

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, Chair

AB 1914 (Schiavo) – As Introduced February 12, 2026

SUBJECT: General plan elements: childcare

SUMMARY: Requires cities and counties to review and update specified elements of the General Plan to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction upon the next update of two or more elements. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Defines “childcare” to mean all licensed childcare and development services and license-exempt childcare and development services and license-exempt childcare, including, but not limited to, private for-profit programs, nonprofit programs, and publicly funded programs, for all children up to and including 12 years of age, including children with exceptional needs and children from all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- 2) Requires cities and counties to review and update the land use, circulation, housing, safety, and environmental justice elements, and any other element, where appropriate, to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction upon the next update of two or more elements, as specified.
- 3) Requires cities and counties to review and update the elements in 2) above to reflect the goal of ensuring every family has access to quality, convenient, safe, and affordable childcare. This goal may be achieved in various ways, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Directing resources or leveraging other public and private resources to support development or operation of childcare and early education facilities and services.
 - b) Integrating the childcare needs of those who live and work in the jurisdiction into the city’s or county’s planning processes. Locate childcare services, where possible, in or near housing, transportation, and employment centers to be convenient to residents and workers.
 - c) Partnering with local childcare planning organizations to involve all sectors of the community in the planning for and provision of childcare.
 - d) Looking for innovative ways to involve employers, religious organizations, and developers in the provision of childcare services and facilities.
 - e) Revising zoning ordinance standards and permitting processes for childcare facilities to support the establishment of small family daycare homes, as specified, large family daycare homes, as specified, and daycare centers, as specified, and comply with existing by-right state laws through a simplified, streamlined review process.
 - f) Developing and implementing a comprehensive city or county childcare facilities plan that engages the resources of the city or county, community agencies and organizations, and major employers and employment centers. The plan would identify priority geographic areas to locate new childcare centers, considering target populations and

supply gaps, and identify and assess existing and potential financing mechanisms for facility development.

- g) Allowing developments of emergency shelters to include space for childcare centers.
 - h) Including childcare as a sensitive receptor in public safety planning and including childcare in hazard mitigation planning.
 - i) Including childcare in emergency preparedness and disaster planning to ensure the unique needs of this vulnerable population are met before, during, and after disasters, supporting community resilience, economic recovery, and child safety.
 - j) Including childcare in climate adaptation and resiliency strategies.
- 4) Makes findings and declarations that the bill addresses a matter of statewide concern rather than a municipal affair as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution. Therefore, the bill applies to all cities, including charter cities.
- 5) Provides that no reimbursement is required by this bill because a local agency or school district has the authority to levy service charges, fees, or assessments sufficient to pay for the program or level of service mandated by this bill.

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill is keyed fiscal and contains a state-mandated local program.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bill Summary.** This bill requires cities and counties to include the childcare needs of the jurisdiction in their general plan, specifically the land use, circulation, housing, safety, and environmental justice elements, when two or more elements are updated. The bill requires that cities and counties update the aforementioned elements to reflect the goal of ensuring that every family has access to quality, convenient, safe, and affordable childcare. The bill provides a list of examples to achieve this goal, which includes:
- a) Directing resources or leverage other public and private resources to support development or operation of childcare and early education facilities and services.
 - b) Integrating the childcare needs of those who live and work in the jurisdiction into the city's or county's planning processes. Locate childcare services, where possible, in or near housing, transportation, and employment centers to be convenient to residents and workers
 - c) Partnering with local childcare planning organizations to involve all sectors of the community in the planning for and provision of childcare.
 - d) Looking for innovative ways to involve employers, religious organizations, and developers in the provision of childcare services and facilities.
 - e) Revising zoning ordinance standards and permitting processes for childcare facilities to support the establishment of small and large family care centers, daycare centers, and comply with existing by-right childcare center laws.

- f) Developing and implementing a comprehensive city or county childcare facilities plan that engages the resources of the city or county, community agencies and organizations, and major employers and employment centers. The plan would identify priority geographic areas to locate new childcare centers, considering target populations and supply gaps, and identify and assess existing and potential financing mechanisms for facility development.
- g) Allowing developments of emergency shelters to include space for childcare centers.
- h) Including childcare as a sensitive receptor in public safety planning and including childcare in hazard mitigation planning.
- i) Including childcare in emergency preparedness and disaster planning to ensure the unique needs of this vulnerable population are met before, during, and after disasters, supporting community resilience, economic recovery, and child safety.
- j) Including childcare in climate adaptation and resiliency strategies.

