



STAFF REPORT ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

To: Mayor Gavin Buckley

From: Michael Mallinoff, City Manager

Date: January 7, 2025

Subject: O-1-25: Expansion of Child Care Options in Annapolis

Purpose of legislation

The purpose of this legislation is to allow Large Family Child Care Homes pending zoning approval; to allow “Child Care Centers” as an exception to the prohibition on new commercial and institutional development in the Resource Conservation Area of the City’s Critical Area, removing City restrictions on hiring home-operated child care service employees who live outside the home; combining sections dealing with child care centers; updating the related City Code sections to align with state child care standards; and address the requirements of Title 21 concerning child care in Annapolis.

Impact of legislation on operations

The legislation will likely increase time and resources devoted by the Department of Planning and Zoning in the following ways:

- Existing home child care facilities, which are now limited to eight children under care, may seek to increase occupancies to between 9 and 12 children.
- Because of the wording of proposed section 21.64.190, zoning interpretations will be required to determine if it is the Council's intent to exempt the providers of Large Family Child Care Homes from residing in the house where the child care is provided, or to exempt the providers of Large Family Child Care Homes from the other zoning requirements in section 21.64.190 that otherwise apply to those smaller child cares referred to simply as “Family Child Care Homes”.

In the National Community Survey the City undertook last year, only 39% of residents rated the availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool as “Good” or “Excellent”. Legislation such as this both promotes consistency between the City’s Code and state law and potentially expands the availability of child care. The City is supportive of efforts to increase the availability of child care, but this legislation may require amendments to address potential questions around zoning and the interaction between this legislation and Critical Area expectations (which may require review by the State Critical Area Commission).

Impact of legislation on staffing

We estimate that the legislation will increase the staff time in Planning and Zoning somewhat but are unsure just how large the impact would be. We would want to monitor the total impact moving forward.

Prepared by Victoria Buckland, Assistant City Manager and Chris Jakubiak, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning