received and they are not altered for spelling or grammar. A verbatim listing of all the comments is provided at the end of this report.



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Home-based Child Care Providers' Survey

1. Are you currently a family day home educator operating under a licensed family day home agency?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	11.73%	70
No	88.27%	527
Total	100.00%	597

2. Have you previously been a family day home educator operating under a licensed family day home agency?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	6.26%	33
No	93.74%	494
Total	100.00%	527

3. Why are you no longer operating under a licensed family day home agency?

Examples of reasons why some of the participants who answered this question are no longer operating under a licensed family day home agency included too many rules and unrealistic expectations from agency, age limits of children, child-provider ratios being too restrictive, fees too high and no benefit, feeling micromanaged, and several of them changed careers, went on maternity leave or went back to school.

4. Have you ever considered operating as a family day home educator under a licensed family day home agency?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	19.75%	96
No	80.25%	390
Total	100.00%	486



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5. What are the barriers preventing you from becoming a family day home educator under a family day home agency?

The following is a summary of the top themes from participant responses:

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p style="text-align: center;">Rules, Regulations, Inspections, and Paperwork</p> <p>Many rules and restrictions on their homes, frequent visits and inspections, additional paperwork, and following the agencies' pay schedule are some barriers expressed by participants who answered this question.</p>	<p>"Quality child care does not require all the rules and regulations associated with becoming licensed. This is my home. My children and I live here. I would never want to operate under the scrutiny or threat of inspections in my private home. My home is safe for children but I don't need to put padding on all my corners in order to be safe. I don't need to be told what variety/ amount of toys is acceptable. Licensing does not equal a safe and loving environment."</p> <p>"Child age ratios, Extra Agency fees added, way more paperwork, unpaid vacation/holidays, one month or more waiting to be paid, limitations and management, no value added to my business. Frequent visitations and checks."</p> <p>"Restrictions about too many things (dog food, field trips, how my home must be etc.) that make it so my family I had to give up a lot. Also the added fees for parents and ratios under certain ages (current group means I would give up 1/2 of them)."</p> <p>"To many unnecessary rules , I wouldn't have paid sick days"</p> <p>"when you get paid. I get paid at the beginning of the month. If I went with an Agency I would lose a month's salary which would affect me financially. I like to having control over how I get paid and how I collect my fees Also like to control how I operate my day home. I feel it is my business. I have operated my business successfully for 22 years. All my children I look after are referred to me. Which is shows I am doing things right."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fees</p> <p>Participants noted extra fees for day home operators to join an agency as a barrier. Some day home operators would have to increase fees for parents to cover the agency fees.</p>	<p>"Would have to increase parent fees to make up for what the dayhome agency takes. We're not getting rich doing this! Always huge wait lists for agent approval"</p> <p>"Extra fees placed on my parent of whom I provide child care services for.... costs for myself to join a day home agency. Restriction placed on my home and space such as what I can have in my fridge, cupboards and bathrooms."</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
	<p>“They take a fee per child, say \$100, which, when multiplied by your allowance of 6, adds up to a lot. Most dayhome operators need the money. When I ran a day home, I was not regulated (regulated is the proper term for a day home- ‘licensed’ is for daycares) because I was skilled in the field, and had excellent credentials and references. Parents did not care that I wasn’t regulated. I think parents should be able to decide what they’re comfortable with.”</p> <p>“My income is going to decrease because agencies take more of \$100 per child”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Lack of Autonomy</p> <p>Several participants mentioned that they want to have independence and run their businesses themselves. Lack of autonomy in running their own business would be a barrier for them.</p>	<p>“The fee we have to pay per child. I would have to increase my costs for parents to offset. The amount of paper work and needing to follow a schedule. They are young children not in kindergarten yet, things happen and things change. Not getting paid for days I close, holidays for example would be unpaid. Agency’s not being on the same page and have own regulations we have to follow above the standard government policies. I want to be my own boss and run my Dayhome, not have the agency be my boss.”</p> <p>“I follow all government requirements but find Agencies add there own requirements on top - They cost extra with no benefit i need. I enjoy handling everything personally with the families. It builds long lasting friendships. This is not done with an agency. Their unscheduled monthly visits completely disrupt the childrens day and nap times. Safety visits are okay but not at the disruption of the childs schedules, Placing a big sign in my window advertising dayhome - is a huge safety concern.”</p> <p>“Costs Independence Not seeing the benefit to licensing”</p> <p>“To much micromanagement for me since I’ve ran a successful private dayhome for many many years”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cost and Inconsistent Income</p> <p>Start-up cost, low return on investment, and inconsistent income were stated as barriers by some participants.</p>	<p>“The cost and process entailed”</p> <p>“Startup costs, inconsistency of income, finding and purchasing and moving to a suitable home, and concerns about the poor regulations and oversight in the field. I currently have a Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education and Alberta level 3 certification and work in a facility based early learning center.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
	<p>“Financial. It’s low pay work. I did the math and would be making ~4\$ an hour. So not for me.”</p> <p>“Lack of projected revenue...no profit.”</p>

