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**SCHOOLS**

**Child care on the move**

*Space crunch forces daycares out of downtown core*

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Two non-profit daycare centres that are being forced out of crowded schools will have new homes — but they won't be in the downtown core.

On Tuesday night, the New Westminister school board voted to relocate two infant-toddler child-care centres that are currently operated by the Lower Mainland Purpose Society in two downtown-area schools.

School District 40 will be converting the community spaces in those schools to classrooms for September 2024 to cope with overcrowding and rapidly growing enrolment.

Ready Set Grow, the daycare currently operating at Fraser River Middle School, will be relocated to the grounds of Lord Tweedsmuir Elementary School in the West End. The Qayqayt Children's Centre, meanwhile, will move from École

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**ALLAGLOW:** Samantha Johnstone and one-and-a-half-year-old Marigold are silhouetted against the backdrop of the light tunnel at Hyack Square. The installation is just one of many light displays now underway around the city as part of Shine Bright New West. PHOTO JENNIFER GAUTHIER

**CITY HALL**

**How do you solve a problem like downtown?**

*Work on the city's downtown livability strategy could cost more than \$4 million*

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Efforts to tackle issues in downtown New Westminister could cost more than \$4 million.

On Monday, New Westminister city council received a staff presentation and report about the downtown livability strategy it endorsed in October 2021.

The strategy recommended immediate- and short-term actions on several fronts: improved general cleanliness and enhanced access to 24/7 public toilets; enhanced homeless outreach and added emergency shelter capacity; opioid epidemic and illicit drug response; business support and engagement; and mental health response and support.

Lisa Spitale, chief administrative officer, said the city is trying to address the challenges in the downtown in order to improve the livability for area businesses and residents, while also serving the needs of the city's most vulnerable populations in a compassionate way.

She said many of the challenges facing the city fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, but the city is working on many aspects of the strategy

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