

Promoting the Power of General Plans: A Strategy to Support Early Childhood Development

Executive Summary

Research underscores the importance of early childhood development. Upstream, preventative programs and services have the largest impact over a child's lifetime. Policy makers have a unique opportunity to lay the foundation for timely investments in early childhood by including early childhood policies in general plans. These policies will prioritize our youngest residents and their families through well-informed decision-making.

One method of influencing change in communities is strategic planning through a general plan. A general plan is a broad document, comprised of various elements, that guides a city or county's direction and priorities. Within each element, policies identify how early childhood can be integrated into the fabric of a community, implementation plans outline how quality programming will be achieved, and work to build collaborative partnerships is identified. In general plans, early childhood development policies demonstrate governments' understanding of the long-lasting value of early learning. Ultimately, communities' commitment to family friendly general plan policies and implementation will increase access to affordable and high quality early childhood education.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN COMMUNITIES INVEST IN EARLY LEARNING



Figure 1: Image courtesy of Bright Beginnings

Promoting the Power of General Plans: A Strategy to Support Early Childhood Development

Research underscores the importance of early childhood development. “Early experiences affect the development of brain architecture, which in turn provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health,” according to the Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University.ⁱ The first 5 years of life are critical for children’s development--nearly 85% of the brain develops during this time. Yet, only 14% of public education dollars are spent on early childhood education (ECE) in the United States.ⁱⁱ

Quality Early Childhood Environments

Upstream, preventative programs and services have the largest impact over a child’s lifetime. Quality early childhood education makes a difference for all children, has the greatest impact on closing the “opportunity gap” for under-resourced children, and is closely linked to increasing children’s welfare. Further, high quality child care settings provide safe, nurturing environments while promoting young children’s physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. Low-quality child care is especially detrimental to low-income and vulnerable children.ⁱⁱⁱ

School Readiness

Kindergarten readiness establishes a foundation from which children can learn successfully. Children who are ready to enter school are more likely to experience later academic success, attain higher levels of education, and secure employment.^{iv} Children ready for kindergarten tend have commonalities, including that their parents read to them daily, were enrolled in preschool, and that their transition to kindergarten was reported by their parent(s) as “easy.”^v According to the Annie E Casey Foundation, children who do not read on grade level by 3rd grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.^{vi}

Economic and Social Outcomes

Nobel Memorial Prize Winner Dr. James J. Heckman stated that investing in “quality early childhood development heavily influences health, economic, and social outcomes for

Monterey County Early Childhood: Fast Facts

- There are 47,545 children aged 5 and under (2016).^{*}
- 48% of Monterey County parents of children under 6 years old (and not in kindergarten) report a grandparent or family member as the only source of childcare (2015).^{xi}
- 47% of working families with children aged 0 to 4 have access to part- or full-day licensed care (2014).^{xii}
- 41% of children aged 3 to 4 have access to preschool (2014).^{xii}
- 87% of adults expressed a desire for their children to attend some form of child care or preschool. Only half said their children were enrolled in such programs. The most cited reason for lack of attendance was financial concerns (2015).^{xi}
- 28% of kindergarteners had the skills needed to be optimally ready for kindergarten (2015).^{xiii}

individuals and society at large,” especially for under-resourced families. Dr. Heckman’s research shows that investments in quality, early childhood services can yield a 13% return on investment per child, per annum, through better education, economic, health, and social outcomes.^{vii} A holistic approach to early development is key. Family engagement, parent/caregiver development, relationship-based, reflective interactions, and two-generation programs and services are effective approaches.

While awareness of early childhood’s importance has increased, practices and investment have not kept pace.^{viii} Policy makers have a responsibility to lay the foundation and facilitate timely investments in early childhood by prioritizing our youngest residents.

Policy Recommendation – Institutionalize Early Childhood Development Policies in General Plans

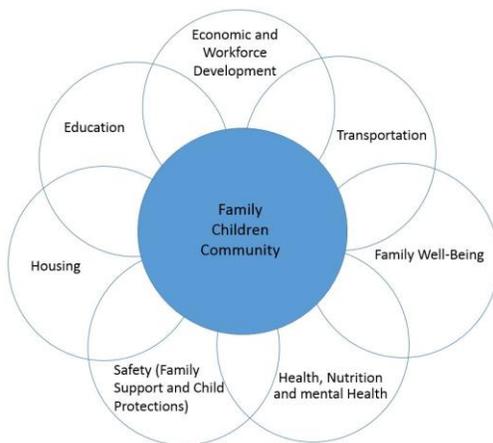


Figure 2: Public Policies that affect early childhood development collectively overlap.

True change does not happen in isolation. Factors that affect early childhood include health, nutrition, mental health, education, safety (family support and child protection), and family well-being. However, there are policy areas that also influence a child and their family’s ability to thrive, including housing, transportation, and economic development, particularly workforce development.