6. If those barriers did not exist, would you consider becoming a family day home educator under a licensed family day home agency?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	86.05%	74
No	13.95%	12
Total	100.00%	86

7. Would you support introducing a municipal business licence to better regulate unlicensed home-based child care in Calgary?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	55.44%	331
No	34.34%	205
Don't know	10.22%	61
Total	100.00%	597



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8. What minimum qualifications do you feel should be required to obtain a municipal business licence? (select all that apply)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
First Aid Certification	83.79%	486
Police information check for all individuals 18 years and over who reside at my house	73.62%	427
Police information check for myself	73.28%	425
Police vulnerable sector search for myself	68.28%	396
Police vulnerable sector search for all individuals 18 years and over who reside at my house	68.10%	395
Liability insurance	67.93%	394
Personal references	52.41%	304
Training in early childhood education	47.07%	273
Physician’s note stating that the provider is mentally and physically able to care for children	45.17%	262
Do not feel there should be any minimum qualifications to obtain a business licence	15.52%	90
Other	10.00%	58

9. With this process in mind, what do you feel would be the biggest barrier to getting a business licence if a municipal business licence were introduced for private day home operators? Why?

The following is a summary of the top themes identified from participant responses:

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>Cost</p> <p>Participants identified the cost of obtaining a business licence, and the cost associated with the other requirements such as Police Information Check, Police Vulnerable Sector Search, and first aid certification as the biggest barrier to getting a business licence if a municipal</p>	<p>“Cost. Police/vulnerable sector/first aid cost a lot individually and add up, when you’re looking at multiple people in a household. A lower licensing fee would be helpful. If the goal is to get as many private providers licensed as possible, it needs to be financially accessible for all. Day home operators have high costs already, asking them to take on another fee in this economy is asking a lot. Childcare does not pay as lavishly as people think, especially in low ratio day homes.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>business licence were introduced for private day home operators.</p>	<p>“Finances. A lot of women start a dayhome because they need to make an income while still caring for their own children. The start up cost might put some people off”</p> <p>“The price. As I understand it, this proposal is for day-home providers who do not qualify under the current Universal Child Care Program. Because day-home providers may have different access to resources and the population who seeks their services might also be different, the price might be a hindrance.”</p> <p>“Additional increasing fees and continued up upkeep of a license Would make it difficult not to increase fees to parents to be more inline with daycares. This would make Dayhomes less appealing to parents and could lead to Dayhome closures given that less expensive childcare options becoming available with the new \$10 a day programs being funded. Parents should be making informed decisions before making child care choices. Dayhome closures from new licensing would lead to childcare shortages.”</p>
<p>City Should Not be Involved/Leave Regulation to Province</p> <p>Some participants who answered this question pointed out that the Municipal Government should not be involved in the area of child care business licensing as it is a duplication of Provincial jurisdiction. It may cause confusion with the existing system and seems like another way to tax citizens.</p>	<p>“There is no need for the city to regulate dayhomes. It is provincial jurisdiction and there is no need for any further red tape.”</p> <p>“The providers already have all the above in place. So as long as everyone is already providing great service, above the minimum requirements, then I do not feel that this license will change anything except having an extra expense for the programs. So no, I do not want to have to apply for a city license. Also the city license will be confused with the government license for licensed dayhomes so is not ok. Will create confusion and affect everybody.”</p> <p>“Finances. I think the city is just looking for a way for more money. The province already manages this there is no reason for the city to intervene and cost people more money.”</p> <p>“This license should be offered/required through the same channels as regulated licensing and the City should put it's energy into advocating for the removal of unlicensed child care options at the provincial level”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>No Barriers Some participants stated that they do not anticipate any barriers in this proposed process. Several noted that they have already met all the minimum requirements.</p>	<p>“No barriers but if one already has police information checks and vulnerable sector searches in place they should not be required to repeat the application until they are close to expiry”</p> <p>“I see no big barrier at all. Parents ask me for these things during interviews.”</p> <p>“None. To operate a business (with children) this process seems fair.”</p> <p>“I don’t foresee any barriers for myself if this process was introduced and as a private, family-based operator in our city for almost a decade, I welcome this initiative.”</p>
