
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Becker, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 1914
Author: Schiavo
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Consultant: Diana Dominguez
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Fiscal: Yes

Subject: General plan elements: childcare

SUMMARY

This bill would require a city, county, or city and county to adopt or integrate a childcare plan into the next adoption or revision of its general plan by January 1, 2033.

ABSTRACT

Existing Law:

- 1) Establishes the Child Care and Development Services Act to provide a comprehensive, coordinated, and cost-effective system of childcare and development services for children from infancy to 13 years of age and their parents, including a full range of supervision, health, and support services through full- and part-time programs. (*Welfare and Institutions Code [WIC] 10207 et seq.*)
- 2) Requires each planning agency within a city or county to prepare, and the legislative body of each city or county to adopt, a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the city or county, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning. Provides that chartered cities shall adopt general plans which contain the mandatory elements, as specified. (*Government Code [GOV] 65300*)
- 3) Requires a general plan to include elements on the following, as specified: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice. (*GOV 65302*)
- 4) Requires, upon the next update of one or more general plan elements, on or after January 1, 2028, the safety element to be reviewed and updated as necessary to address the hazard of extreme heat. (*GOV 65302.01*)
- 5) Requires a county or city that is located in a warehouse concentration region, as defined, to update its circulation element, as specified, on or before January 1, 2026. (*GOV 65302.02*)

- 6) Defines “childcare and development programs” as those programs that offer a full range of services for children from infancy to 13 years of age, for any part of a day, by a public or private agency, in centers and family childcare homes. These programs include, but are not limited to, all of the following:
 - a. General childcare and development.
 - b. Migrant childcare and development.
 - c. Child care provided by the California School Age Families Education Program.
 - d. Resource and referral.
 - e. Child care and development services for children with exceptional needs.
 - f. Family childcare home education network.
 - g. Alternative payment.
 - h. Schoolage community childcare. (*WIC 10213.5(i)*)
- 7) Defines “childcare and development services” as those services designed to meet a wide variety of needs of children and their families, while their parents or guardians are working, in training, seeking employment, incapacitated, or in need of respite. These services may include direct care and supervision, instructional activities, resource and referral programs, and alternative payment arrangements. (*WIC 10213.5(j)*)
- 8) Exempts the following child care arrangements from child care licensure:
 - a. Any family child care home providing care for the children of only one family in addition to the operator’s own children.
 - b. Any cooperative agreement between parents for the care of their children when no payment is involved and the arrangement meets specified conditions.
 - c. Any arrangement for the receiving and care of children by a relative.
 - d. Any public recreation program, as specified.
 - e. Extended day care programs operated by public or private schools, as specified.
 - f. Any school parenting program or adult education child care program that meets specified criteria.
 - g. Any child day care program that operates only one day per week for no less than four hours on that one day.
 - h. Any child day care program that is not operated on the site of a ski facility, shopping mall, department store, or any other similar site identified by CDSS by regulation.

- i. Any program that provides activities for children of an instructional nature in a classroom-like setting and satisfies specific criteria.
 - j. A California State Preschool Program operated by a local educational agency under contract with the State Department of Education and that operates in a school building, as specified. (*Health and Safety Code 1596.792*)
- 9) Establishes local childcare and development planning councils to provide a forum for the identification of local priorities for childcare and the development of policies to meet those priorities. Requires a local planning council to annually submit to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the California Department of Education identified priorities. Requires a local planning council to conduct an assessment of childcare needs in the county once every five years, prepare a comprehensive countywide childcare plan, conduct a periodic review of childcare programs, collaborate with subsidized and nonsubsidized childcare providers and administrators, design a system to consolidate local childcare waiting lists if one is not already in existence, and coordinate part-day programs with other services to provide full-day care, among other things. (*WIC 10485–10487*)

This Bill:

- 1) Makes findings and declarations about the need for all levels of government to be involved in and prioritize planning for their communities' child care needs.
- 2) Defines the following terms for purposes of this bill:
 - a. "Child care" means license-exempt childcare, childcare and development services, and childcare and development programs, for children up to 13 years of age, including children with exceptional needs and children from all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
 - b. "Child care plan" means a plan developed by a city, county, or city and county to address the childcare needs of the jurisdiction.
 - c. "Child care and development programs" means programs that offer a full range of services for children from infancy to 13 years of age, for any part of a day, by a public or private agency, in centers and family child care homes.
 - d. "Child care and development services" means services designed to meet a wide variety of needs of children and their families, while their parents or guardians are working, in training, seeking employment, incapacitated, or in need of respite. These services may include direct care and supervision, instructional activities, resource and referral programs, and alternative payment arrangements.
 - e. "License-exempt child care" has the same meaning as Section 1596.792 of the Health and Safety Code, as it relates to child care, which exempts specified facilities from child care licensure, including:

