CHILD CARE ACTION PLAN

NOVEMBER 12, 1996

City of Santa Rosa

Department of Community Development
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Trends</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Child Care in Santa Rosa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Need for Child Care Spaces</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Need for Child Care Spaces</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Action Plan Goals and Objectives</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix &quot;A&quot; - Child Care Policy From Santa Rosa General Plan</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix &quot;B&quot; - Santa Rosa Child Care Committee - Identified Needs and</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix &quot;C&quot; - References</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BACKGROUND

Local government involvement in child care has grown significantly since the early 1980s. Jurisdictions' participation in child care varies, but many recognize the importance of available, affordable, quality child care to overall community health.

In 1991, the Santa Rosa City Council adopted a child care policy in its revised General Plan. The General Plan is the long range guide for development and the basis for all land use decisions. Including child care policy in the General Plan assures child care the same level of importance as other long range planning issues. This policy directed the completion of an action plan for the provision of child care facilities in Santa Rosa and creation of a child care committee to identify and analyze facility needs. (The full General Plan policy is in Appendix "A" to this Plan).


Child Care Committee

In February 1995, participation in the Santa Rosa Child Care Committee was solicited from child care providers, school districts, employers, and the development community. Individuals expressing interest in being part of the Committee were asked to join.

The 21-person Committee held 7 meetings during Spring 1995. The group discussed all aspects of child care, including the importance of child care and its professionals to the well being of the community, the difficult planning process for new child care facilities, complex state licensing requirements, and the impact of new development on the need for child care.

Five main areas of need were identified by the Committee. They include: the need of available child care, quality child care, affordable child care, employer involvement in child care, and community, parent, and provider education about child care.

The Committee's recommendations for addressing these needs form the basis of this plan.

The plan is a guide for action in child care issues. It sets forth goals and objectives to address child care needs in Santa Rosa and promotes collaboration between the City of Santa Rosa and other entities to achieve the goals.
CHILD CARE TRENDS

Child care is an issue of nation wide importance. Current work force trends including the increase in the number of two income families, single parent families, and the growing number of women in the work force, are increasing the attention being given to child care needs.

The need for child care depends on many factors, such as the employment of parents. Parents may work during the day, at night, periodically, on split shifts, part time or full time. They may work in the same city in which they live or they may commute outside the city for their job.

Other important factors include parental preference and choice - some may wish care by relatives, in home care, family day care, school based care, church based care, or child care center care. The age of children and family income also play a role in child care.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN SANTA ROSA

Santa Rosa’s population has grown significantly in the last 40 years. The number of jobs has also increased steadily. This growth has caused the need for additional child care services in the community.

The Santa Rosa General Plan projects continued population and employment growth. Consequently, there will be additional need for child care services.

POPULATION GROWTH

Santa Rosa’s population has grown from 82,650 in 1980 to 113,300 in 1990. Approximately 31% of all Santa Rosa households contain children under 18 years of age. By the year 2010, the Santa Rosa General Plan projects Santa Rosa Urban Boundary area will contain 172,000 persons.

![Population Growth Chart](image)

*PROJECTED
Source: Vision 2020 Santa Rosa General Plan, July 1996; Figures are for Urban Boundary area.
EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Santa Rosa had 56,000 jobs in 1980 and 82,800 jobs in 1990. By 2010, ABAG projects 119,500 jobs in the Santa Rosa Urban Boundary area, an increase of 36,700 since 1980. The largest increase is predicted in service jobs, which typically are low paying.

EMPLOYED RESIDENTS

According to ABAG, Santa Rosa had 66,300 employed residents and 82,800 jobs in 1990. This indicates that many people from outside Santa Rosa come into the city to work. Petaluma, Rohnert Park, and Windsor all have more employed residents than jobs, and it can be assumed that some of these persons work and use child care services in Santa Rosa. Of the 36% living in Santa Rosa but working outside Santa Rosa, 90% work in Sonoma County, while only a small portion drive out of the County for work.
WOMEN IN WORKFORCE

The 1990 United States Census indicates about 63% of women with children under 6 are in the workforce and 80% of women with children ages 6 to 17 are in the workforce in Santa Rosa. This is an increase from 1980, when the Census showed 45% of women with children under 6 in the workforce and 66% of women with children ages 6 to 17.