<p>Application Process and Providing Documentation Several participants expressed that the process of applying for the business licence including completing forms, obtaining the required documents, and taking time away from work to go through the application process would be the biggest barrier.</p>	<p>“Essentially the time required to obtain required documents and complete the application. One will really want to operate a business to get this done.”</p> <p>“Assembling all the necessary paperwork and qualifications - which could be more difficult for individuals with language barriers. However, having safe childcare is important enough that these requirements are reasonable.”</p> <p>“Taking time off to obtain necessary documentation.”</p> <p>“Providing documentation with proper training and credentials. Most don’t have it and absolutely should.”</p>
<p>Waiting/Processing Time Another barrier identified was that the review process might take a long time if there are a lot of applicants.</p>	<p>“The review process might be the biggest barrier if too many people apply.”</p> <p>“I feel as though there is many barriers that could potentially arise such as a surge of applicants that creates long wait times, qualifications that do not relate directly to childcare which may be hard to obtain for low income educators, and finally confusion due to the municipal government getting involved that contradicts what the early learning and child care act already implemented.”</p> <p>“Cost of licence and police checks as well as processing time for both”</p> <p>“Costs (for first aid and training), possibly long wait times to receive license.”</p>



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10. If the City of Calgary were to create a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence, do you feel it would help families with their decision-making process when selecting a child care provider?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	61.55%	365
No	28.67%	170
Don't know	9.78%	58
Total	100.00%	593

11. Tell us why you answered as you did for the last question?

The following is a summary of the top themes identified from participant responses:

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>General Comments of Support Participants indicated that having a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence would be helpful for families with their decision-making process when selecting a child care provider. More oversight gives assurance of quality and peace of mind for families.</p>	<p>“Families would feel safer to choose a day home provider with a license as there is more transparency.”</p> <p>“It gives confidence that a minimum level of background checks and follow up has been completed, helping to instill confidence for parents”</p> <p>“Most families want to take their children to a day home that is somewhat regulated.”</p> <p>“It would give people peace of mind to know that the business has had background checks.”</p> <p>“Families should know which operators have met the minimum requirements of safety. Many families don’t know what to look or ask for and will make decisions based off word of mouth”</p> <p>“I feel like it would give some peace of mind in that they know that the providers are qualified and care enough to go through the process and aren’t just a pop up dayhome”</p>
<p>General Comments of Opposition Participants did not think that having a publicly accessible</p>	<p>“I feel parents have trusted private providers for a long time and adding an extra step to the process is unnecessary”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence would be helpful for families with their decision-making process when selecting a child care provider. They thought the database is unnecessary, parents can make the choice through their own means, or the proposed business licensing added cost and burden.</p>	<p>“Been a involved with ECE for 34 years. I think that parents are becoming much better informed when selecting care.”</p> <p>“I’ve been running my private dayhome successfully for 7 years with very little turnover , I have certifications most registered dayhomes have. My dayhome parents know their child is loved and safe , they dont need a piece of paper tell them so”</p> <p>“Unless this database has accurate information as to why licensed child care is best, parents will still need to investigate.”</p> <p>“Because I dont need to pay money to the city to prove that I am qualified to provide care. You will not be able to provide subsidies to parents. I will be increasing my fee for parents to include this cost. And now pay more tax as I am now a business”</p> <p>“it isn’t actually doing anything to encourage safety and education of the provider. So really, it’s an extra expense that looks nice on paper but actually doesn’t mean anything different in terms of quality of care provided.”</p>

