

## Preliminary questions related to Child Care Centers on Columbia Pike

### Are more child care centers needed on Col Pike? Desired? In what conditions?

#### Current Supply

1. What is the supply of child care centers on Col Pike today?
  - 8 centers, excluding family-<sup>1</sup> and church operated (Trinity) centers, including 1 at Arlington Mill Community Center
    - 6 centers with combined capacity for approx. 290 children; ages 0-12 years; individual spaces range from ~1,150 sf – 4,700 sf
    - Teacher/staff capacity at 4 of 6 centers range from 3-10 staff per center<sup>2</sup>

#### Future Need/Demographics and Location:

2. What is the optimal capacity for child care centers on Col Pike? What is the forecasted need (i.e. pre-K population)?
  - Wait lists are common for all child care centers in Arlington; some of this is attributed to attraction and retention of child care employees (high level of credentials; low pay), otherwise, the shortage can be attributed to low supply of centers and overall capacity within existing centers;
  - Birth rates county-wide are averaging approx. 14.2 births/1,000 people; birth rates are higher in “other” races (i.e. non-white, non-black/African American) at approx. 23.2 births/1,000 people. Nearly 12,000 of 41,000 is “Other” race on Pike (@23.2 birth rate). These rates are common for over a 10 year timeframe.
3. Is there a correlation with affordable housing units?
  - Garden apartments have historically generated higher student populations than other multi-family housing types; however, committed affordable housing units have attracted more families with school-age children.
  - It can be expected that the plans and policies established for Columbia Pike, particularly tools to preserve the existing affordable housing supply, will result with an overall increase in households, including those with families, child care needs, and school age children.
  - Federal Head Start programs are offered for lower income families.
  - Demographic Trends:<sup>3</sup>
    - 67% Columbia Pike residents are non-white;
    - 50% of Columbia Pike households earn less than \$60K/year (29% Arlington); ~24% earn between \$60K- \$100K (similar to Arlington); ~26% earn over \$100K (~47% Arlington);
    - 17% of Columbia Pike residents do not have HS Diploma (7.5% Arlington); 16% with HS Diploma (~9% Arlington); 14% have some college and ~34%

---

<sup>1</sup> Several family day care providers in homes exist along Columbia Pike. These centers hold anywhere from 1 – 9 children; a use permit is required for “family day care home” with 6 – 9 children.

<sup>2</sup> data collected from available use permit information

<sup>3</sup> Source: US Census, 2006-2010 ACS (B15002)

have college degree (~9% and ~37% respectively, Arlington); 19% have professional/Masters/Doctorate (~36% Arlington).

4. Is Columbia Pike, with a high supply of housing, a good location for child care? Where are residents traveling to work?
  - Centers are ideally located close to housing; close to jobs; and/or within the commuting route.
  - Based on Mobility Lab's 2010 Arlington Household Survey<sup>4</sup>, on average:
    - 6% of Arlington's resident trips are to school/day care; 6% for pick-up/drop off;
    - 69% of Arlington resident's trips are to Arlington locations;
    - 17% of trips are made on foot or bicycle; 30% daily trips are made with others; 11% of trips by train or bus;
    - Arlington residents drive or ride with others for 30% of all daily trips;
    - 8% of trips are made by transit and 33% of trips are made by walking for pick up/drop off or school/daycare;
    - 33% of Arlington residents work within Arlington; of those employed outside of Arlington, 38% work in DC;
    - 35% of all Arlington resident trips originate and end in Arlington; 57% of Columbia Pike trips start and end in Arlington

#### Lease rates/economic factors:

1. Will "bonus density" be necessary for new centers along Col Pike, as noted in the 2010 White Paper, or if other circumstances would be present to make the centers more feasible?
  - Child care centers have challenges paying same rents as retail in new construction, or mixed use development; this challenge is likely to occur with new development on Columbia Pike
  - Developers who view child care centers as a building amenity may be able to factor costs into redevelopment plans more feasibly

#### Physical space needs:

1. Can child care be provided on upper stories, or are ground story locations required?
  - Child care centers prefer ground stories; ground stories are required for infant care; upper stories can accommodate older, mobile children (i.e. 2.5 years and older)
  - Ground story locations make egress more convenient, including access to open space
  - Child care centers: require 35 sf indoor space/child
2. Is there a maximum distance for the required open space & amenities? Can the open space be shared during the same operating hours? Can the space be shared during non-

---

<sup>4</sup> Columbia Pike sample: ~300 households; ~500 persons; ~1,180 resident trips; ~90 non-resident trips; ~1,270 total trips; <http://mobilitylab.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/2010-Arlington-County-Household-Survey2.pdf>

operating hours? Can the space be provided above grade (i.e. courtyards, terraces, balconies)? Can a public park be used to satisfy the requirement, and if so, what are the necessary procedures/requirements? What are the typical requirements for the open space (i.e. size/child; equipment; surfaces); and who/what staff enforces the requirements?

- Finding safe, sufficient, and appropriately designed open space is a challenge;
  - Child care centers must have access to outdoor spaces, either on site or off site; DHS Child care staff evaluates all requests;
  - On-site open space: min. 75 sf/child based on expected amount of children using outside space at any one time; has to meet functional needs for proposed age groups; spaces have to be approved with proper surfaces and enclosures;
  - Off-site open space: if no on-site open space is proposed, DHS Child care staff will evaluate proposed program offerings and how activity levels will be provided: neighborhood walks; trail walks; use of neighborhood parks; indoor multi-purpose rooms;
  - Neighborhood parks can be used to meet needs if determined to be safe, and within safe walking environment; distance is not a current criteria;
  - DHS Child care staff does not currently evaluate shared use of neighborhood parks and competition for space; however, teachers/instructors are aware that overlapping use by groups from other centers is not permitted.
3. Do the child care operators have concerns or limitations about the space requirements, such as, transparency requirements, entrance requirements?
- Child care centers prefer:
    - locations away from main street frontages, for security of children and to monitor access
    - views of children shielded from public view
  - Child care centers typically have high demands/costs for space build out
4. Parking & Drop Off: How is parking typically regulated? How is drop off handled?
- Parking: typically 1 space/employee; which may be provided off site on a commonly owned property or places of worship, lodges, or community swimming pools not operated primarily for commercial gain (per ACZO)
  - Site Plan parking: varies; some site plans approved on a space/GFA basis allocated for the retail space
  - Drop off space: can be provided within garage, with parents escorting children to center
    - Queuing and access entering/exiting garage can compete with residential uses
    - Drop off may be accommodated on-street depending on accessibility, traffic impacts, and queuing