

# **Facilities Assessment for Childcare Facilities**

## **OVERVIEW**

According to a report presented by Sophie Barnhorst, Committee Consultant to the Economic Development & Intergovernmental Relations Committee, 40% of San Diego families with children have both parents working, and in San Diego County, a family with two children living on median income spends up to 40% of their monthly budget on childcare.

Since the pandemic began 522 childcare providers have closed in San Diego County, roughly 12% of the of the county's providers, increasing the strain on an already inadequate childcare system.

Many of the businesses that have remained open are operating at reduced capacity, often with reduced staff and increased costs due to health restrictions. While most schools have returned to full operations, the childcare sector will not likely bounce back to prior levels, let alone to the capacity that working parents (and their employers) need.

Studies have found that nearly 190,000 children in San Diego County under the age of 12 don't have a stay-at-home parent and are not able to secure childcare. Many neighborhoods in San Diego County are childcare deserts, where the demand for care far outweighs the supply. A childcare desert is defined as a geographic area where fewer than 3 childcare spots are available for every 10 children under age 6. Infant and toddler care is particularly hard to find, as less than 20% of childcare providers are licensed for infants, and the number of home-based programs is decreasing.

## **PROPOSED MOTION**

At the Economic Development & Intergovernmental Relations Committee on May 26, 2021, the following Motion was made:

Request that City Staff (1) identify city properties that can be adapted for use as or made available for construction of childcare facilities through a facilities assessment; (2) report the findings to the Economic Development & Intergovernmental Relations Committee within six months; (3) study the feasibility of negotiating a Master Lease of real estate that can be used or converted to childcare facilities; and (4) explore reforms to city permit processes to incentivize the conversion of existing commercial or office space into childcare facilities.

The motion was made by Committee Chair Councilmember Campillo, seconded by Councilmember Elo-Rivera and passed unanimously.

## **THE FACILITIES ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The Department of Real Estate and Airport Management started the facilities assessment process by reviewing a list of 1,100 city facilities. Facilities initially eliminated were fire stations, police stations, pump stations, operation yards, ranger stations, cemeteries, landfills, and wastewater treatment facilities. This left a list of 121 properties which are comprised of nine (9) warehouses, 15 office buildings, 60 Parks and Recreation centers and 37 libraries. Warehouses were then removed for consideration due the nature of the work at the sites, storage of hazardous materials and safety concerns. With the assistance of the Development Services Department (DSD), the zoning was added to the sites for informational purposes but was not used in the selection of potential properties.

Based on the basic criteria of a minimum of 5,000 square feet of ground floor space that is generally required for a small 4-classroom childcare facility the property list was further refined by Municipal Asset Services and separated by property type.

This left a list of 78 sites, as follows: 20 libraries, 12 office buildings, and 40 Parks and Recreation centers.

## **DISCUSSION OF ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES**

Working with of the Libraries and Parks and Recreation Departments, sites were identified that had a minimum of 5,000 square feet of ground floor space and with the further requirement of either an outdoor green space or a parking area that could be converted into an outdoor playground area.

The final list was narrowed to 72 sites. Out of 37 libraries, 18 fit the criteria; out of 60 Parks and Recreation centers, 42 fit the criteria; and all 12 office buildings fit the criteria, for a total of 72 sites.

The identified sites were then divided by Council Districts and property type as shown in the charts below and on the individual maps attached to the report.

### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 1**

<b>Libraries (3)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (0)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (4)</b>
3919 Townsgate Drive		3777 Townsgate Drive
7555 Draper Avenue		8175 Regents Road
8820 Judicial Drive		4770 Fairport Way
		3585 Governor Drive

**COUNCIL DISTRICT 2**

<b>Libraries (2)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (1)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (4)</b>
4275 Cass Avenue	3775 Morena Boulevard	4726 Santa Monica Avenue
3701 Voltaire Street		1405 Diamond Street
		2525 Bacon Street
		1008 Santa Clara Place

