



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Childcare Near You

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SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION
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Outline

- Childcare regulations
- Current conditions
- Proposal



Photo: U.S. Air Force/Rhonda Siciliano

Childcare regulations

Washington State

Department of Children Youth and Families

Licenses childcare centers

- Health, wellness and safety
- Programs and activities
- Indoor and outdoor space standards
- Feeding and napping
- Staffing requirements
- Licensing and record-keeping

City of Seattle

Regulates childcare businesses and uses

- Business licenses
- Principal or accessory use
- Impacts to surrounding community
- Incentives to incorporate childcare in development

State licensed childcare

Family Home programs

- Up to 12 children, based on age, staffing and expertise
- Treated as a home occupation under Seattle zoning

Childcare centers

- Number of children regulated based on space and staffing
- Standards for space and operation

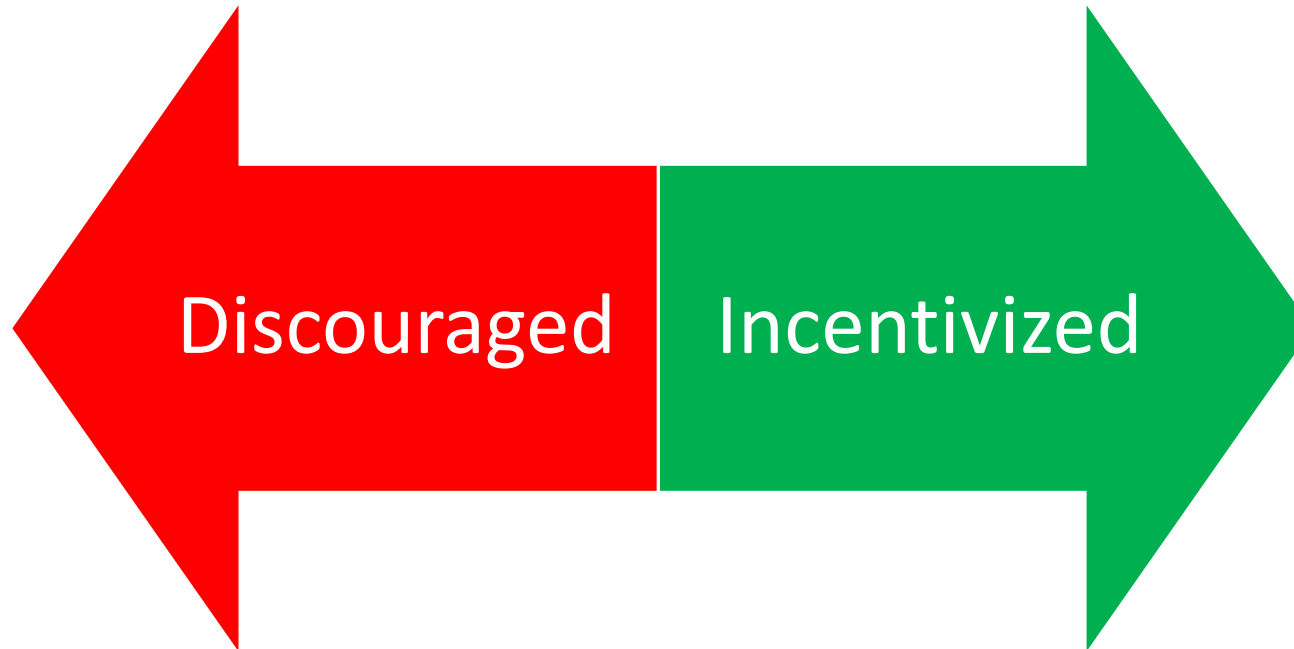
Not licensed, but regulated as a childcare center under zoning

- Cooperative care for less than 4 hours a day
- Government-sponsored centers
- Drop-in childcare centers

Seattle's childcare regulations

Single Family

- Limit size of family care centers
- Require conditional use approval for other childcare centers
- Allow appeals if approved



Downtown

- Allow as a use permitted outright
- Bonus for on-site childcare centers
- Contributions for off-site childcare
- Exempt floor area in childcare use
- No size limit

Seattle's childcare regulations

Home occupations (family care centers)

- Permitted outright up to 12 children
- Only within a dwelling unit
- No outdoor evidence, except play space and ADA access

Single Family zones

- Conditional use, can be appealed the Hearing Examiner
- Must be 600 feet from any other institution
- Noise, odor, lighting, yards, appearance of bulk, parking and loading considered in conditional use review

Seattle's childcare regulations

Multifamily zones

- Permitted outright, must be 600 feet from other institutions

Commercial zones

- Permitted outright
- Size limits in Neighborhood Commercial 1 & 2 zones consistent with other uses in zone

Industrial zones

- Permitted outright

Seattle's childcare regulations

Downtown and Seattle Mixed zones

- Permitted outright
- Exempt from floor area limits
- Extra floor area allowed for provision of childcare onsite or contributions toward offsite childcare centers

Demand for childcare

In 2018*

31,700 households with children under 6

44,000 children under 6

In 75% of households with children under 6 all parents work outside the home

33,000 children under 6 may need some childcare

* American Community Survey data

Supply of childcare

Approximately 16,400 spaces in 910 childcare centers in Seattle

50% of Seattle's Census Tracts meet definition of "childcare Deserts"*

24% of Seattle's Census Tracts contain no childcare centers

- * "A childcare desert is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no childcare providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots."

