



TOWNSHIP OF EDWARDSBURGH CARDINAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Committee: Committee of the Whole – Community Development

Date: April 15, 2024

Department: Community Development

Topic: Daycare Facilities and Child Care Directed Growth Strategy

Background: In 2023, the Provincial Government introduced Canada Wide Early Learning Childcare (CWELCC) Directed Growth Strategy initiative. As the designated CMSM, the County was tasked by the Provincial Government to identify the communities that will receive the new licensed child care spaces being created under the 2022-2026 CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy. The province identified specific population criteria that CMSMs were required to use in the identification of designated communities for the CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy child care spaces.

Through extensive research and community consultation, the Counties strategy determined that the new spaces should be dedicated to serving infants, toddlers and/or preschool children; more flexible hours are needed to accommodate parents with shift work; and programming should reflect the assets of our communities in both design and operation, while also honouring the indigenous people who first lived on the lands that encompass the communities of Leeds and Grenville.

The Counties was allocated a total of 397 new licensed child care spaces to be created from 2022 to 2026 under the CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy. Edwardsburgh Cardinal, Prescott and Augusta (combined) have been allocated 66 of these spaces.

Federal/Provincial funding is being provided to the County to support CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy Implementation. The funds cannot be used to purchase land or build a new building. Funds can be provided for:

- Minor renovation/retro-fit of existing space
- Start up: Toys, materials, equipment, office furniture, appliances
- Ongoing Operational funding (i.e. General Operating, etc.)
- Workforce Compensation funding

In the Fall of 2023, the Counties reached out to the Township for help in identifying suitable locations in Cardinal or Spencerville, where EC's greatest child care needs were identified. During a presentation to Committee in October 2023, members asked staff to continue to support the Counties in their initiative of bringing additional child care spaces to EC.

Update: Although we continue to investigate options in Cardinal and Spencerville, the Counties have also considered expanding their search to include Johnstown, which is uniquely situated to support our Industrial Park employers, where access to child care may be a barrier for employers and employees.

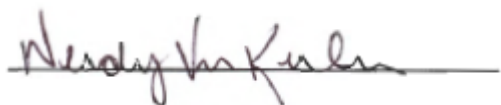
A recent business survey finds that 3 of 15 Edwardsburgh Cardinal employers (20%) rated “absenteeism due to child care” as somewhat to very challenging and 33% of businesses surveyed believe that “available daycare” presents a challenge to their employees.

Township staff have identified some land in Johnstown that is owned by the Township and may be suitable for a new child care building at 24 Sutton Drive, near Albert Street. As mentioned above, the provincial and federal funding to support the growth strategy will not cover the purchase of land or the construction of a new building. It may be possible to gather support, donations or in-kind contributions from employers that would benefit from the daycare.

Township and Counties staff met with Alantra and discussed the possibility of leasing a new building. The company’s modular construction method would significantly lower cost and construction timelines, but there would still be many unbudgeted expenses to fund.

For Discussion: This idea is brought to Committee for discussion so that staff can determine whether further time and resources should be used in investigating this possibility.

- **If the project could be funded through financial and in-kind donations, does the Committee feel they would support the use of this land for a daycare?**
- **Staff would appreciate any early comments or discussion on the Township becoming landlords of this building and renting to a daycare operator.**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nelsy Van Kesteren", written over a horizontal line.

Community Development Coordinator