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CHILD CARE SURVEY RESULTS AVAILABLE, REPORT TO FOLLOW IN 2020

DECEMBER 11th, 2019 – PRINCE RUPERT, B.C. – The preliminary results of the City-led Child Care survey are now available, with researchers finding a number of overarching themes that emerged from the engagement process. Namely, that there are limited licensed care options outside of traditional work hours to accommodate shift workers; there is a lack of a centralized registry of available licensed spaces; and although child care costs were identified as a challenge, there is low awareness of current child care benefit eligibility to reduce costs. The study also noted space shortages for infants and toddlers, especially, as well as inability to recruit/retain child care staff as a major barrier to service provision.

In August and September, the City asked parents and child care providers to complete a survey in order to better understand local child care needs and challenges. The survey was made available through the City's Rupert Talks online consultation platform at engage.princerupert.ca and at various community locations, including the Prince Rupert Library, Recreation Complex, City Hall, Friendship Centre, and Northern Savings Credit Union. During the survey, there were 132 surveys completed by parents, 15 one on one interviews, 10 child care provider surveys completed and 71 child drawing submissions.

Congratulations are also in order for Sara White, the local parent who won the survey prize draw for a \$500 RESP for her child, generously donated by Northern Savings Credit Union. Participant Alicia McDowall has also won a one-month Recreation pass to the facility for herself and her family.

Information received from child care providers and parents will inform the development of the draft plan, which will be available for public review in February 2020. Following completion, the plan will be a valuable resource for the City, child care operators, employers and community partners to use to proactively address and advocate for local child care needs. In addition, it will be a key document to assist local applications for the recently announced Childcare BC New Spaces Fund, where Prince Rupert is eligible for up to \$3 million in space creation funding.

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