Source: America's child care deserts in 2018, Rasheed Malik, Katie Hamm, Leila Schochet, Cristina Novoa, Simon Workman, and Steven Jessen-Howard, Center for American Progress, 2018

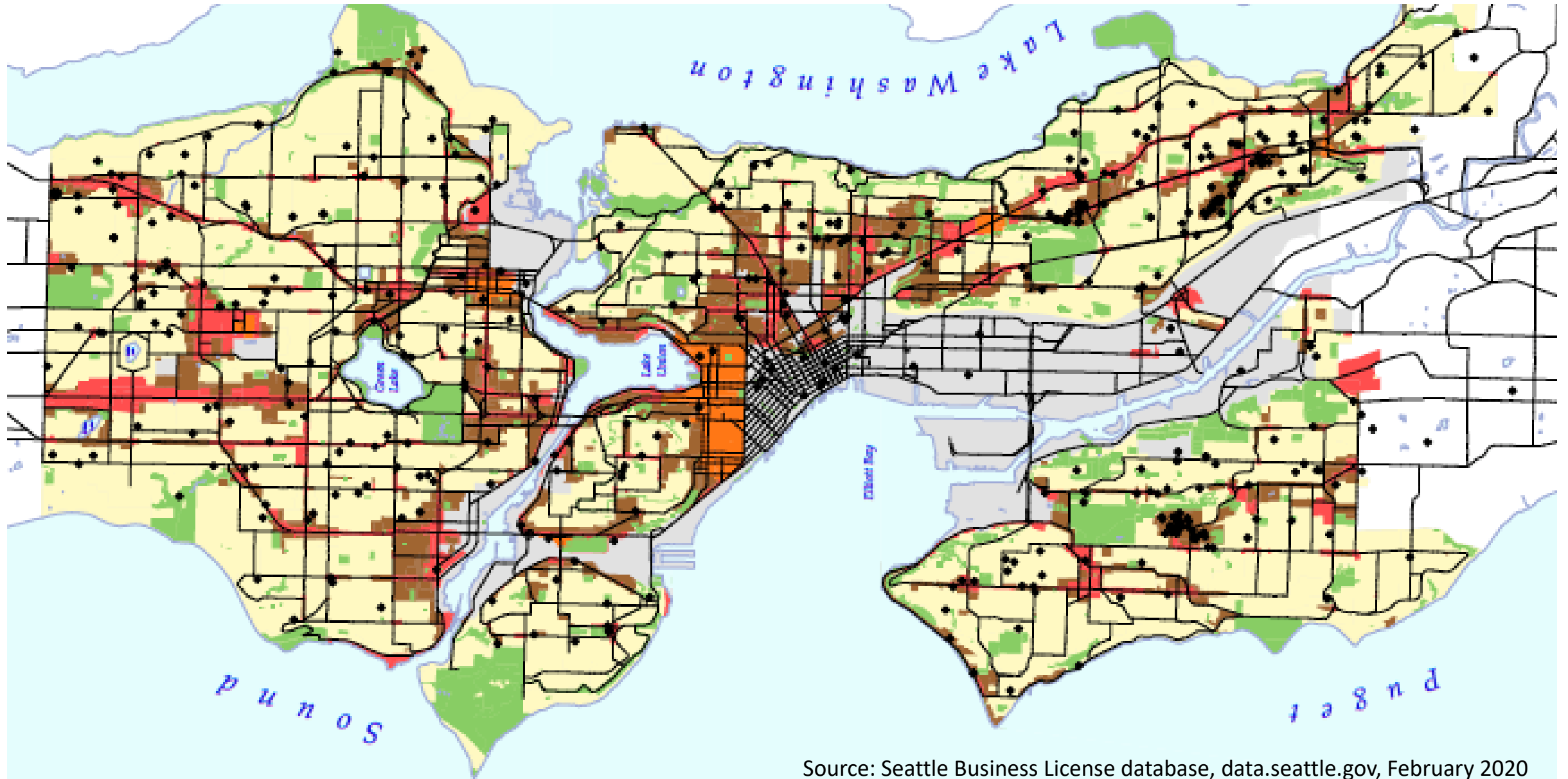
Supply of childcare

Recently permitted childcare centers (2015-2019):

- 51 centers received land use or building permits
- Average size of new childcare centers: 4,811 square feet
- Largest childcare centers are in Downtown and Industrial zones (>12,000 sf)
- Smallest childcare centers are in single-family and multifamily zones (1,400 sf)
- Average capacity of new childcare centers: 67 children
- Total capacity of new childcare centers: 3,400 children

- Time to approval averaged 161 days
- Longest approvals were childcare centers in single family zones that needed conditional use approval: 248 days on average

Childcare Businesses



Source: Seattle Business License database, data.seattle.gov, February 2020

Childcare Near You Package

Home occupations (Family care centers)

- Remove limit on the number of children
- Allow childcare in accessory buildings

Single Family zones

- Permit outright
- Remove dispersal requirements

Childcare Near You Package

Multifamily zones

- Remove dispersal requirements
- Exempt childcare from floor area limits in midrise and highrise zones

Commercial zones

- Remove size limits (10,000 square feet in NC1 and 25,000 square feet in NC2)

Childcare Near You Package

Seattle Mixed zones

- Allow at street level along key pedestrian streets
- Provide floor area incentives that currently apply to preschools to all childcare centers

Future Steps

- Review incentive programs that mitigate increased height and density through provision of childcare space

Questions?