One method of influencing change in communities is strategic planning and a general plan. Early childhood policies in a general plan reveal a local

government’s prioritization of the well-being of their children. Children and families live in dynamic environments and should be supported in integrated ways. To create supportive environments for children and families, non-profit organizations, government agencies, private sector businesses, faith-based communities, and schools need to incorporate early childhood development in all aspects of the community.

What is a general plan?

A general plan is a broad document that guides a city or county’s direction and priorities. The state of California requires that every city and county have a general plan to articulate its long-range goals “for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning” (Government Code §65300). Within each general plan, there are eight different “elements” defined by the state as land use, housing, circulation, conservation, noise, safety, open space, and environmental justice.^{ix} The general plan must also incorporate 4 components: (1) vision, (2) goals, (3) objectives, (4) policy, and (5) implementation measures for their communities. Although there are required elements, a community can adapt the required elements to meet its specific needs.

Intentionally adding early childhood policies in all elements of a general plan, including additional ones guided by the community, highlights the importance of early childhood, prioritizes childhood development, and opens early childhood programming and services to additional resources. Early childhood policies can be integrated within each element to call for implementing high quality programs and building collaborative partnerships. Policies in a general plan can guide a communities' budget, influencing the expansion or development of early childhood programs and allowing opportunities to leverage monies with other funding sources.

San Mateo County adopted early childhood policies in several cities' general plans. For instance, the city of San Mateo included the need for quality child care programs and facilities in its 2010 General Plan. Since then, staff proposed to city council the development of new child care facilities. The city also implemented a Developer Impact Fee that raised, so far, \$1.2 million in revenue. With these funds, city staff set the goal of expanding the number of child care spaces in the community and implementing programs with little to no increase in administrative costs. It is anticipated that this revenue will create up to 90 new child care spaces, with the hope of increasing that number in the future.

Without similar, consistent commitment to quality early childhood settings, children will enter kindergarten already behind, and, by 3rd grade, will struggle even more. San Mateo's dedication to quality early childhood is reflected in data. Half of the county's children are reading proficiently by 3rd, in comparison to Monterey County's 28%^{xv}. This indicator cannot be completely attributed to a county or city's general plan. However, a community's understanding of the individual and collective power between non-profits, businesses, schools, and government to holistically support children and families contributes to enabling all children to be prepared for success today and later in life.

Good intentions do not create an effective general plan that addresses early childhood. For example, a community in Monterey County incorporated early childhood development policies for child care in their general plan, yet these were not impactful to children and their families. While the child care policies were approved and adopted, implementation lacked actions that should have guided city staff on how to carry them out. Lack of city council members monitoring progress added further challenges. As a result, city government did not prioritize implementing early childhood development policies. Simultaneously, residents did not call attention to these oversights.

Authentic community voice and engaging constituents in a commitment to early childhood development policies are important components to long-term success. Early childhood advocates have an important job in general plans—to provide input about needs and hold their elected officials and government staff accountable. Communities can make sure that decision makers stay informed on relevant early childhood issues and policies by attending public meetings and speaking during public comment sessions, participating in public input meetings,

and completing surveys. Government staff and elected officials can hold each other accountable by creating a system to track and monitor progress on policy implementation.

Several communities in Monterey County recognized the power of early childhood policies in their general plans. At the time of this policy brief, several communities were reviewing goals, policies, objectives, and implementation measures (Appendix A).

Imperative Policies and Implementation

It is imperative that local elected officials be at the forefront of supporting early childhood development. The following is a sample recommendation for early childhood policies in general plans and implementation actions. For a longer list of recommendations for each element, see Appendices B through H.

LAND USE

Goal: Available quality child care for all community members.

Objective: Ensure there is enough quality childcare for children 0-5 years old.

Policy: **Develop Quality Child Care Space** – Facilitate and promote the development of quality childcare spaces in areas and acknowledge that the provision of such facilities is a community goal.

Implementation Action – **Available Inventory** Review unused public and private locations for potential conversion into child care sites and identify available funding for the effort.

Implementation Action – **Partnerships** Encourage the use of public facilities for child care services, including collaboration between schools and parks, faith-based institutions, community centers, libraries, and senior centers.

Conclusion

Supporting early childhood development enriches the well-being of a community both socially and economically. While legislative efforts take place at the national and state level, local policy can occur concurrently. By inserting early childhood development policies in general plans, local governments demonstrate that they prioritize the needs of all children and all families. This action creates more opportunities to ensure access to affordable, high quality early care and education and ensures more children enter school ready to learn. It further improves workforce development and allocates much-needed additional resources for services. Government at all levels should not forget their youngest residents when planning, their future—and our future—depends on it.