INCOME LEVELS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18

Married couple households with children, many with two wage earners, have higher annual incomes than households with one adult. Average incomes are as follows.

- **$53,700**
- **$30,000**
- **$21,000**

Another factor affecting family and child care is the low proportion of women and men employed in the highly child care-intensive areas. The increasing cycle of marriage, job seeking, child care, back care, care at school age and school age care, specialized care such as ill child care, back care, care at school, care at school age care, may be difficult.

- **MARRIED COUPLE FAMILIES**
- **MALE HOUSEHOLDER, NO WIFE PRESENT**
- **FEMALE HOUSEHOLDER, NO HUSBAND PRESENT**

Source: 1990 U.S. Census; Figures are Mean Income.
NEED FOR CHILD CARE IN SANTA ROSA

The Child Care Committee has identified five broad categories of child care need in Santa Rosa: the need of available child care, quality child care, affordable child care, employer involvement in child care, and community, parent, and provider education about child care. The following summarizes the Committee's general discussion regarding needs in these areas.

AVAILABLE CHILD CARE

Besides the need for more infant and school age care, specialized care such as ill child care, back up care, care at any hour of the day, care for special needs children, and transportation to care are not readily available in Santa Rosa. Also, finding child care in a convenient location, such as near the workplace or the child's school, may be difficult.

The inability to find care when a child is ill or the regular provider is not available may cause the parent to miss work to stay home with the child. This in turn may cause loss of wage as well as a loss in productivity to the employer.

QUALITY CHILD CARE

The provision of quality child care is a continuing need. The State of California has licensing requirements and educational requirements for providers, which aim to address quality child care. A national accreditation program begun in 1985 through the National Association for the Education of Young Children is setting standards for quality and is accrediting child care programs.

Another issue affecting quality child care is the low compensation earned and status attributed to the child care profession. The increasing costs of running a child care business may also affect quality. These issues make recruiting and retaining highly skilled and motivated individuals to the child care profession difficult.

AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

Quality child care is not easy for some families to afford. Many families spend a large percentage of income on child care and some simply cannot afford it.
Results from a rate survey of family day care homes conducted in October 1994 by the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4Cs) indicate an average cost of $97.73 per week for ages infant to 2; $93.68 per week for ages 2 to 5; and $91.38 per week for school age children in Santa Rosa. This results in estimated monthly child care costs ranging from $395 to $425 per child and an annual range of $4,740 to $5,100. Many families pay more than this average.

A single mother with 1 child aged 2 to 5 may spend about 22% of monthly income for child care. (Based on 1990 Census income for female householder and above rate survey).

Subsidized care is also in great demand. As an example of the need, 4Cs reports that as of July 1995 its programs provided 365 slots for eligible Santa Rosa children. They approximate that an additional 394 slots were available from other agencies in the city for a total of 759 slots. All of these slots were filled.

Also in July 1995, the 4Cs eligibility list showed 641 Santa Rosa families, representing 1,048 children, waiting for subsidized child care services. It should be noted that these figures were obtained solely from the 4Cs eligibility list and do not include those of other agencies in the community.

The Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council estimates that there may be as many as 8,000 Santa Rosa children who are eligible for subsidized care. Many families do not get on a waiting list due to the low probability of receiving service.

EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD CARE

Since many parents of young children are in the workforce, child care is an employer issue. The provision of child care benefits the economic health of the community. When parents can't find child care, they often are late for work or must miss work, affecting work place productivity and sometimes impacting co-workers. Many employers are unaware of child care information or benefits they can provide.