- i. Any family child care home providing care for the children of only one family in addition to the operator's own children.
 - ii. Any cooperative agreement between parents for the care of their children when no payment is involved and the arrangement meets specified conditions.
 - iii. Any arrangement for the receiving and care of children by a relative.
 - iv. Any public recreation program, as specified.
 - v. Extended day care programs operated by public or private schools, as specified.
 - vi. Any school parenting program or adult education child care program that meets specified criteria.
 - vii. Any child day care program that operates only one day per week for no less than four hours on that one day.
 - viii. Any child day care program that is not operated on the site of a ski facility, shopping mall, department store, or any other similar site identified by CDSS by regulation.
 - ix. Any program that provides activities for children of an instructional nature in a classroom-like setting and satisfies specific criteria.
 - x. A California State Preschool Program operated by a local educational agency under contract with the State Department of Education and that operates in a school building, as specified.
- 3) Requires, no later than January 1, 2033, each city, county, or city and county to prepare and adopt a child care plan or integrate a child care plan into the next adoption of the city, county, or city and county's general plan to address the child care needs of the jurisdiction.
 - 4) Provides that, if a city, county, or city and county has already adopted a similar child care plan in its general plan or apart from the general plan that meets the requirements of this bill, the city, county, or city and county may designate that child care plan to comply with this bill.
 - 5) Provides that this bill shall apply to all cities, including charter cities.

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, "No state costs. Local costs resulting from this bill are not reimbursable by the state because local agencies have general authority to

charge and adjust planning and permitting fees to cover their administrative expenses associated with new planning mandates.”

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Purpose of the Bill:

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.”

Local Government General Plans and Zoning

State law provides powers and duties for cities and counties regarding land use. Each city and county is required to prepare and adopt a general plan to guide future planning decisions. General plans are required to include eight mandatory elements: land use, circulation (e.g., traffic), housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice. Elements must be consistent with each other, and several elements must be revised every eight years, meaning general plans are typically reviewed every eight years. Additionally, a city or county’s land use decisions, such as zoning ordinances, must be consistent with its general plan. This bill would require a city or county, by January 1, 2033, to prepare and adopt a child care plan or integrate a child care plan into the next adoption of the city or county’s general plan to address the child care needs of the jurisdiction.

Zoning Exemptions for Child Care Facilities

Local zoning identifies a primary use for parcels of land in an area. Recent legislation has exempted certain child care facilities from local zoning requirements. 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. Similarly, AB 752 (*Ávila Farías, Chapter 164, Statutes of 2025*) made a daycare center that is co-located with multifamily housing a residential use of property and a use by right. In both circumstances, this means that a local government’s review of a child care facility may not require discretionary local government review or approval.

Local Child Care Development Planning Councils (LPCs)

LPCs were created by AB 2141 (*Speier, Chapter 1187, Statutes of 1991*) in response to the implementation of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant program. LPCs serve as forums to address the child care needs of all families, including subsidized and non-subsidized child care. Councilmembers are appointed by each county's board of supervisors and superintendent of schools and include consumers (parents), child care providers, public agency representatives, community representatives, and discretionary appointees. The LPC in each county is required to assess child care needs at least once every five years and annually identify local priorities that reflect all child care needs in the county. LPCs also facilitate child care funding transfers and partner with local providers such as county welfare departments, regional centers, human services agencies, job training programs, and parent organizations. The 2026-27 May Revision proposes to provide \$7.7 million for LPCs.¹ This bill would require a city or county's general plan to include a child care plan to address the child care needs of the jurisdiction.

Related/Prior Legislation:

AB 752 (*Ávila Farías, Chapter 164, Statutes of 2025*) provided that a daycare center that is collocated with multifamily housing shall be considered a residential use of property and a use by right.

AB 2684 (*Bryan, Chapter 1009, Statutes of 2024*) required a city or county to update the safety element of its general plan to address the hazard of extreme heat upon the next revision of one or more elements of the general plan on or after January 1, 2028.

AB 98 (*Juan Carrillo, Chapter 931, Statutes of 2024*) required a city or county to update the circulation element of its general plan to include truck routes.

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

SB 1000 (*Leyva, Chapter 587, Statutes of 2016*) required cities and counties to address environmental justice in their general plans by either adopting a separate environmental justice element or integrating environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives into their general plans.

AB 2141 (*Speier, Chapter 1187, Statutes of 1991*) established a local planning process, using local child care and development planning councils, for the allocation of child care funding received under the federal Child care and Development Block Grant.

