

Morgan Ambrose
474 Admirals Road, Esquimalt BC V9A2N1
May 7th, 2026



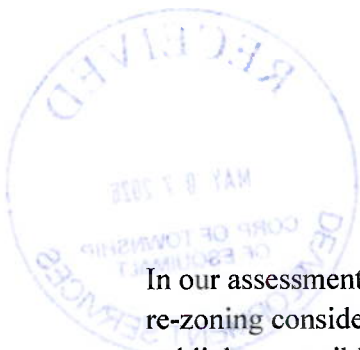
To Development Services, Township of Esquimalt,

My partner and I are co-owners of residential property 474 Admirals Rd, and we are applying for re-zoning so that our 828 square foot basement suite may be used as a child care facility. We are doing this specifically in response to a need from a local, pre-existing childcare program, Tree of Life Nature Playschool, that will no longer be able to operate in their current space starting September 2027. The space that Tree of Life currently rents has been listed for sale and efforts to find alternative rental spaces in the commercial market have been unsuccessful, despite a wide net being cast and a wide variety of options being examined.

Tree of Life Nature Playschool is a licensed child-care facility owned and operated by Kate Lawes that was established in 2011 and has operated in the neighbourhood of Esquimalt since 2019. Kate's unique program has provided exceptionally high quality care to well over 100 children and families since its inception. As parents of two children under five, Tree of Life and its staff has been an essential fixture in our lives and community. Currently, Tree of Life operates as a nature-based Waldorf-inspired program that cares for children ages three to five in their indoors space on Mondays and Fridays, and across a variety of public outdoor spaces on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (weather permitting).

As per licensing requirements, our basement suite currently meets the established criteria to host at least 10 children. As the drawings indicate, the ceilings and lighting are such that it is a well-lit and a welcoming space. Our house is newly acquired and the previous owners renovated the bathroom and the floors within the last 3 years. The suite has a separate access via the backyard on the other side of the house from the main access, as well as separate, approximately 500 square foot fenced yard space that is big enough for garden boxes and to facilitate a private transition space for pick up and drop off.

Tree of Life currently runs from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday - Friday, with closures on all holidays, for regular professional development days, as well as seasonal breaks in December, June and August. In line with their current operational model, children would be on site in the suite of the home on Mondays and Fridays, with visits to nearby parks, such as Saxe Point, throughout the day. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays, parents drop their children off at pre-determined public outdoor spaces (including, but not limited to Mukwuks [previously Macauley Point Park], Highrock Park, and Barnard Park), which rotate monthly to reduce impact on the land and to diversify the children's experiences of nature. Depending on the weather and season, the children either stay there for the entirety of the day, or will return on foot to the indoor space prior to pick up. This model significantly reduces the pick-up and drop-off traffic three out of five days of the week, as parents do not drop their children off at the indoor site unless the weather is a significant barrier



In our assessment, traffic and parking impacts should not present a significant barrier to re-zoning considerations. Pick-up and drop-off traffic at 474 Admirals Road would rely on publicly accessible street parking, and street parking across from our house on the east side of Admirals Road is currently under-utilized as the corner house uses Juno Street to park their vehicles. Additionally, nearly all houses on our block have private driveways. We have spoken with our immediate neighbours, on either side of our property as well as directly across, including the aforementioned house in the corner of Juno and Admirals, and they have expressed enthusiastic support for our hope to host a child-care facility. Notably, a large proportion of the families within Tree of Life use alternative forms of transport, including walking and cargo bikes, further minimizing the anticipated traffic impacts on the neighbourhood.

As we know, the Township of Esquimalt is a rapidly densifying and evolving neighbourhood. There is a proposal for re-development for two 12-storey buildings hosting c. 90 units just three blocks away from our home. Childcare for young children in the Esquimalt area is already very difficult to find, and many families in our community are challenged in trying to manage the high cost of living with their need to find child care that is local and affordable. My partner and I feel strongly that providing a financially viable space for Tree of Life to continue offering their current high standard of care is a way that we can exercise our privilege as homeowners to contribute to the vitality of families in our neighbourhood. We are willing to take on the responsibility and labour associated with this endeavour in order to support Tree of Life's mission to provide exceptionally high-quality, nature-based childcare for young children, as we have witnessed firsthand the positive impacts of the school's work on our own children and their classmates.

I have included letters of support from previous Tree of Life families to illustrate how important and dear the program has been, and continues to be, in our community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any further questions. I can be reached at morgan@ambrosemediation.com, or 403 707 5796. Kate Lawes, Program Founder and Director, can be reached at kate@treeoflifeplayschool.ca or 250 813 3050.

Thank-you in advance for your consideration and sincerely,
Morgan Ambrose