PARENT, COMMUNITY, AND PROVIDER EDUCATION ABOUT CHILD CARE

Education about child care and provision of information to persons requiring it is needed. Those who will benefit from child care information and education are identified by the Committee: 1) Parents. They need assistance and education in selecting quality child care and in areas of child development; 2) The community at large. The child care field should be promoted and its professionals recognized so the community will recognize the importance of child care and its professionals to the well being of Santa Rosa; and 3) Child care professionals. They need continuing education and training in order to provide quality care for Santa Rosa's children.
EXISTING NEED FOR CHILD CARE SPACES

It is estimated that there are approximately 22,260 children age 12 and under in 1995. According to the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4Cs), there are approximately 6,664 California state licensed child care spaces in Santa Rosa. Licensed spaces are in child care centers as well as in family day care homes.

The charts below depict the estimated number of child care center and family day care home spaces available as of June 1995, according to the 4Cs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF CENTERS</th>
<th>CAPACITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant to 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 6</td>
<td>51△</td>
<td>2,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 12</td>
<td>9★</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 12</td>
<td>21 Schools</td>
<td>1,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>63 Centers</td>
<td>4,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 Schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

△Includes two centers which provide infant care
★Includes one center which provides infant care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LICENSED FAMILY DAY CARE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small△</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Capacity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

△Capacity of 6 or Fewer Children
†Capacity of 7 to 12 Children

TOTAL NUMBER OF LICENSED SPACES IN SANTA ROSA = 6,664

Note: The age breakdown is not exact due to wide ranges in ages cared for in some centers.
In order to estimate if additional child care spaces are needed in Santa Rosa, the number of children with mothers in the work force must be estimated, since many of these children will need care outside the home. The following table estimates need by multiplying the estimated number of children by the percentage of women in the work force who have children, how many of these children will require care, and comparing that number to the spaces available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESTIMATE OF EXISTING NEED FOR CHILD CARE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. 1990 United States Census. 63% of women with children under 6 are in the workforce; 80% of women with children ages 6-17 are in the workforce.
3. Product of Lines 1 and 2.
4. Demand for 0-4 based on children needing non-relative care from "Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 1985" as used in Livermore/Pleasanton/Dublin Child Care Needs Assessment, September 1990 and accepted by the Santa Rosa Child Care Committee as reasonable today in Santa Rosa.
5. Product of Lines 3 and 4.
6. Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County, June 1995. Age breakdown estimates by Santa Rosa Department of Community Development.

7. Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County, June 1995. Age breakdown estimates by Santa Rosa Department of Community Development.

8. Sum of Lines 6 and 7.

9. Difference between Lines 8 and 5.

The table indicates that there is need for child care spaces for children infant to 2 years of age (152 spaces) and an even greater need of spaces for children aged 5 to 12 before and after school (3,073 spaces). The Child Care Committee verifies, from personal experiences, the need for additional spaces for these age groups.

High provider to infant ratios and the accompanying additional cost in providing care is a likely reason for the need for infant spaces. A lack of space appropriate for child care at schools is one reason before and after school child care programs have not expanded.

The surplus of spaces for children aged 3-4 is partially attributed to the inclusion of partial day programs in the number of spaces available.

It is important to note that space availability is extremely dynamic, changing from week to week. For example, in April 1995, there were 275 more spaces available than in June 1995.

An additional indicator of the need for child care services is the number of requests made to the resource and referral agency, the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County. Between April 1994 and April 1995, 7,378 requests for service were made, an average of 614 per month.
FUTURE NEED FOR CHILD CARE SPACES

The Santa Rosa General Plan projects continued residential and employment growth. It can be assumed that this growth will cause a need for additional child care spaces.