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APPENDIX A

CALENDAR OF GENERAL PLANS IN MONTEREY COUNTY

	Link to General Plan	Date of Most recent plan	Scheduled to update again	Status of ECE in general plan
Monterey County	http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-i-z/resource-management-agency-rma-planning/resources-documents/2010-general-plan/final-version-of-the-monterey-county-general	October 2010	2020	None
Carmel	http://ci.carmel.ca.us/carmel/index.cfm/search-results?keywords=general+plan&display=search&newSearch=true&noCache=1	June 2003	2023	None
Del Rey Oaks	https://www.delreyoaks.org/general-plan.htm	January 1997	Unknown	None
Gonzales	http://www.ci.gonzales.ca.us/planning.php	2010	2017 addition of Health Element	Proposed language in Health Element with thoughts to expand throughout general plan
Greenfield	http://ci.greenfield.ca.us/Search?searchPhrase=general%20plan	2005	2025	None
King City	http://www.kingcity.com/city-departments/community-development-department/general-plan-housing-element/	November 1998	Unknown	None
Marina	http://www.ci.marina.ca.us/Search?searchPhrase=general%20plan&page=1&perPage=10	October 2000 with amendments through 2010	Unknown	Land Use Element
Monterey	http://www.monterey.org/Portals/0/Policies-Procedures/Planning/GeneralPlan/16_0323-General-Plan.pdf	January 2005 with amendments March 2016	Unknown	None
Pacific Grove	https://www.cityofpacificgrove.org/living/community-economic-development/planning/general-plan	1994	Unknown	None
Salinas	https://www.cityofsalinas.org/sites/default/files/departments_files/community_development_files/general_plan_files/generalplan.pdf	September 2002	Alisal Vibrancy Plan Element 2017	None
Seaside	http://www.ci.seaside.ca.us/Search?searchPhrase=general%20plan	August 2004	In process 2017	Proposed language in draft throughout general plan
Soledad	http://ci.soledad.ca.us/Search?searchPhrase=general+plan&page=1&perPage=10	September 2005	Unknown	None

APPENDIX B

HEALTH

A Health Element is an optional element for most general plans. Healthy community design bridges together planning activities (including land use, economic development, and infrastructure) to establish a strong tie with health-related items, including but limited to increasing the public's perception of safety, social support and cohesion, and livable complete communities. A healthy community will bring many benefits to a community, from better physical and emotional health to economic investments. Implementing these determinants can also help promote equity and community development over the long term.

Goal: Enhance educational attainment and employment readiness

Objective: Ensure early childhood supports are available to the community

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Policy: Affordable and Quality Preschool and Head Start

Support the development of affordable and accessible, quality early child care, preschools and Head Start programs to increase and promote early learning.

Implementing Action – **Cross-Agency Work** Develop childcare facilities through collaborative work among multiple city and county agencies and initiatives (ex: cradle to career initiatives).

Implementing Action – **Growth and Expansion** Promote mixed-use permits that will allow for inclusion of childcare facilities and preschools in residential neighborhoods and expansion of early learning facilities as part of the city's growth.

Implementing Action – **Facility Space** Explore ways of utilizing existing school, private, and commercial facilities for non-school related and child care activities, and advocate for the inclusion of early learning spaces in both the planning of new facilities and for the expansion of existing school facilities.

Implementing Action – **City Childcare Subsidies** Develop a subsidy program to support family access to quality local childcare.

Policy: **Early Childhood Development Partnerships**

Develop an education system that supports accessible early childhood education programs that provide all children with a foundation to become happy, healthy and successful.

Implementing Action – **Year-Round Enrichment Programs** Develop or continue collaboration with School Districts and public/private partnerships to maintain and enhance existing extended learning opportunities through after-school enrichment programs, summer boost programs, school breaks, and weekends for all children, especially low to moderate income families and English language learners.

Implementation Action – **Licensed Childcare Providers** Work with local institutions of higher education and the Child Care Resource & Referral agency to coordinate and expand professional development pathways for residents to become licensed childcare providers.

Implementing Action - **Family Strengthening** Through community events, provide families with practical ways to support their children, including resources on social-emotional development, extending learning into the home, and successful transitions into and out of pre-K. Ensure that all children gain foundational language, cognitive and social emotional skills, including students with special needs and children whose primary language is not English. Incorporate family strengthening messaging into social marketing campaigns.

Implementing Action – **Needs Assessment** Complete a child care nexus study to determine the extent of need for early childhood education and care programs within the community and expenses related to expansion of quality programs. Explore avenues to implement a systematic way to monitor and evaluate this on a periodic basis, developing mechanisms for gathering regular feedback from families on all aspects of programming and using those findings to inform ongoing improvements.

Policy: **Support of Early Childhood Education**

Promote community health and well-being through the promotion and support of early childhood education in collaboration with public and private entities.