This bill is sponsored by the Low Income Investment Fund.

- 2) **Author’s Statement.** According to the author, “As rising living costs and threats to cut funding from the federal government continue to create additional barriers to affordable child care, it is increasingly important to examine child care accessibility as communities plan for future growth and infrastructure needs. Instead of relying solely on ad hoc solutions to address child care accessibility, I believe AB 1914 is a promising strategy to promote greater consistency and consideration of child care in earlier stages of local planning, while preserving local discretion. Requiring local general plans to include child care is crucial because it supports economic development by enabling workforce participation, attracts families and talent, promotes healthier, family-friendly communities, and aligns land use with community needs, ensuring equitable access and reducing traffic by integrating child care facilities near homes, jobs, and transportation. As we saw from the fires in Los Angeles, it is also critical to include child care in disaster planning and climate adaptation and resilience strategies to ensure children are cared for before, during, and after disasters and to ensure they have access to safe, healthy learning environments. Child care is a critical resource for California families and requires comprehensive planning to ensure widespread access to high-quality, affordable options.”
- 3) **Planning and Zoning Law.** State law provides additional powers and duties for cities and counties regarding land use. The Planning and Zoning Law ~~requires~~ require every county and city to adopt a general plan that sets out planned uses for all of the area covered by the plan. A general plan must include specified mandatory “elements,” including a housing element that establishes the locations and densities of housing, and a land use element that describes the general categories of uses (such as multifamily residential, single family residential, retail commercial, and open space) that are allowed in specific portions of a jurisdiction. Cities’ and counties’ major land use decisions—including zoning ordinances and other aspects of development permitting—must be consistent with their general plans. General plans also include policies, standards, and mitigation measures that developments must comply with, to protect against flood hazards, fire hazards, and climate change, and to further environmental justice, among other state goals.

Local governments use their police power to enact zoning ordinances that establish the types of land uses that are allowed or authorized in an area. Zoning ordinances also contain provisions to physically shape development and impose other requirements, such as setting maximum heights and densities for housing units, minimum numbers of required parking spaces, setbacks, and lot coverage ratios. These ordinances can also include conditions on development to address aesthetics, community impacts, or other particular site-specific considerations.

- 4) **Child Day Care Facilities.** The California Child Day Care Facilities Act governs the licensure, maintenance, and operation of child day care facilities in the state. This law and the associated regulations adopted by the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) establish, among other things, general health and safety requirements, staff-to-child ratios, and provider training requirements. The CDSS Community Care Licensing Division has the responsibility of licensing and monitoring the state's child day care facilities.

There are different types of child day care facilities:

- a) Family daycare homes are operated in the licensee's own home, which may be rented, leased, or owned, and are permitted to be in a mobile home park or an apartment. These homes provide non-medical care and supervision in a family-like setting with all the daily activities associated with home. Family daycare homes are further categorized into small (eight or fewer children) and large homes (as many as 14) based on the size of the childcare group and the ages of the children.
- b) Childcare centers are child day care facilities other than a family daycare home. Childcare may be part of a large childcare corporation or locally owned and are usually located in commercial buildings, schools, religious facilities, public buildings, or private buildings. Centers can accommodate infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. Separate licenses are required to care for infants, preschoolers, and school-age children, although a center may be licensed to care for all three age groups at one site. Depending on their age, children receive care in separate areas at the center for safety and activity reasons.

SB 234 (Skinner), Chapter 244, Statutes of 2019, made all family daycare homes a residential use of property and a use by right for purposes of all local ordinances, and prohibited all family daycare homes from being subject to a business license, tax, or fee. Prior to SB 234, large family childcare homes were subject to local zoning requirements, while small family daycare homes were exempt.

AB 752 (Avila-Farias), Chapter 164, Statutes of 2025, made collocated daycare centers in multifamily housing developments a use by right, includes an exemption from CEQA, and prohibits local jurisdictions from charging taxes, fees, or business licenses on these types of facilities.

- 5) **Local Planning Councils.** Under current law [Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC)§ 10485-10487], Local Childcare Development Planning Councils (LPCs) provide a forum for the identification of local priorities for childcare and the development of policies to meet the needs identified within those priorities. LPCs were legislatively created in 1991, following the federal establishment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program to ensure local voices influence how CCDBG funds are allocated.