Utilizing the projected number of dwelling units, the following number of new child care spaces is estimated to be required by 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projected Number of New Dwelling Units</th>
<th>Projected Number of Children Needed in Workforce</th>
<th>Percentage of Mothers in Workforce</th>
<th>Percentage of Children in Needing Care</th>
<th>Projected Number of Spaces Required in 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10,500)</td>
<td>(.45)</td>
<td>(.70)</td>
<td>(.50)</td>
<td>1,650 new spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. The 1990 Census indicates .17 children ages 0-4 per household. According to Enrollment Trends and Projections prepared by Morgan Woollett and Associates in November 1993 for elementary districts in the Santa Rosa secondary region, .28 children grades K-6 per unit is the average pupil yield for moderate and mid income single family dwellings.

3. The 1990 Census shows 70 percent of women in the workforce have children under 18 years of age.

4. Demand based on children needing non-relative care from "Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 1985" as used in Livermore/Pleasanton/Dublin Child Care Needs Assessment, September 1990 and accepted by the Santa Rosa Child Care Committee as reasonable today in Santa Rosa.

5. Product of 1, 2, 3, and 4.

As the community grows during the 1995-2010 period, it can be assumed that some new child care facilities will be opened. However, due to current deficits in infant spaces, care before and after school, and subsidized spaces, it is expected the need for additional child care services will carry through to future years.

Projection of need for future child care spaces is on a citywide basis. A breakdown of spaces by area is not included because there is not an exact correlation between the number of new dwelling units in an area and the need for new child care spaces in that area. This is due to parental choice (some parents want child care near their jobs, which may not be in the same area as where they live) and the age of the child.
CHILD CARE ACTION PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FIVE YEAR PLAN

This plan identifies objectives of the City and objectives that can be met or enhanced through partnerships with other agencies or non-profits. Some objectives are targeted for immediate implementation while other objectives are long range and will be developed during the five year time span. The City may be able to enhance some partnership objectives by merely sharing information already developed and maintained by the City. Actions that are a commitment of the City are indicated by "City Action," actions by partnerships are indicated by "Partnership Objective."

1 AVAILABLE CHILD CARE

Expand the supply of child care to meet existing and future needs of Santa Rosa. Specific emphasis is needed in infant care, school age care, ill child care, back up care, all hours care, and care for children with special needs.

1.1 Coordinate with other agencies or non-profits to seek partnership opportunities to promote and implement the goals of this plan, including seeking innovative funding opportunities (such as grant partnerships) to fund a Child Care Coordinator to carry out the City and partnership objectives. Partnership Objective. Long range implementation, Advisory Committee.

1.2 Provide assistance to child care providers to develop additional child care spaces.

a) City Department of Community Development counter staff will be trained to be knowledgeable about the City's child care requirements and the State's child care requirements to facilitate applicants through the City's permitting process (permits, business license requirements, etc.) and/or to refer them to the appropriate State agencies. City Action. Immediate implementation, Department of Community Development.
b) Review the feasibility of reducing or waiving City permitting fees for child care facilities. Fees for application, barring appeal, are $150. If $1,000 in fees were waived annually it would probably meet all needs. Fees should be collected at application time and be refunded when the facility is opened to discourage people from submitting marginal plans. City Action. Immediate implementation, City Council and Department of Community Development.

c) Continue to monitor and revise existing Santa Rosa Zoning Code requirements for child care facilities, including Conditional Use Permits, public hearings, and parking to determine if changes can be made to promote development of new child care facilities. City Action. Immediate implementation, Department of Community Development.

d) Monitor the development of child care facilities and services in growing areas of the community such as southeast and southwest Santa Rosa, as well as existing areas. City Action. Immediate implementation, Department of Community Development: Progress reports.

e) Encourage the development of new child care facilities, particularly in the growing areas of the community. Partnership Objective. Long range implementation.

f) Facilitate establishment of a low interest loan program through local banks with a revolving fund for child care facility development. The initial funding for this program may be provided with Community Development Block Grant funds, Community Reinvestment Act funds, or other sources. Partnership Objective. Long range implementation, Advisory Committee/Department of Administrative Services.