12. If you are a private day home operator, would you be interested in advertising your private day home on a City of Calgary database if you met all the minimum requirements?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	25.04%	146
No	18.18%	106
Don't know	5.32%	31
Am not a private day home operator	51.46%	300
Total	100.00%	583

13. Is there anything else you would like to share as part of this engagement?

The following is a summary of the top themes identified under this question supported by participant comments:



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>Role of Municipal Government A number of participants who answered this question expressed that the City should not be involved in child care as it has other issues it should be dealing with. Leave child care oversight to the province. On the other hand, a few of the participants thought that The City should provide more oversight of child care.</p>	<p>“The City needs to stay out of areas that are not in its jurisdiction or focus— leave this to the province for child care”</p> <p>“The city of Calgary should stick to providing city services and stay out of provincial affairs.”</p> <p>“I would be very grateful to see the City of Calgary take on greater responsibility for oversight of early childhood education, as provincial enforcement is currently alarmingly lacking for a field that is so crucial for child wellbeing and development. As an educator myself who is currently completing a Master's Degree in ECE policies and regulations, I am aware of how few child care experiences align with provincial goals for quality in the field and deeply hope to see significant change.”</p> <p>“When it comes to the care of anyone vulnerable, in this case children, oversight is the first line of defence to ensure the safety of those being cared for.”</p>
<p>General Support and Improve Child Care Standards Many participants expressed support for the proposed business licence. Suggestions for appropriate training and enhanced safety measures will help to improve overall child care standards and recognition of child care operators.</p>	<p>“I think it is a good idea to license private day homes and should focus especially on the level of training and education the provider has in the field of childcare. It will give the whole profession of early childhood educators more recognition.”</p> <p>“As an early childhood educator, I think it is critical for all childcare settings to be licensed to care for children to protect our most vulnerable population. Without appropriate training and licensure, more frequent accidents and incidents occur. I would prefer to see all childcare providers be required to follow the Act and Regulations, however if that is not possible, being licensed by the city is a good next step.”</p> <p>“The option of licensing through the city would be hugely beneficial to operators who have safe, happy day homes and do not wish to work with an agency (whose monthly operator fees largely impact day home income) and also provides parents with the option of working with/continuing to work with a private day home with all of the safety checks in place. While all of my day home parents welcome the benefits of the new financial gains, not one of them is interested in having to go through an agency.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
	<p>“As a licensed dayhome provider myself, I know some private dayhome providers that prefer to remain unregulated and unmonitored. Having this engagement, will improve the overall standards of dayhome operators.”</p> <p>“I hope that this brings a higher level of safety to child care.”</p>
<p>Would Like Access to Provincial Grants/Subsidies for Private Day Homes</p> <p>Several participants highlighted that it would be beneficial if the City business licensing could help them access the Provincial grants/subsidies program.</p>	<p>“Truth is - parents mostly looking now for Licensed Day homes or switching from very nice unlicensed Day Homes to licensed but more expensive because of Federal subsidy support program. City Licensing would help parents to make a decision giving more piece of mind speaking about safety etc. If City Licensing could qualify for Provincial Subsidy program or City could introduce own subsidy/support program that would be a great help for everyone.</p> <p>“Government should give the opportunity to families to get grant and subsidy even with a private child care provider.”</p> <p>“I’m hoping that this will be a step towards being able to offer my clients the government subsidy.”</p> <p>“As a private provider I would only support something like this if it allowed families who use private care to access current subsidies and allow these families choice in care while still having equal access to subsidies. Otherwise there is little incentive to change what is already working without any new incentive.”</p>
<p>Costs and Fees</p> <p>Some participants commented on having to pay additional costs/fees for a business licence and emphasized that licence needs to be affordable so child care operators can access it. The City should not be making revenue on this.</p>	<p>“I think this program is great to weed out bad day homes however, it's unfortunate for all the good ones such as myself that now will possibly have to pay additional money for things I'm already doing.”</p> <p>“It kind of feels like a money grab. Private day home operators don't make a lot of money. I'm also worried there would be confusion around registered, unregistered, licensed, and unlicensed. I think overall it's a good idea- BUT the cost is off putting.”</p> <p>“There needs to be lower licensing fees, so everyone is able to access the opportunity. If the goal is to reach the</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
	<p>maximum amount of people, it needs to be more affordable. There has to be safety certifications/police clearances in order to access a license, otherwise it is just a piece of paper and means very little to families or providers.”</p> <p>“I hope this service will be free so that the fees doesn't increase”</p> <p>“Unlicensed day homes don't qualify for the subsidy so I would think they're no longer the cheapest option? If there aren't enough licensed spots then I think this is an idea worth further consideration to give families more safe childcare options. This shouldn't be another revenue source for The City though, neither families nor providers should be taken advantage of for a bit of revenue. Only charge what it costs to run the program.”</p>

