

# St. Charles Parish

## Department of Planning & Zoning

### Land Use Report

#### Case Number: PZO 2019-01

#### Introduced by Larry Cochran, Parish President

To amend the St. Charles Parish Zoning Ordinance of 1981, to revise the definitions of child daycare center, child daycare home and clarify the regulations for child daycare home.

#### Background

Ordinance 15-7-5 modernized the Zoning Ordinance, including the definitions of land uses. The resulting definitions of child daycare center and child daycare home creates five different categories of day care based on the number of children served:

- Day care home, small: up to five (5) children
- Day care home, large: six (6) to twelve (12) children
- Day care center, small: up to fifteen (15) children
- Day care center, large: sixteen (16) to fifty (50) children
- Day care center, commercial: fifty-one (51) or more children

Working with daycare operators since the new definitions came into effect, staff have found that not only are the different categories unnecessary, but they also conflict with the categories used by the various state agencies that regulate child daycares. This causes confusion for operators and convolutes the permitting process.

In order to help reduce the regulatory confusion for daycare operators, planning staff recommends eliminating the five unnecessary size or intensity categories and changing the definition of daycare home in both the Definitions section of the Zoning Ordinance and the Home Occupation Regulations. The maximum number of five (5) children aligns with the maximum number of children allowed under the *residential* building code.

#### Potential outcomes

The change will simplify local regulations and align them more closely with the regulations of the Parish Building Official, the State Fire Marshal, and the Department of Education have for child daycares.

In-home daycare providers will be restricted to caring for five (5) or fewer children unrelated to them. This will keep business-related traffic reasonable and preserve the neighborhood character. It will keep in-home daycares below the threshold that would require renovations to meet commercial building code requirements

Child daycare centers will still be allowed in the R-1A, R-1B, R-1A(M), and C-1 zoning districts as a Special Permit or in the C-2 and C-3 zoning districts by right.

#### Recommendation

Approval