1.3 Incorporate child care considerations into the planning and development process.

a) Include options that promote the provision of child care (such as land set asides for new facilities) among the city's negotiation "wish list" for selection, when appropriate, for negotiation in a development agreement. City Action. Immediate implementation, Community Development.
b) Determine the need for child care spaces created by new development to allow for ongoing evaluation of child care needs.  
*City Action: Immediate implementation, Community Development.*

1.4 Promote development of multi-use buildings/community centers which can be utilized for youth activities and child care. City parks may be an ideal location for such facilities. Investigate the feasibility of including such a facility as part of the current youth athletic field project.  
*City Action: Immediate implementation, Department of Recreation and Parks.*

1.5 Enter into joint power agreement or memorandum of understanding with school districts to maintain/expand before and after school care on or near school sites.  
*Partnership Objective. Long range implementation. Advisory Committee and Schools.*

2 QUALITY CHILD CARE

Promote the provision of quality care for Santa Rosa's children.

2.1 Support training for child care community.

a) Emphasize program quality, for example, by appointing a child care advocate to the non-profit Cable Access Advisory board of directors.  
*City Action. Immediate implementation, City Council.*

b) Make public facilities available. The city shall provide facilities for child care training and education free of charge when facilities are available.  
*City Action. Immediate implementation.*

3 AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

Promote the provision of affordable child care services in Santa Rosa.

3.1 The City shall include child care provider agencies in notification of Block Grant Requests for Proposals to heighten awareness of available grant funds.  
*City Action. Immediate implementation.*

3.2 The City will consider participating in grant funding opportunities available to joint city/community-based organizations.  
*Partnership Objective. Long range implementation.*
The City will support the child care community in legislation that would promote the affordability of local child care. *City Action. Immediate implementation*, Advisory Committee.

4 EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD CARE

Encourage Santa Rosa employers to assist employees with child care needs.

4.1 Encourage community-wide employer support of child care by setting a positive example. *City Action. Immediate implementation*.

4.2 Provide information to employers about child care options.

4.2a Include discussion of child care and share the City's experiences with the benefits of flexible work hours when City staff visits businesses through its economic development programs. *City Action. Immediate implementation*, City Manager's Office.

4.2b Include an information sheet which outlines options that are available to employers with applications or renewals for business licenses. The information will be provided by the Advisory Committee and may cover Dependent Care Assistance Program, personal day or leave policies for employees with ill children, and books or videotapes on child development issues. This shall also include information highlighting other successful employer programs. *Partnership Objective/City Action. Long range implementation*, Advisory Committee.

4.2c Work with the Business/Education Roundtable to encourage and support child care issues in its efforts. *Partnership Objective. Long range implementation*, Advisory Committee.

4.3 Accommodate a request to include questions about child care in the annual Business License Tax Survey mailer. *City Action/Partnership Objective. Long range implementation*, Advisory Committee.

5 PARENT, COMMUNITY AND PROVIDER EDUCATION ABOUT CHILD CARE

Promote education about child care and child development to increase awareness of its community importance.
5.1 Strengthen community and parent awareness through training and education about child care.

a) Broadcast programs using public access television to 1) provide local training sessions, 2) educate parents on child development issues, and 3) promote a positive media image of the child care profession and of child care issues. Utilize the public access cable television facility and equipment, as well as high school interns, for production of the programs. **Partnership Objective. Long range implementation, Advisory Committee.**

b) Include child care as a category in the City's annual Merit Awards so that a child care provider can be recognized in the City's "Update" periodical. **City Action. Immediate implementation, Advisory Committee.**

5.2 Promote child care resources available in the community by disseminating information broadly, in the following ways:

a) List a phone number for "Child Care" in Info Santa Rosa and other City reference listings so that inquiries may be answered or referred to the appropriate agency. **City Action. Immediate implementation.**

b) Distribute brochures with child care resource information to the various City public offices and to information centers in the community at large, such as other public agency offices and the Chamber of Commerce. **City Action/Partnership Objective. Long range implementation, Advisory Committee.**