Implementing Action - **Recreation Support** Partner with parks to develop parent-child playgroups that support all areas of child and parenting development.

Implementing Action – **Information Campaign** Promote significant benefits of quality early childhood education to community members, employers, businesses and developers through social marketing campaigns.

Implementing Action - Community Engagement Intentionally use community space to partner with local agencies to host workshops for parents on building early literacy skills.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

Policy: **Increase and Maintain Childcare Services**

Support the expansion of affordable, high quality child-care, and early learning options for working parents.

Implementing Action – Year-Round Enrichment Programs Increase collaboration with school districts and public/private partnerships to maintain and enhance existing extended learning opportunities through after-school enrichment programs, summer boost programs, school breaks, and weekends for all children.

Implementation Action – Licensed Childcare Providers Work with local institutions of higher education and the Child Care Resource & Referral agency to coordinate and expand professional development pathways for residents to become licensed childcare providers.

Implementing Action – Facility Development Streamline processing and permit regulation to the extent possible to promote and support the development of childcare facilities and family child care homes. Review zoning regulations regarding home-based early childhood education facilities for areas that can be streamlined.

Implementing Action – Support License-Exempt Child Care Create network of family, friend and neighborhood (FFN) caregivers to form a peer learning playgroup for information and strategy sharing. The playgroup will serve as an important strategy to achieve FFN caregivers feeling competent, well-informed, and capable of supporting the children to become happy, healthy and successful.

Policy: **Livable Communities**

Encourage childcare to be located strategically to support workforce and livable communities.

Implementation Action – Future Development Encourage developers and larger commercial employers to provide on-site childcare or to cluster public uses such as schools, early education centers, parks, libraries, and community activity centers around sites of development.

Implementation Action – Inclusion in New Developments New developments having more than 50 housing units or 50,000 square feet of commercial or industrial space shall prepare a Child Care Facilities Needs Assessment. The purpose is to assess new

childcare demand created by new residents and employees against available community resources.

Implementation Action – **Permits** Ensure Local City Permits Department inform new developments of this policy to ensure they meet this requirement.

Implementation Action – **Permits and Zoning** Ensure staff issuing permits are knowledgeable of policy which would require them to include a child care facility, community space, green space, etc. in new development or proposal for mixed-use space prior to permits being issued and approved.

Implementation Action – **Childcare Land Trust** Explore possibility of establishing a childcare land trust that reserves land and space for community uses such as early childhood education.

Policy: **Childcare Delivery Services**

Develop a comprehensive child care delivery system.

Implementation Action – **Childcare Task Force** Join a community-wide child care task force (or council) to study the development of childcare programs, fill service gaps, increase program effectiveness, improve service accessibility, and maximize available resources.

Implementation Action – **Childcare Master Plan** Create a joint public/private childcare master plan that will coordinate a range of services for children and their families, in conjunction with local agencies, groups, and larger county initiatives.

Implementation Action – **Childcare Trust Fund** Establish a Childcare Trust Fund under the direction of the Childcare Task Force with an emphasis on fundraising for capital projects and seed money for new programs.

APPENDIX C

LAND USE

The Land Use element is a system for classifying and designating the appropriate use of properties. It functions as a guide to planners, the public, and decision makers as to the ultimate pattern of development for the city or county as it grows. Land use plays a central role in correlating all land use issues into a set of coherent development policies. The land use element has a pivotal role in zoning, subdivision, and public works decisions. Recommendations provided could be inclusive of Land Use, Facilities, and other pertinent general plan elements.

Goal: Available quality child care for all community members.

Objective: Ensure there is enough available quality childcare for children.

Policy: **Develop Quality Child Care Space**

Facilitate and promote the development of quality child care spaces in all areas and acknowledge the provision of such facilities as a community goal.

To the greatest extent possible, schools should be utilized for after school programs whether operated by the school district or an outside entity.

Actively support efforts to develop child care facilities for downtown employees, shoppers, and visitors.

Implementation Action – **Available Inventory** Review unused public and private locations for potential conversion into child care sites and identify available funding for the effort.

Implementation Action – **Partnerships** Encourage the use of public facilities for child care services, including collaboration between schools and parks, faith-based institutions, community centers, libraries, and senior centers.

Goal: To develop a comprehensive child care delivery system that builds child care services into the fabric of community development.

Objective: Create a complete community with the inclusion of child care.

Policy: **Complete communities**

Promote health for all communities in the city/county, with attention to those that have been identified as lacking in amenities such as transit, clean air, grocery stores, bike lanes, parks, child care, education, health care and other components of a healthy community.

Establish activity centers within or near residential neighborhoods that contain services such as child or adult-care, recreation, public meeting rooms, convenient commercial uses, or similar facilities.