Each county in California has an LPC established to identify local childcare priorities and develop policies to address those needs. State law requires the county board of supervisors and county superintendent of schools to appoint members to these councils, ensuring balanced representation with equal parts of consumers, childcare providers, public agency representatives, community representatives, and discretionary appointees. LPCs are responsible for conducting a countywide childcare needs assessment at least once every five years, developing comprehensive plans to mobilize public and private resources and to address identified needs, and ensuring community input in setting local priorities. Many LPCs have developed these strategic plans informed by needs assessment and community feedback gathered through forums.

- 6) **Childcare Disaster Plans.** The *California Childcare Disaster Plan* (2016), developed in alignment with federal Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements and as an annex to the broader State Emergency Plan, provides a comprehensive approach to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery within the early care and education system. It outlines strategies to improve communication among childcare providers, families, and emergency responders, and it recommends best practices for evacuation planning, emergency drills, and supply management. The plan also clearly assigns roles and responsibilities across a wide range of state agencies, including CDSS and Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), as well as federal partners and the Resource and Referral Agencies and Network (R&R Network) to ensure safe evacuations, continuity of operations, health and safety monitoring, and access to funding and recovery services.

In response to ongoing lessons from the pandemic and climate-related disasters, the *Statewide Interagency Child Care Disaster Plan* (2023), as required under federal law as part of the Child Care and Development Fund, was released to promote greater cross-agency coordination. Developed by CDSS and with input from state departments, local emergency planners, and childcare stakeholders, the 2023 Plan clarifies the roles of state and local agencies in ensuring continuity of childcare before, during, and after emergencies and disasters.

In the preparedness phase, licensed childcare providers are required to maintain emergency plans that include evacuation procedures, shelter-in-place protocols, communication systems, and accommodations for children with disabilities or medical needs. State regulations also mandate training in pediatric first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and infectious disease prevention, with drills conducted at least twice a year. During an emergency, CDSS coordinates with local and state partners to issue timely communications via bulletins, licensing notices, and Everbridge mass notifications. R&R agencies serve as key local hubs for real-time updates on provider status, childcare availability, and relocation needs. Licensing staff use automated systems to track operational status and communicate with providers in evacuation zones. In the recovery phase, the plan ensures that providers are not penalized for closures due to emergencies and may continue receiving subsidies during periods of temporary closure. Emergency waivers, technical assistance, and support for temporary childcare arrangements help restore services quickly.

- 7) **Policy Considerations.** The Committee may wish to consider the following:
 - a) **Role of the General Plan.** The General Plan serves as a planning tool for cities and counties to identify adequate sites and zones where infrastructure and land uses are

appropriate to meet the needs of the community. This bill requires 5 of the 7 elements to be reviewed and updated to “reflect the goal of ensuring every family has access to quality, convenient, safe, and affordable childcare”. While this is a laudable goal, program assessments or operation requirements of any kind of development are not typically included in the General Plan. Additionally, the terms “quality, convenient, safe, and affordable” are undefined in the bill and may be difficult to interpret and implement at the local level. The Committee may wish to consider if assessing childcare programs for affordability, convenience, quality, and safety are appropriate factors to be considered in the General Plan.

- b) **Childcare Facilities vs. Services.** This bill uses the term “childcare facility”, “childcare center”, and “childcare”. It is unclear if these terms are interchangeable. The author may wish to consider standardizing terminology for clarity.
 - c) **Childcare facilities as a use by-right.** This bill requires cities and counties to address the need ~~of~~ for childcare facilities in the General Plan. SB 234 (Skinner), Chapter 244, Statutes of 2019, and AB 752 (Avila- Farias), Chapter 164, Statutes of 2025, made childcare centers in homes, or those that were co-located on multi-family residential properties, a use by-right. AB 752 also exempted childcare centers on multifamily properties from CEQA. The Committee may wish to consider what additional benefits s this bill would provide to the process of siting childcare facilities.
 - d) **Planning for Childcare Need.** This bill identifies partnering with local childcare planning organizations to involve all sectors of community in the planning for and provision of childcare. As described above, LPCs are responsible for conducting a countywide childcare needs assessment at least once every five years, developing comprehensive plans to mobilize public and private resources and to address identified needs, and ensuring community input in setting local priorities for childcare. The Committee may wish to consider if duplicating this process in the General Plan would render additional benefit to the provision of childcare services.
 - e) **Disaster Planning and Recovery.** The role of childcare and childcare professionals in disaster planning and recovery is considered and planned for at the state level in conjunction with the federal government. Since various public agencies at the federal, state, and local level are already required to collect data and develop policy recommendations on the childcare needs of a jurisdiction related to disaster preparedness, the Committee may wish to consider if the bill poses any redundancies to existing law.
- 8) **Committee Amendments.** To address the policy considerations above, the Committee may wish to consider the following amendments:
- a) Define “childcare plan” to mean a plan developed by a city, county, or city and county to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction.
 - b) Revise and recast subdivision (b) to instead require that a city, county, or city and county to prepare and adopt a childcare service plan or integrate a plan to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction into the next adoption or revision of the city’s, county’s, or city and county’s general plan, beginning January 1, 2028 but no later than January 1, 2033.