5.3 Investigate the feasibility of collaborating to create a program allowing junior high and high school students to spend time in child care centers, learning about children and their needs and assisting with child care. **Partnership Objective. Long range implementation, Advisory Committee.**

5.4 Create a Child Care Advisory Committee that meets quarterly, or upon request: to advocate for child care needs, to support and monitor the implementation of the Child Care Action Plan goals, to advise the city of grant and partnership opportunities, and to report the progress to the City Council annually. **City Action. Immediate implementation. Department of Community Development.**
Appendix "A"

Child Care Policy from Santa Rosa General Plan - Santa Rosa 2010
APPENDIX “A”

G. CHILD CARE POLICIES

ISSUE: Responding to the Existing and Anticipated Needs for Child Care Facilities and Services

Twenty Year Goal

[PSF-6] To encourage provision of high quality, convenient and affordable child care facilities and services in neighborhoods and at workplaces, as needed by people living and working in Santa Rosa.

Implementation Actions and Objectives


The action plan should include:

1. Creation of a childcare committee whose task it will be to identify and analyze childcare facility needs both in residential neighborhoods and at workplaces;

2. Proposed criteria and regulations for the provisions of facilities including:
   a. The reserving of childcare sites and the provision of facilities on those sites, in residential developments above stipulated sizes;
   b. The provision of on-site childcare facilities by developers of commercial and industrial complexes, when on-site childcare facilities would be appropriate in terms of the number of workers and nature of the enterprises;
   c. The provision for payment of in-lieu fees, or other mechanisms, by smaller developments of residential, commercial and industrial complexes where on-site facilities are not practical; and

3. Strategies for eliciting the cooperation of school districts in providing before-school and after-school childcare, both on school sites and, in cooperation with other governmental entities and private enterprises, at other locations.

From Santa Rosa 2010 General Plan, July 1991
Appendix "B"

Santa Rosa Child Care Committee - Identified Needs and Suggested Actions
APPENDIX "B"

SANTA ROSA CHILD CARE COMMITTEE
IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

June 28, 1995

The Santa Rosa Child Care Committee has met to identify and analyze need and to suggest strategies to meet the need. The Committee finds that available, quality, affordable child care is important to the community. Further, children must be a top priority in the community.

The following areas of child care need in Santa Rosa have been identified by the Committee.

AVAILABLE CHILD CARE

The Committee has identified a need for additional care for infants and for school age children 5 to 12 years old before and after school. Other care, including sick care, back up care, care availability 24 hours a day, care to accommodate flexible schedules, care for special needs children, and transportation to care, is not readily available in the community.

To address this need, the Committee recommends:

1. Address the need for sick care and back up care by:
   a) encouraging local hospitals and clinics to provide sick care for children;
   b) encouraging people to become child care providers for children who are ill or to provide drop in child care services;
   c) encouraging creation of a visiting home care program using registered nurses to provide care for sick children;
   d) initiating a program to train youth to provide back up child care, especially during the summer.

2. Assist child care providers to develop additional child care spaces by:
   a) having a Child Care Coordinator on City staff who is knowledgeable about local and state child care requirements and who can assist child care providers;
   b) considering reducing or waiving City permitting fees;
   c) investigating incentives to providing child care;
   d) reviewing existing Santa Rosa Zoning Code requirements for child care facilities, including Use Permits, public hearings, and parking to determine if changes could be made which would promote development of new child care facilities;
APPENDIX "B"

e) considering establishment of a low interest loan program for child care facility development.

3. Promote development of multi-use buildings/community centers which can be utilized for youth activities and child care. Investigate the feasibility of including such a facility as part of the current youth athletic field project.

4. Create methods to evaluate the impact on child care when new development projects are reviewed.

5. Include provisions for child care when development agreements are negotiated. Provisions for child care include land set aside for a new facility, monetary contributions, or new facilities.

6. Address the need for child care in growing areas of the community such as southwest and southeast Santa Rosa.

7. Investigate the feasibility of a volunteer wheels program to transport children from school and/or activities to child care.

