

# INCREASING ACCESS TO CHILD CARE: LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE REFORM SUCCESSES

In 2022, Metro United Way, the Ready for K Alliance and numerous partners advocated for land development code reform to allow child care facilities in single family zoning, which covers more than 75% of Jefferson County. This modest reform is already proving to be highly impactful.

## INCREASING ACCESS, GROWING CAPACITY

- **Quality child care centers are opening closer to where families live** - Multifamily developments with more than 20 units on more than one acre of land are now permitted to include child care centers, allowing two world-class, tuition-free Bezos Academies to be proposed alongside housing developments in Louisville's Okolona and Russell neighborhoods. Another new development off Outer Loop has also submitted a plan to include a child care program thanks to this change. These western and southern areas of Louisville are currently among those with the fewest child care seats in Jefferson County. Additionally, one Conditional Use Permit (CUP) was approved in R-4 where it would not have been previously allowed.
- **Home-based child care programs are growing** - Licensed Type II child care programs--which are home-based child care programs serving up to 12 children--were previously prohibited in residential zones along with all center-based child care programs. Louisville now has its first (and second!) Type II program, one of which offers care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The owners receive multiple calls every day with new enrollment requests from families.
- **Child care programs are revitalizing existing buildings in residential zones** - In residential zones, child care centers are now permitted on corner lots and in existing buildings that were built for non-residential purposes. These are often old church assembly halls, union halls, small schools, etc., that were built to house once-permitted uses that they no longer support. In 2022 alone, seven new child care centers were approved for these buildings and corner lots. Jefferson County would not have these additional spaces for children without its zoning improvement efforts.
- **Broad-based fees no longer block access to child care zoning permits** - Application and permitting fees may seem small in the context of large commercial business expenses, but for years, prospective home-based child care providers repeatedly found that the costs stacked up and proved difficult to pay when permits were not assured. Now, the Conditional Use Permits required for Type II child care programs are free to acquire, and the fee for child care centers providing care for more than 12 children was reduced from \$1,200 to \$500.
- **Child care providers have hands-on permitting process support** - Thanks to deeply collaborative planning throughout the year-long Land Development Code improvement process, child care providers now have zoning navigation support from their local Family Child Care Home Network agency--4-C--AND from Louisville Metro's Planning & Design Services department. This side-by-side guidance has broken down long-standing barriers stalling providers in the complex maze of permitting processes.

## IN 2023:

<b>76</b> applications in 2023	<b>29</b> commercial centers	<b>30</b> family child care homes	<b>1</b> center approved with special standards for multi-family
<b>10</b> centers approved with special standards for nonresidential reuse or corner lot	<b>4</b> centers approved by CUPs where they previously would not have been able to request		



The Ready for K Alliance is a collaborative network of over 100 individuals and organizations, led by Metro United Way, committed to a seamless system of support for all children ages birth to kindergarten entry and their families.