Within residential districts, land uses that have historically been in residential neighborhoods and which, by design, can be made compatible with the purpose and character of the residential classification should continue to be allowed. These other land uses include, but are not limited to, small child care facilities for children, group and residential care homes of six or fewer persons, schools, and parks.

Where appropriate, design communities with a balanced mix of uses (shopping, residential, child care) that provide regional transportation facilities within walking distance.

Implementing Action – **Year-Round Enrichment Programs** Increase collaboration with school district and public/private partnerships to maintain and enhance existing extended learning opportunities through after-school enrichment programs, summer boost programs, school breaks, and weekends for all children.

Implementation Action – **Licensed Childcare Providers** Work with local institutions of higher education and the Child Care Resource & Referral agency to coordinate and expand professional development pathways for residents to become licensed childcare providers.

Implementing Action – **Facility Development** Streamline processing and permit regulation to the extent possible to promote and support the development of childcare facilities and family childcare homes. Review zoning regulations regarding home-based early childhood education facilities for areas that can be streamlined.

Implementation Action – **Information Sharing** Host community conversation around current city regulations with city officials.

Implementing Action – **Support License-Exempt Child Care** Create network of family, friend and neighborhood (FFN) caregivers to form a peer learning playgroup for information and strategy sharing. The playgroup will serve as an important strategy to achieve FFN caregivers feeling competent, well-informed, and capable of supporting the children to become happy, healthy and successful.

Goal: To encourage the development of child care (both family child care home and child care centers) within new development centers (residential or business).

Objective: Ensure new development accounts for early childhood care.

Policy: New growth

Encourage the inclusion of child care facilities as part of the city's growth and to address existing demand.

Encourage retention of existing and development of new commercial uses that primarily are oriented to the residents of adjacent neighborhoods and promote the inclusion of community services (e.g., childcare and community meeting rooms).

Encourage child-care facilities (both in home and center based care) in residential areas if there is sufficient available space for outdoor activity, and traffic, parking and noise are mitigated.

Implementation Action – **Early Education in Neighborhood Design** All new residential developments with 50 or more homes should address the need for child care resulting from the new growth and consider the inclusion of child care facilities as a component of their neighborhood design.

Implementation Action – **Child Care Needs Assessment** New developments having 50,000 square feet or more of commercial or industrial floor area shall prepare a Child Care Facilities Needs Assessment. The purpose is to assess new child care demand created by new residents and employees against available community resources and recommend methods to meet these child care needs.

Implementation Action – **Future Development** Encourage developers and larger commercial employers to provide on-site childcare or to cluster public uses such as schools, early education centers, parks, libraries, and community activity centers around sites of development.

Implementation Action – **Inclusion in New Developments** New developments having more than 50 housing units or 50,000 square feet of commercial or industrial space shall prepare a Child Care Facilities Needs Assessment. The purpose is to assess new childcare demand created by new residents and employees against available community resources.

Implementation Action – **Permits** Ensure Local City Permits Department inform new developments of this policy to ensure they meet this requirement.

Implementation Action – **Permits and Zoning** Ensure staff issuing permits are knowledgeable of policy which would require them to include a child care facility,

community space, green space, etc. in new development or proposal for mixed-use space prior to permits being issued and approved.

Implementation Action – **Incentives** Study and adopt development guidelines that establish incentives for inclusion of public amenities, including child care facilities.

Goal: To streamline the facility development process.

Objective: Easier access for child care providers to do business within the community.

Policy: **Early Child Care Regulation and Permitting**

Reduce regulatory and other barriers to quality early care and education facilities.

Cooperate with the region’s cities to draft a model ordinance or procedure for the processing of permits for child care facilities and to work with the region’s cities to develop uniform zoning policies regarding location, parking and other requirements.

Implementation Action – **Permit Process** Streamline processing and permit regulation to promote the development of child care facilities.

Implementation Action – **Permits and Zoning** Ensure staff issuing permits are knowledgeable of policy which would require them to include a child care facility, community space, green space, etc. in new development or proposal for mixed-use space prior to permits being issues and approved.

Implementation Action – **Provider Assistance** Where feasible, make underutilized properties or low-cost loans available to child care providers, particularly for those child care facility types of greatest need, center or home based providers.

Implementation Action – **Information Sharing** Assist in the development of such programs by providing child care providers with information and assistance in obtaining space for early childhood care and education. Hold meeting(s) where current child care providers can offer their expertise on local regulations along with officials and what additional regulations would be necessary.

Implementation Action – **Code Enforcement** Have a Code Enforcement staff member hold informational meetings when potential new providers are going through the permitting process to ensure follow-through of city regulations.

Implementation Action – **Inspection** Schedule inspections with child care facilities at least 1 time per year.

Goal: Enhance early education.