**COUNCIL DISTRICT 3**

<b>Libraries (1)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (3)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (8)</b>
330 Park Boulevard	1220 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue <b>(Downtown Johnny Browns)</b>	1220 Caminito Centro
	202 C Street <b>(City Administrative Building)</b>	1245 Caminito Centro
	202 C Street <b>(Plaza Hall - Concourse)</b>	2125 Park Boulevard
		2130 Pan American Road Plaza
		2150 Pam American Road West
		2600 Golf Course Drive
		4044 Idaho Street
		2811 Jackson Street

**COUNCIL DISTRICT 4**

<b>Libraries (3)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (0)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (4)</b>
7900 Paradise Valley Road		6508 Wunderlin Avenue
5148 Market Street		6401 Skyline Drive
721 Pasqual Avenue		6610 Potomac Street

		8285 Skyline Drive

#### COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

<b>Libraries (1)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (0)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (3)</b>
10301 Scripps Lake Drive		10152 Rancho Carmel Drive
		9711 Oviedo Way
		11454 Blue Cypress Drive

#### COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

<b>Libraries (0)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (6)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (3)</b>
	4020 Murphy Canyon Road	12350 Black Mountain Road
	9150 Topaz Way	8575 New Salem
	9191 Kearny Villa Road	4421 Bannock Avenue
	9192 Topaz Way	
	9601 Ridgehaven	
	8525, 8575, 8665 Gibbs Drive	

#### COUNCIL DISTRICT 7

<b>Libraries (3)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (1)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (6)</b>
2160 Ulric Street	9485 Aero Drive	5155 Greenbriar Avenue
4985 La Cuenta Street		3170 Armstrong Street
9005 Aero Drive		7064 Levant
		6445 Lake Badin Avenue
		9020 Village Green Drive

		11220 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard
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#### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 8**

<b>Libraries (4)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (1)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (6)</b>
567 S. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street	1424 Continental Street	455 Sycamore Road
2160 Ulric Street		2902 Marcy Avenue
3003 Coronado Avenue		3020 Coronado Avenue
4235 Beyer Boulevard		179 Diza Road
		1885 Coronado Avenue
		301 Athey Avenue

#### **COUNCIL DISTRICT 9**

<b>Libraries (1)</b>	<b>Office Buildings (0)</b>	<b>Park &amp; Recreation Centers (4)</b>
3795 Fairmount Avenue		4380 Landis Street
		5319 Orange Avenue
		641 S. Boundary Street
		4149 Newton Avenue

#### **ZONING INFORMATION**

There is not specific zoning that allows for childcare services, rather the use is listed as "limited," "requiring a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)" "not allowed" and or controlled by a Planned Development Overlay Zone.

DSD and the City Attorney's Office have provided information on zoning regulations. Generally, the City is not bound by its own zoning regulations, unless there is some intent shown to restrict itself. There are some exceptions for public safety; for example, we cannot exempt ourselves from California Building Codes.

As for CUPs for childcare facilities, there is no intent shown in the San Diego Municipal Code provisions for childcare facilities (section 141.0606) to apply these regulations to the City, however, there may be regulations or restrictions in various Planned Development Overlay (PDO) Zones that would need to be assessed individually. Due to the recent trend to move PDO-type regulations into the community and specific plans, these plans would need to be examined for any expressed intent by the City to apply City regulations to itself.

Additionally, a conclusion that childcare facilities on City-owned property are exempt from CUP requirements is less clear when the proposal is to allow the City's zoning exemption to apply to a private operator on City property, as opposed to a City operator. When considering whether a city's exemption from a county's zoning ordinances applied to a privately operated facility, the California Attorney General opined that the city's zoning exemption did not necessarily transfer to a private operator.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/NEXT STEPS**

Staff recommends that a Request For Information (RFI) is generated so the City can identify potential operators with knowledge of childcare facilities to aid in the final selection of sites, provide details on the tenant improvements specific for childcare, coordinate the permitting process and ensure the site(s) are in compliance with the childcare site requirements.

The City would allow individual operators or master operators to respond to the RFI, which may support the re-opening of smaller scale childcare facilities that closed during the pandemic. Master operators (such as Kinder Care or Bright Horizons), may also be interested in pursuing a master lease or license agreement for multiple locations throughout the City.

If the Committee accepts Staff recommendations, the RFI will be issued in late spring/early summer of 2022.