Parents'/Families' Survey

1. Is your family's main child care arrangement a provincially licensed child care program?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	39.77%	173
No	56.09%	244
Don't know	4.14%	18
Total	100.00%	435



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2. Would you support introducing a municipal business licence to better regulate unlicensed home-based child care providers in Calgary?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	63.01%	276
No	27.40%	120
Don't know	9.59%	42
Total	100.00%	438

2b. Why?

The following is a summary of the top themes identified from participant responses:

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>General Comments of Support Many participants supported the proposed municipal business licence to better regulate unlicensed home-based child care providers in Calgary. Reasons for this included ensuring safety and accountability, having rules and regulations to follow, and setting minimum requirements for child care providers to operate.</p>	<p>“To ensure all dayhomes operate to standard and are regulated to ensure the safety of all kids.”</p> <p>“Its safer to have my child in a home that is licensed. The day home would have certain rules to follow.”</p> <p>“To ensure safety of children. It's troubling there are no regulations for private dayhomes and licensure is so difficult to find”</p> <p>“Unlicensed home do not have to currently meet any regulations. They cannot be held accountable even as a business like others can i.e. extra parking, safety of children. Caring for other people's children is different - much more complexity.”</p> <p>“safety. ensure compliance with basic regulations.”</p> <p>“Yes, if someone is being paid to provide child care, they should at the very least adhere to minimum safety standards, police checks, and first aid.”</p>
<p>General Comments of Opposition or Concerns Some participants did not support or had concerns about introducing a municipal business licence to better</p>	<p>“Childcare and early childhood education is the exclusive domain of the province. Introducing a Childcare business licence will only add to costs and administrative red tape.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>regulate unlicensed home-based child care providers in Calgary. Reasons for this included childcare is the jurisdiction of the Province and is not a Municipal Government's responsibility. Challenges and barriers facing child care providers such as extra cost, increased workload and more red tape, and no actual benefits were also mentioned.</p>	<p>"You would be duplicating the work of the provincial regulations. We'd be better served if you spent your time and money advocating to the province to introduce an oversight division, responsible for ensuring compliance with PROVINCIAL regulations."</p> <p>"It's s cash garb by the city. Provincial jurisdiction, and a parents choice."</p> <p>"It will add cost to an already overwhelmingly expensive service. Leave them alone. The city has far more pressing issues to address."</p> <p>"I like the idea of better regulation, but afraid this may make it less accessible for unlicensed care providers to operate due to things like language barriers (which is the reason why our main day home could not get a license, despite trying)."</p> <p>"I feel that many childcare providers will choose to close down their businesses rather than go through the time and effort of meeting potentially ineffectual requirements for less than minimum wage. This will result in less options for parents."</p> <p>"There's no evidence that such a licensing programme will in any way meaningfully improve quality of care, which is already quite excellent in most cases. Licensing is simply introduces a barrier for providers with no benefits to families."</p>
<p>Would Like Access to Provincial Grants/Subsidies for Private Day Homes</p> <p>Some participants hoped that they would be eligible to access federal/provincial grants and subsidies after the unlicensed home-based child care providers have obtained a municipal business licence. Unfortunately, obtaining a municipal business licence would not make private day homes eligible to access the existing</p>	<p>"If it would lower our fees, making us eligible for federal grant money and subsidy."</p> <p>"I hope they would be able to have access to subsidy without us having to pay agency fees"</p> <p>"I absolutely adore my dayhome operator, but she is private care and this program would allow her to access subsidy, which would take huge financial pressure off my family."</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
federal/provincial grants and subsidies.	

