



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
MEMBERS OF THE CITY  
COUNCIL

**FROM:** Vice Mayor Kamei  
Councilmember Davis  
Councilmember Foley

**SUBJECT:** Resolution of the Council of  
the City of San José Declaring  
the City's Commitment to  
Affordable Childcare

**DATE:** 12/08/2023

Approved:

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the staff recommended action; and
2. Approve attached Resolution of the Council of the City of San José Declaring the City's Commitment to Affordable Childcare.

## BACKGROUND

The cost of childcare is a rising economic impediment to economic mobility, opportunity, and equity both nationally and in the greater San Francisco Bay Area<sup>1</sup>. In Silicon Valley, a typical family pays \$26,450 per child per year for the care of an infant. Such costs are little better for one preschooler's annual care: nearly \$22,000.

These costs, coupled with San José's extensively documented high housing costs, diminish the ability of our residents to build and maintain wealth, to create stable economic environments for children and their families, and to foster strong and durable communities. Refocusing<sup>2</sup> our

<sup>1</sup> See Council for a Strong America, *\$122 Billion: The Growing, Annual Cost of the Infant-Toddler Child Care Crisis*, READYNATION REPORT (February 2, 2023), available at: <https://www.strongnation.org/articles/2038-122-billion-the-growing-annual-cost-of-the-infant-toddler-child-care-crisis> (elaborating on the increased costs of childcare since 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Prioritizing childcare is not new to this Council. The attached Resolution reflects prior concrete commitments this Council made to childcare and related issues going back to at least the 2019 prioritization process. See, e.g., City of San José, Council Agenda of March 5, 2019, Item 3.3, Attachment 7. "Council Nominations" at p. 17 (containing a

attention on this key source of economic strain for San José families would reduce these threats for our youngest residents.

Simple access to childcare facilities is, by itself, an important goal—huge swaths of San José and neighboring communities are functional childcare deserts,<sup>3</sup> meaning that there are no childcare facilities in their vicinity or those that do exist are oversubscribed. Creating pathways for expanding childcare access would not only foster a more economically competitive environment for childcare (thereby lowering relative costs), but also reduce travel times for busy working families. The return of such invaluable time merits support for its own sake.

Expanding childcare access would unleash economic potential by building new business opportunities and freeing otherwise constrained family financial resources. We already note childcare in land use plans underscoring economic development and job growth. Establishing an implementation plan for this piece of our land use goals and strategies would give meaning to those plans.

The Resolution's focus is also consistent with a panoply of existing programs cutting across numerous city departments, including, but not limited to, the Affordable Housing Childcare Tenant Improvement Fund, the San José Recreation Preschool program, the Family Friend and Neighbor Caregiver Support Network Workforce Development program, and Bridge Libraries. As such, refocusing our attention on childcare could include (but not be limited to) such initiatives as examining how we can unify and coordinate our existing programs to leverage competencies and create synergies across departments, and improving permitting and siting processes for childcare facilities to expand access and to reduce start-up barriers.

Given the enormous impact reducing childcare costs could have for our families and economy, I urge my colleagues to adopt the recommendation this memorandum and the Resolution attached thereto.

*The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each*

---

Policy Nomination Form from Mayor Liccardo requesting the addition of a Council prioritization of "Childcare & Early Education" and identifying the primary deficits in childcare services as (1) insufficient facilities, and (2) shortages in trained workforce, and which was prioritized with majority support), available at:  
<https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7059457&GUID=7A6D6B3B-4DB7-4D75-8378-85170917C88E>

<sup>3</sup> CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, *Do you live in a child care desert?* (2018), available at:  
<https://childcaresdeserts.org/2018/#:~:text=51%20percent%20of%20people%20in,as%20licensed%20child%20care%20slots.>

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

12/12/2023

Resolution of the Council of the City of San José Declaring the City's Commitment to Affordable  
Childcare

Page 3

*signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.*