Objective: Increase awareness and support of quality early education.

Policy: **Support early education**

Encourage employers to support child care for their employees with family friendly policies.

Ensure that all households have access to a sufficient supply of quality early care and education and supervised school-age enrichment options for children.

Implementation Action – **Promote Benefits** Reserve and pay (in full or in part) for child care spaces with a provider near the worksite, offer Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts or “cafeteria plan” benefits, and enter a consortium with other employers to provide an on- or near-site child care center.

Implementing Action – **Recreation Support** Partner with parks to develop parent-child playgroups that support all areas of child and parenting development.

Implementing Action – **Information Campaign** Promote significant benefits of quality early childhood education to community members, employers, businesses and developers through social marketing campaigns.

Implementing Action – **Community Engagement** Intentionally use community space to partner with local agencies to host workshops for parents on building early literacy skills.

Goal: Make land available for early childhood activities.

Objective: Set aside land for early childhood care and education.

Policy: **Land Designation**

Land shall be reserved for community uses such as private schools, membership organization, child care centers, and senior centers.

Implementation Action – **Childcare Land Trust** Explore possibility of establishing a childcare land trust that reserves land and space for community uses such as early childhood education.

Child care businesses contribute to the local economy. Quality child care promotes school readiness and ultimately a better workforce and productive citizens. Child care services attract and retain business and employees. Quality child care supports work/life balance and increases job loyalty and satisfaction. To develop and maintain livable communities, child care must be included in growth plans to encourage families to move to and remain in these local communities.

Goal: Increase the amount of quality childcare facilities.

Objective: To create incentives for developing child care facilities.

Policy: **Incentives to developers and businesses**

The City shall develop a formula for granting a bonus in density or intensify use for commercial, industrial, and residential projects (of specific sizes) that provide quality child care facilities.

Implementation Action – **Incentives** Review availability and provide incentives for building projects and new employment centers that include quality childcare facilities.

Implementation Action – **Mixed Use Space** Promote and permit mixed land use, including quality childcare centers in residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Action – **Expand Quality Childcare Facilities** Build relationships and collaborate with businesses, schools, and public/private partners to expand or develop childcare facilities.

Goal: Create an economic climate conducive to attracting new development and businesses which yield net social and economic benefits to the community.

Objective: Enable residents to prosper through employment with supports with quality child care services.

Policy: **Employment Opportunities**

Recognizing that working parents need affordable and available child care to enter and remain in the workforce, the City/County supports the provision of quality child care services in proximity to jobs.

Maintain and improve the City/County's strong, diversified economic base and provide for a wide range of employment opportunities and support services, such as job training and child care.

Work to remove impediments to gainful employment, such as lack of transportation, child care, job training, vocational education, and other factors.

Encourage the development of quality childcare facilities that support working parents.

Implementation Action – **Land Availability** Ensuring adequate land is available, with appropriate zoning, to encourage childcare centers in residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Action – **Expand Childcare Options** Establishing relationships with private businesses, schools, and other public and private entities to create more childcare facilities.

Implementation Action – **Incentives** Review availability and provide incentives for building projects and new employment centers that include childcare facilities.

Implementation Action – **Mixed Use Space** Promote and permit mixed land use, including childcare centers in residential neighborhoods.

Goal: Encourage quality child care to be located strategically to support workforce and livable communities.

Objective: Transportation efforts promoting childcare centers close to employment and home.

Policy: **Mixed Use Space**

Encourage community-serving uses, such as child care centers and personal services, to be in proximity to employment centers, at community and regional centers, near transportation facilities, in or adjacent to public parks and schools, and along the mixed-use corridors.

Encourage the inclusion of child care facilities in commercial and residential areas, near transportation facilities and in or adjacent to public parks and schools to provide a needed service to working parents and a benefit to the community.

Encourage developers of larger commercial and office projects to provide for on-site ancillary uses that would allow employees and residents to make non-work related trips (e.g., banking, lunch, dry cleaning, recreation, child care) without having to use their automobiles.

Implementation Action – **Mixed Use Space** Promote and permit mixed land use, including childcare centers in residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Action – **Promote Benefits** Promote significant benefits of quality childcare to citizens/employment centers/developers through public service announcement/social media/local publications campaigns.

Implementation Action – **Incentives** Review availability and provide incentives for building projects and new employment centers that include childcare facilities.

APPENDIX E

OPEN-SPACE

The Open-Space element guides the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space land, which is defined in statute as any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to open-space use. This element has a broad scope and overlaps with several elements including Land Use, Conservation, Safety, Health, and Environmental Justice.

Goal: Increase early learning opportunities.

Objective: Provide early learning opportunities throughout the community.

Policy: **Recreational and Library Services**

Develop parks, recreational, and library programs that promote early learning opportunities for children.

Encourage joint-use agreements with school districts that allow school properties to be used during non-school hours.

Implementation Action – **Physical Structures** Ensure that parks include play areas that are developmentally appropriate for children ages 0-5.

Implementing Action – **Recreation/Library Support** Partner with parks and libraries to develop playgroups that support all areas of child development. Utilize existing partnerships of cradle to career initiatives to determine best practices of early childhood education delivered in playgroup models and ways to incorporate in groups.

Implementing Action – **Information Campaign** Promote significant benefits of quality early childhood education to community members, employers, businesses and developers through social marketing campaigns.

Implementing Action – **Community Engagement** Intentionally use community space to partner with local agencies to host workshops for parents on building early literacy skills.

Goal: Utilize open/park Space for early learning.

Objective: Encourage child care providers to utilize open/park space.

Policy: **Use of Open-Space**

Maximize the use and productivity of parks and recreation facilities by encouraging childcare facilities to be located adjacent to or nearby, allowing children who are under care and supervision to use the public space.

When planning communities, encourage the location of parks near other community facilities such as schools, senior centers, recreation centers, etc.

Require that development of parks, trails, and open-space facilities occur concurrently with other areas of development.

Implementation Action – Promote the use of community open-space and parks to child care providers through community conversations and informational sessions. Encourage the expansion of facilities and amenities in existing parks. Include map of city parks through public websites and in any information provided to childcare facilities interfacing with permitting office.

Implementation Action – Increase access to open-space resources by locating parks near homes and offices.

Goal: Understand relationship between open-space and child care

Objective: Include open-space in the development of larger child care planning documents.

Policy: **Create a joint public/private Child Care Master Plan and Child Care Trust Fund.**

Implementation Action – **Child Care Task Force** Create a community-wide child care task force (or council) to study the development of child care programs, to fill service gaps, increase program effectiveness, improve service accessibility, and maximize all available resources in the community.

Implementation Action – **Child Care Master Plan** Create a joint public/private child care master plan that will coordinate a range of services for children and their families, in conjunction with local agencies and groups.

Implementation Action – **Inventory and Repurpose Space** Review unused public and private facilities in the city (including open-space, parks, etc.) for potential renovation or use as child care sites.

The Housing Element addresses the provision of safe, affordable housing for existing and future community residents. The Housing Element is designed to meet the statewide goal of providing a home and suitable living environment for all Californians. It is also designed to meet local and regional goals for maintaining and improving the quality of life by making housing accessible to people of all ages, incomes, races, and physical capabilities.

Goal: Encourage communities to co-locate child care and other human services near homes, community centers, and transportation.

Objective: To provide social services at affordable housing locations.

Policy: **Housing-Community Partnership**

The City/County shall encourage the co-location of childcare, disabled, mentally-disabled, and elderly facilities compatible with the needs of residents and land use patterns; and encourage such facilities to be located near homes, schools, community centers, recreation, facilities, and transit hubs.

Incorporate child care and social services into affordable housing. Work with non-profit housing developers who build affordable housing to address any special needs of farm workers, such as on-site child care and community rooms. Encourage development of recreational centers to serve all phases of life (e.g. children, families, and senior citizens).

Implementation Action – **Intergenerational Facilities** Promote intergenerational community facilities. Senior centers and child-care facilities with the appropriate arrangements shall bring children and seniors together in new developments to maximize opportunities for innovation and interactions.

Implementation Action – **Co-location of Services** Encourage co-location of childcare services with other human services system that focus on the whole person. Expansion of partnerships, new equipment or renovations to facilities may be needed to help families struggling with adverse factors. Create a welcoming, friendly reception, and include private meeting spaces for privacy protection.

Implementation Action – **Develop On-site Child Care** Encourage non-profit housing developers to provide on-site child care and community rooms for children and their families.

Goal: Develop, conserve and improve affordable housing.

Objective: Allow for the development, conservation, and improvement of affordable housing.

Policy: **Quality of Life**

Maintain the quality of life within neighborhoods by maintaining an adequate level of community facilities, such as child care centers and municipal services by encouraging the inclusion of space for child care in new housing developments, including affordable housing developments.

Implementation Action – **On-site Child Care** Encourage low-income housing to offer child care space on-site.

Implementation Action – **Assessment** Work with project applicants to evaluate the demand for child care in new housing developments.

Implementation Action – **Incentives** Establish and provide incentives for the inclusion of child care facilities in affordable housing projects.

Goal: Ensure affordable housing is available to all residents.

Objective: Consider the affordable housing needs of single-parent and female-headed households.

Policy: **Single Parent Household Support**

The City/County will ensure that affordable housing constructed or rehabilitated by the City/County meets the needs of single-parent households, especially female-headed households.