3. Would you be more likely to use a private day home operator with a valid municipal business licence than one who didn't have one?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	60.59%	266
No	29.16%	128
Don't know	10.25%	45
Total	100.00%	439

4. What minimum requirements do you feel should be required to obtain a municipal business licence for a private day home operator? (Select all that apply)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
First Aid Certification	85.82%	363
Police information check for all individuals 18 years and over who reside at the day home	79.43%	336
Police information check	77.07%	326
Police vulnerable sector search for all individuals 18 years and over who reside at the day home	74.47%	315
Police vulnerable sector search	73.52%	311
Liability insurance	67.85%	287
Personal references	47.75%	202
Physician's note stating that the provider is mentally and physically able to care for children	47.75%	202
Training in early childhood education	46.34%	196
Minimum requirements are not needed	12.53%	53



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5. If the City of Calgary were to create a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence, would you use it to help your decision-making process when selecting a child care provider?

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	67.43%	296
No	23.69%	104
Don't know	8.88%	39
Total	100.00%	439

5b. Why?

The following is a summary of the top themes identified from participant responses:

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>General Comments of Support Many participants thought that having a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence would be helpful. Easier to search and access information through a centralized system; ensuring safety, responsibility & accountability; providing helpful information to make informed decisions; and having peace of mind are some of the top reasons mentioned.</p>	<p>“There are many great dayhomes that don't always advertise themselves, having a central database would save a lot of searching.”</p> <p>“As an immigrant, it was difficult to find an affordable dayhome for my daughters. I didn't know if there was one on my street or in my community, so I think it's important to be able to access a database.”</p> <p>“It would make searching easier, and also make me feel more confident in confirming the license than a physical certificate.”</p> <p>“I think oversight is important and shows a level of responsibility that I'd be looking for.”</p> <p>“Again, safety concerns and professional development in childcare are the most important. A database would help many families easily access safe licensed childcare.”</p> <p>“I would use the database as it may assist my family in making a more informed decision in selecting a caregiver as there is a level of screening that is already completed for me.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p style="text-align: center;">General Comments of Opposition</p> <p>Several participants did not think that they would use a publicly accessible database of private day home operators with a valid municipal business licence. The following factors are some of the top reasons mentioned: Unnecessary; the parents decide to choose their child care providers, and this area falls within Provincial responsibility and not the role of the Municipal Government.</p>	<p>“Knowing there is a minimum standard and even basic oversight would give me a better starting point, rather than having to ask all of those questions myself to each provider. It narrows down the list and gives me more confidence in my choices.”</p> <p>“It is meaningless - just more red tape and cost to end consumer. I can and have vetted dayhomes myself. We have always used private dayhomes as what we have found privately has been better than the licensed ones we have interviewed.”</p> <p>“Our current unlicensed provider gave us all of the info you’ve listed without having to be regulated. That speaks to her character, and professionalism. Forcing her to buy a license would just increase our costs, for no additional benefit.”</p> <p>“Not needed...the city isn’t going to choose an appropriate person better than I am for my family. There are many ways on social media for providers to advertise with pictures and words instead of an excel spreadsheet”</p> <p>“Being regulated by the city is not a concern for me. Doing my own checks and due diligence is more important”</p> <p>“The province has the responsibility not the city!”</p> <p>“Again, day homes should be regulated by the Child Care Licensing Act. Not a business license through the City of Calgary.”</p> <p>“Without the rules and regulations imposed by the Province, a city business lisc is just a cash grab.”</p>