¹ <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Fiscal-and-Financial-Information/LOcal-Assistance-Estimates/2026-27/Revisions/2026-may-revision-detail-tables.pdf>

COMMENTS

This bill seeks to improve child care access by incorporating child care in local government planning. Although certain child care facilities may bypass local planning requirements under recently passed “allowable use” and “use by right” legislation, requiring cities and counties to plan for child care needs could allow local governments to be more strategic about where child care facilities are, or will be, located. While each county already has an LPC that develops local child care priorities, LPCs are not directly involved in city and county planning. While this bill does not explicitly require a city or county to consult with its LPC, the general plan process must include public hearings to solicit community input.

Child care is essential for families with young children, school-age children, and children and youth with exceptional needs. It enables parents and guardians to go to work, training, or school knowing their children are in a safe and supportive environment. Therefore, child care is an integral part of community and economic planning to ensure children and families can thrive. This bill could create more visibility of local child care priorities and promote collaboration between the child care sector and local government.

SUPPORT/OPPOSITION

Arguments in Support:

According to Low Income Investment Fund, Build Up California, and the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, co-sponsors of this bill, “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, child care is not consistently incorporated into local planning processes. As a result, communities may miss opportunities to plan for child care facilities near housing, employment centers, and transit corridors, or may unintentionally create barriers that limit the development of new child care providers. AB 1914 will require that local jurisdictions create a child care plan separate from or integrated into local general plans. Integrating child care earlier in the planning process will help communities better align land-use decisions, infrastructure investments, and local policies to support the growth of child care options in their jurisdiction. [...] Improving coordination between child care access and local planning decisions is a practical and forward-looking strategy to help communities better meet the needs of working families. By requiring jurisdictions to consider child care in their local planning processes, AB 1914 promotes thoughtful planning while preserving local discretion in how those needs are addressed.”

Arguments in Opposition:

According to the League of California Cities, “Cities recognize the importance of creating more affordable and accessible childcare options and support additional funding and resources to expand childcare availability. Unfortunately, AB 1914 requires cities to plan for childcare through an unfunded mandate, without providing additional resources to ensure cities have the tools they need to turn those plans into realities for their residents. [...] Existing law already treats small and large licensed family childcare homes as residential uses permitted by right for zoning purposes. Recent legislation has also limited fees and provided targeted CEQA

exemptions. These reforms focus on implementation – making it easier to open and expand childcare facilities in communities. In contrast, AB 1914 adds another layer of planning without addressing major barriers to expanding childcare access, such as funding and workforce shortages. Every county in California has a Local Childcare Planning Council (LPC) that identifies local childcare priorities and develops policies to address those needs, including comprehensive plans updated every five years. Rather than requiring new plans that duplicate the work LPCs are already doing, the Legislature should focus on leveraging that work to turn existing plans into real progress in addressing California’s childcare crisis.”

PRIOR VOTES

Senate Local Government Committee:	5 - 1
Assembly Floor:	59 - 9
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	10 - 2
Assembly Local Government Committee:	8 - 1

POSITIONS

Support:

- Low Income Investment Fund (Co-Sponsor)
- CA Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (Co-Sponsor)
- A Child's Place Intentional Learning & Emotional Informed Studio
- Alameda County Office of Education
- Build Up San Mateo County
- California Child Care Resource and Referral Network
- California Coalition for Community Investment (CCCI)
- California State Pta
- Cameo Network
- CDC Small Business Finance
- Child Action
- Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
- Child Care Law Center
- Child Care Providers United (CCPU)
- Child Care Resource Center
- Children Now
- Cielo
- Consortium for Early Learning Services
- Early Care and Education Consortium
- Early Edge California
- Eileen Monahan Consulting
- Ellen Kamei, Councilmember, City of Mountain View
- Eric Guerra, Councilmember, City of Sacramento
- Family Connections Centers
- First 5 Association of California
- Kidango

Kristen Anderson Consulting
Leap
Little Blossoms Childcare
Long Beach Day Nursery
Marin Child Care Council
Marin County Child Care Commission
Para Los Ninos
Parent Voices California
San Francisco Child Care Planning and Advisory Council
San Jose Councilmember Pamela Campos
San Mateo County Child Care Partnership Council
San Mateo County Supervisor Lisa Gauthier
Seeds of Tomorrow Preschool
Skyline College
Start Well, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
Thriving Families CA Foundation
Thriving Families California (TFC)
Xouhoa Bowen, Councilmember, San Leandro

Oppose:

City of La Verne
City of Thousand Oaks
League of California Cities

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