Single parent households with children have special housing needs, primarily because single-parent households tend to contribute a higher percentage of their income to housing costs and women continue to earn less than men in comparable jobs. Due to relying on one income, these families need lower cost housing in proximity to employment as well as access to affordable childcare.

Implementation Action – **Collaboration** Collaborative approach with multiple agencies to develop child care facilitates, including the Childcare Planning Council, local child care providers, transportation, parks and recreation, neighborhood groups, Chamber of Commerce, etc.

Implementation Action – **Partnership** Coordinate services for children and their families in conjunction with local agencies and groups. Build and maintain relationships with child development resource agencies and organizations in networking, referral, and coordination of services.

Implementation Action – **Funding Assistance** Research and promote grants for parents to afford quality child care centers within the jurisdiction, and for small businesses that offer affordable housing.

Goal: Provide support for license-exempt providers.

Objective: Assess and research the establishment of licensing requirements for license-exempt providers.

Policy: **Licensed Exempt (Family, Friend, and Neighbor)** Explore licensing (or training/inspection) for all license-exempt providers.

Implementing Action – **Support License-Exempt Child Care** Create network of family, friend and neighborhood (FFN) caregivers to form a peer learning playgroup for information and strategy sharing. The playgroup will serve as an important strategy to achieve FFN caregivers feeling competent, well-informed, and capable of supporting the children to become happy, healthy and successful.

Implementation Action – **Assessment** Explore opportunities for a pathway to licensure for license-exempt providers.

Implementation Action – **Safety** Adapt fingerprinting and background check requirements to now include license-exempt providers.

Implementation Action – **Subsidies** Create a tiered-reimbursement system that ties higher rates of government subsidy or other financial support to licensing levels or training requirements.

The Environmental Justice Element addresses environmental justice concerns in communities. It includes the fair treatment and meaningful participation of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (Government Code §65040.12).

Goal: Reduce carbon footprint.

Objective: Reduce the number of trips in vehicles needed by residents.

Policy: **Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development**

Commercial uses and services for employees and businesses (i.e. grocers, child care, dry cleaners, branch banks, etc.) shall be required, as a means of reducing trips and vehicle miles traveled.

Support research on the feasibility of locating child care centers at 'Park and Ride' sites, transit centers, or other locations accessible to public transportation.

When feasible, avoid locating new sources of air pollution near homes and other sensitive receptors, including early childhood learning facilities.

Implementation Action - **Future Development** Encourage developers and larger commercial employers to provide on-site childcare or to cluster public uses such as schools, early education centers, parks, libraries, and community activity centers around sites of development.

Implementation Action – **Mixed Use Space** Promote and permit mixed land use, including childcare facilities in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas to maximize existing structures.

Implementation Action –**Partnerships** Partner with parks and libraries to develop playgroups that support all areas of child development. Utilize existing partnerships of cradle to career initiatives to determine best practices of early childhood education delivered in playgroup models and ways to incorporate in groups.

The Circulation Element is an infrastructure plan addressing the movement of people, goods, energy, water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications. By law, the Circulation Element must correlate directly with the Land Use Element and has direct relationships with the Housing, Open-Space, Noise and Safety Elements. For communities who have additional elements, there may also be relationships with Health and Economic Development Elements.

Goal: To support child care facilities within transportation hubs.

Objective: Achieve support of child care facilities near transportation locations.

Policy: **Child care facilities near transportation locations.**

Support research on the feasibility of locating child care centers at 'Park and Ride' sites, transit centers, or other locations accessible to public transportation.

Coordinate with transportation service providers and transportation planning entities to address the location of civic uses such as schools and government buildings, commercial corridors, and medical facilities so that they are accessible by public transit.

Implementation Action – **Existing Facilities** Continue researching availability of facilities for child care purposes that are also near public transportation.

Implementation Action – **Needs Assessment** Determine the proximity of child care to transportation hubs. If a gap is discovered, support and advocate within the community to ensure that additional bus routes and stops are added.

Implementation Action – **Information Campaign** Develop content on city website that includes Access to Public Transportation in relation to the location of child care facilities.

Implementation Action – **Partnership with Transportation** Coordinate with transportation service providers and transportation planning entities to ensure that public transportation facilities are located a convenient distance from residential areas.

Goal: Develop livable communities that promote walkability.

Objective: Create opportunities to include basic needs into the development of complete communities.

Policy: Complete Communities

Coordinate the development of complete neighborhoods that provide for the basic needs of daily life and for the health, safety, and welfare of residents.

Promote services that enable residents to meet their daily needs without driving. Such services may include: shopping shuttles to nearby retail districts, child care and social services near residential areas, and mobile or virtual health clinics.

Implementation Action – **Service Proximity** Where appropriate, require neighborhood retail, child care, service and public facilities within walking distance of residential areas.