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6. Is there anything else you would like to share as part of this engagement?

Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>Barriers Facing Providers Red tape, more administrative work, increased cost, and difficulty getting licensed through the province are some of the barriers mentioned by participants answering this question. These barriers could lead to the closure of private day home and further reduce childcare service availability.</p>	<p>“I’m concerned with how difficult it is to find quality childcare providers. also how much work goes into operating a dayhome, private or otherwise and the challenges that an operator has - like more administrative work drives them out of operation”</p> <p>“I am worried this initiative would harm smaller communities by introducing another obstacle in childcare companies operating. My current company is run by a family who runs two day homes, one licensed and one not. The unlicensed one has tried to become licensed but due to language barriers they keep getting declined. With \$10/day now, they don't have enough clients and are closing that location. I am worried this type of scenario will become more common if this is introduced.”</p> <p>“Our taxes are already going up. You will make new committees and require a new department and more resources to current departments, which will in turn raise our taxes. Also, if my dayhome has to jump through hoops to operate and their cost goes up, that gets passed on to me. Or they close, further worsening the shortage of spots available for children. Stay out of regulated sectors you are not part of currently. Put due diligence back on parents to find appropriate dayhomes.”</p> <p>“The feedback I have recieved from my unlicensed day home provider is that it is very hard to get licensed right now through the province. She has tried to get licensed in the past, but they were not accepting new dayhomes. Now that the provincial funding has been announced, the wait lists are very long.”</p>
<p>City Should Not be Involved/Leave Regulation to Province Child care regulation is outside the scope of The City and is the responsibility of the Province. Concerns about taking on the proposed business licensing program would further delay the City’s existing process for permit</p>	<p>“Focus on your municipal jurisdiction not trying to get into the provincial area.”</p> <p>“Please don’t add more red tape in this city. The city can’t process the requests for permits and licenses they already receive in a reasonable timeline.”</p> <p>“we have a Provincial System in place and need to put more money into that system then create a new one.”</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>and licence applications, and it is not a good use of taxpayers' dollars to create a new licensing system.</p>	<p>"with the new national/provincial childcare agreement, this is not a good spend of City taxpayer dollars - most parents need to use a licensed facility to get the reduced rates to access affordable childcare, we don't need another regulator stepping in to make it more difficult on the existing childcare providers"</p>
<p>Suggestions for Licensing Requirements Some suggestions for licensing requirements included a recurring review process, inspections, Police Information checks, Child Intervention Record checks, and early childhood training. A few participants suggested that similar regulations should be required as the provincially regulated licensed child care operators.</p>	<p>"The licensing should require some form of cyclical review. A provider should have to pass all things annually every few years to ensure standards are continually maintained."</p> <p>"They should be part of a unscheduled quality check and make sure all records are reviewed and kept up to date."</p> <p>"Safety is my biggest concern. There needs to be basic requirements for people to care for children, including police checks and wellness checks."</p> <p>"Yes, Child Intervention Record checks also need to be completed by all adults over 18 in the home. They are more important than criminal background checks. Child Intervention Checks are completed through Children's Services Government of Alberta. This checks shows if the adult has ever harmed a child. The process can take over 6 months to be completed currently so this is a barrier."</p> <p>"Day home regulations should closely match provincial regulations for day cares. Have a minimum of Level 1 Early Childhood Educator certification which can be achieved via Child Care Orientation Course for free at https://childcare.basecorp.com/home."</p>
<p>Would Like Access to Provincial Grants/Subsidies for Private Day Homes Some participants expressed that they hope private day homes would be eligible to access government grants and subsidies once they have obtained a municipal business licence.</p>	<p>"I would hope that municipally licensed child care would qualify for government subsidies"</p> <p>"There are lots of Private Dayhomes that offer highly quality and safe environments, I hope as a families we can obtain the Government subsidy and grant."</p> <p>"This is only valuable to parents if you allow the affordability grant and subsidy"</p> <p>"Our Dayhome is an amazing provider and would have no issues meeting any requirements and I feel they should be eligible for the childcare subsidy."</p>