- c) Provide that a city, county, or city and county may comply with the provisions of this bill if the city, county, or city and county has already adopted a similar plan in its general plan or a plan apart from the general plan that meets the requirements of this bill.
- d) Make additional technical and conforming changes.

Due to timing, the author has requested the following amendments to be incorporated as committee amendments:

- a) Find and declare all the following:
 - i) Child care access and infrastructure are a critical need, and every family should have access to quality, convenient, safe, and affordable child care.
 - ii) To address the state's child care crisis, all levels of government must be involved and prioritize planning for their communities' child care needs.
 - iii) Integrating the child care needs of those who live and work in the jurisdiction into a city's or county's planning processes is a promising strategy to promote greater consistency and consideration of child care in earlier stages of local planning processes, while preserving local discretion.
 - iv) Including child care in emergency preparedness and disaster planning is also critical to ensure the unique needs of this vulnerable population are met before, during, and after disasters, supporting community resilience, economic recovery, and child safety.
 - b) Add Senator Josh Becker as a co-author to the bill.
- 9) **Related Legislation.** AB 2083 (Jackson) establishes the Moreno Valley-Perris Childcare Special District for the purpose of, among other things, expanding childcare capacity and access through the development, coordination, and operation of universal childcare programs. This bill is under consideration in this Committee.
- 10) **Previous Legislation.** AB 1471 (Soria) of 2025 revises the responsibilities of local childcare resource and referral (R&R) agencies by codifying their role in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. This bill also requires the California Child Care R&R Network to implement the roles and responsibilities assigned to it in the disaster plans. This bill died in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations.
- 11) **Arguments in Support.** The Low Income Investment Fund writes in support, "Access to reliable and affordable child care is closely tied to where families live, how they travel to work, and the infrastructure and services available in their communities. Yet despite its importance to families and the workforce, childcare is not consistently incorporated into local general planning. As a result, communities may miss opportunities to plan for childcare facilities near housing, employment centers, and transit corridors, or may unintentionally create barriers that limit the development of new childcare providers.

"AB 1914 addresses this gap by ensuring that childcare is considered as part of long-term community planning. When jurisdictions update two or more elements of their general plans, the bill requires them to evaluate how planning decisions related to land use, transportation, housing, safety, and environmental justice affect the availability and accessibility of childcare. Integrating these considerations earlier in the planning process will help

communities better align land-use decisions, infrastructure investments, and local policies to support the growth of childcare options in their jurisdiction.”

- 12) **Arguments in Opposition.** The American Planning Association, California State Association of Counties, and the Rural County Representatives of California write in opposition, “AB 1914 would require cities and counties to undertake a substantial, multi-element update to their General Plans—effectively requiring revisions to at least five of the seven mandatory elements. The issue is not whether childcare is important—it is whether the General Plan mandate is the appropriate mechanism to deliver it.

“While General Plans can establish policies and goals, they do not directly result in childcare facility development. Instead, facility delivery is driven by implementation programs, licensing, financing, and site-specific feasibility. As proposed, the bill risks creating a significant planning exercise without addressing the core barriers to expanding childcare capacity...

“Local jurisdictions are already working to implement a growing number of state-mandated planning requirements. Many lack the staffing and financial resources needed to keep pace with these cumulative obligations. AB 1914 explicitly provides that no reimbursement is required for the new duties imposed on local agencies, creating a significant unfunded mandate...”

- 13) **Double-Referral.** This bill is double referred to the Assembly Human Services Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Low Income Investment Fund (Sponsor)
 California Coalition for Community Investment (CCCI)
 California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls
 Child Action INC
 Children Now
 Early Edge California
 Eileen Monahan Consulting
 Kristen Anderson Consulting
 Little Blossoms Childcare
 San Jose Councilmember Pamela Campos
 San Mateo County Supervisor Lisa Gauthier

Opposition

American Planning Association
 California State Association of Counties
 Rural County Representatives of California

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