

Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning
Progress on Short- and Longer-Term Goals
September 5, 2024

Goal	Activities to Date	Possible Future Activities
1. Advocate at the state level for Preschool Promise slots to be made available to programs currently licensed and operating in Ashland. A traditional Preschool Promise class supports 18 children. Having 18 Preschool promise slots would be a significant asset to our community and help greatly in supporting Ashland working families. Preschool Promise supports families earning at or below 200% of the FPL with free early learning opportunities.	The committee has not done specific lobbying yet, but the Ashland Family YMCA has received state funding for ____ Preschool Promise slots.	Reach out to Children’s World and the other Ashland childcare providers to inform them about the process for applying for Promise Preschool funding.
2. Engage local businesses to assess their employees’ needs, and investigate potential partnerships	Committee members published “The Economics of Musical Chairs” in the local online Ashland.news, April 2024	Prepare article for Southern Oregon Business Journal that would expand on the Ashland.news article. John spoke with founder/editor Jim Teece, and he’s eager to accept our submission. Aim for about 2,000 words (at least twice as long as the April article). John will bring a draft outline to the committee’s September 4 meeting.

Goal	Activities to Date	Possible Future Activities
3. Improve public awareness of early learning programs currently available in Ashland.	The team worked with a variety of partners, including SOESD, EQQUS Work Force Solutions, Business Oregon, SBDC, ODHS, DELC, and multiple local providers (see #4).	Continue reaching out to these partners as the committee expands its work. Also see #5.
4. Work with providers to ensure they are aware of grant opportunities and business development opportunities that support their long-term viability.	Committee chair Paula Hyatt reached out to all local, licensed providers (including YMCA, Children’s World), Business Oregon, Asante, and local movers and shakers (including Peter Buckley, SOU President Richard Bailey, Cynthia Anderson) to ensure awareness of the city’s Affordability Grant program announcement and the state’s DELC/Business Oregon Childcare Infrastructure Grant opportunity this August/September.	Continue reaching out to all these providers and organizations as the committee learns about new grant- and business-development opportunities.
5. Engage Ashland’s Community Development department regarding land use for early learning programs and how we can best support providers looking to locate programs in our city.	NA	Work with Community Development to get a “place at the table” in connection with the group involved in planning the Croman Mills housing development. Explore with them possibilities for including a childcare center in that development. Advocate for one that could (a) serve <u>all</u> the children, 0-5 years of age, who might reasonably be expected in the number of families who would reside in the new development and (b) be located convenient to RVTD’s expected bus line. Also determine the agency/organization/business that could apply for a grant in the next round of Child

Goal	Activities to Date	Possible Future Activities
		Care Infrastructure Program funding, and support them in submitting an application.
6. Explore strategies for collocating childcare and affordable housing.	Members of the Ad Hoc Committee have met with a local affordable housing non-profit to discuss a potential project. Additionally, the Executive Director of the non-profit was introduced to the Executive Director of the Oregon Center for Creative Learning. The goal was to provide a knowledgeable resource as the non-profit investigates co-location.	Include collocation plans in the application coming out of #5. Next step, request a meeting with SOU leadership regarding their senior housing project. Investigate if early learning and childcare could be a valuable component of the vision and development.
Longer-Term Goals		
1. Investigate, and support, development opportunities in infant and toddler care in Ashland.	Recommended that Children's World receive full funding requested for the city's Affordability Grant because of CW's offering of toddler care slots.	See short term goal #5.
2. Investigate, and support, development opportunities in care for children with special needs in Ashland.	Recommended that the Family YMCA receive full funding requested for the city's Affordability Grant because of its request for funding a part-time behavioral support specialist.	Advocate for the city to continue its Affordability Grant Program into the next biennium, and if possible, increase funding to reach more families enrolling children with special needs.