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Themes That We Heard	Examples of Participant Verbatim Comments
<p>Safety and Accountability Safety and accountability were pointed out by several participants that should be a priority for child care operators.</p>	<p>“I Believe it is critical for the safety of children in the care of these providers, to make the operators meet minimum requirements and to have to operate with a license just like any other business.”</p> <p>“As stated in the proposal, people who run day homes need the same accountability as other municipal businesses. Children, regardless of what area of the city they live in, deserve quality care provided by qualified caregivers.”</p> <p>“I am honestly surprised that there is no requirement for these unlicensed day homes - they are not just a friend that someone is leaving their child with in the neighbourhood - they are a business and should have met some sort of qualification to provide care for such young and vulnerable children.”</p> <p>“The health and safety of children should be a priority and there should be more steps and requirements in place to become a home that cares for children.”</p>

Online Workshops

1. Engagement workshop for licensed family day home agency representatives – Feedback Summary

Some barriers that have prevented the unlicensed home-based child care providers from joining the Licensed Family Day Home Agencies model included age restrictions (i.e., approved agencies have limits around ages of those children set by the provincial government), child-provider ratios, delay in payment, waiting/process time for police checks and child intervention checks, insurance, permission from landlords, the number of adults in the home, pets in the home, and the home environment itself as some providers wanted to keep certain areas off limits during an inspection.

2. Engagement workshops for unlicensed home-based child care operators – Feedback Summary

Agency fees, too much paperwork, extra requirements from agencies in addition to the minimum standards, child-provider ratios, age restrictions, and flexibility to accommodate siblings were stated by some participants as barriers that have prevented them from being licensed child care providers. A few participants expressed that they have already followed all the standards and that joining an agency would have no benefit to the parents beyond accessing the government subsidy.

Participants who were in support of the proposed municipal business licensing shared the following reasons: it is easier for parents to search for child care providers in their area through a central website;



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it gives more credibility to private day home operators and families could see them as professional caregivers, and it would give parents the added sense of security.

Examples of barriers to getting a business licence if one were introduced for private day home operators included safety concerns about sharing their names and addresses in a central database, concerns for any rezoning requirements, concerns about having to pay for both municipal license and Embolden membership, challenge to obtain insurance, and confusion for parents between a business licence from the City and licensed child care operators under the Family Day Home Agencies model. A suggestion was to use the word "permit" to limit this confusion.

Detailed workshop notes taken at the online engagement sessions are included in the verbatim report.

Next steps

The feedback collected will be shared with the project team and will be posted on the project portal page to share with stakeholders and the public. Engagement results will be included in the recommendation report to the Community Development Committee in July 2022.

Verbatim comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

The comments are divided into questions asked. Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

For full verbatim comments, [please refer to the verbatim report](#).