8. Adjust or eliminate the business tax for child care providers as an incentive for development of child care.

9. Foster cooperation of the City and school districts in the provision of before and after school care.

QUALITY CHILD CARE

The Committee has identified quality child care as a continuing need. Quality includes providing an age appropriate and nurturing environment for children, and ensuring providers are well trained.

To address this need, the Committee recommends:

1. Advocate for local standards for child care providers, using criteria which will promote continued quality in care.

2. Seek funding for provider training and parent education to emphasize program quality.

AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

The Committee recognizes that there is a large and growing need for more affordable child care in the community. Currently, there are lengthy waiting lists for existing subsidized care. Additional subsidized spaces are needed.

To address this need, the Committee recommends:

1. Protect funds that are currently available to subsidize child care, such as Community Development Block Grants.

2. Seek additional funds and grants for child care.
APPENDIX "B"

3. Consider waiving City permitting fees to assist providers.

4. Create partnerships and co-sponsorships for special community child care events.

5. Lobby legislators to fund for child care programs and provider training, streamline and coordinate credential procedures, and create competitive wage structures and realistic reimbursement rates for subsidized care providers.

EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD CARE

The Committee finds that the provision of quality, affordable, available child care is important for the economic health of Santa Rosa. When parents can't get child care, businesses are negatively affected.

To address this need, the Committee recommends:

1. Provide information to employers about child care options. This effort may include:
   a) Preparation of an information sheet for employers outlining what they can do, including participating in the Dependent Care Assistance Program, providing personal days or leave policies for employees with sick children, providing books or videotapes on child development issues. This shall also include information highlighting other successful employer programs;
   b) Including discussion of child care in the City's visits to businesses through its economic development programs;
   c) Requesting the Business and Education Roundtable to encourage support of child care issues in its efforts;
   d) Sharing the City's experiences of how flexible working hours and telecommuting have positive child care benefits, allowing parents more time with their children.

2. Include questions about child care in the annual Business License Tax survey mailer.

3. The City shall assist businesses wishing to come together to utilize vacant space for a child care facility and help child care providers to occupy it.

4. Foster partnerships between businesses and child care providers to provide child care.

5. The City shall encourage community wide employer support of child care by setting a positive example.
APPENDIX “B”

PARENT, COMMUNITY, & PROVIDER EDUCATION ABOUT CHILD CARE

The Committee finds that parents need education in selecting quality child care as well as in child development issues. The Committee further identifies a need for the community to be made aware of the importance of child care and its professionals to the health and well being of Santa Rosa. The child care field must be promoted and its professionals recognized. Finally, child care professionals need continuing training to provide quality care for children.

To address this need, the Committee recommends:

1. Strengthen community and parent awareness through training and education about child care issues by:
   a) seeking positive media coverage of the child care profession and of child care issues;
   b) encouraging public access television to broadcast programs to educate parents on child development issues.

2. Promote child care resources available in the community by disseminating information broadly, in the following ways:
   a) providing information in City of Santa Rosa and Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce documents outlining where to receive information about child care;
   b) holding a City sponsored child care fair;
   c) including an informational brochure about the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County and other resources for families in Sonoma County in packets mailed by the Chamber of Commerce to businesses looking to locate in Santa Rosa. The brochure shall also be provided to realtors, schools, doctors’ offices, employment offices, the local Welcome Wagon and similar organizations;
   d) including information on child care as part of the Info Santa Rosa program.

3. Promote a collaboration between the school districts and child care providers to create a program allowing junior high and high school students to spend time in child care centers, learning about children and their needs and assisting with their care.

4. Provide City facilities for meeting space for child care training and education purposes.

OTHER AREAS

1. Create a permanent Child Care Advisory Committee.
Appendix "C"
References
REFERENCES


2. *Livermore/Pleasanton/Dublin Child Care Needs Assessment and Master Plan.* Livermore/Pleasanton/Dublin Child Care Task Force (September 1990).


