

Childcare Funding Activation – Project Review Process

Proceeds from the 2020 sale of a City asset (906 E. Stuart) were designated to address childcare issues in Fort Collins. \$269,524 has been dedicated to an Assigned reserve titled ‘childcare needs’.

The Social Sustainability Department (SSD) has maintained the lead role in addressing Council’s priority focused on childcare infrastructure in recent years. Recognizing that these funds had not been activated in 3+ years, in May 2023 SSD initiated an internal, interdepartmental review of potential projects that might benefit City-led childcare initiatives and broader childcare interests in Fort Collins.

In total, 8 project options from 4 departments were identified and further explored to determine the highest and best use of the childcare funds. Through collaborative discussions, self-vetting, and probing inquiries, 1 project option remains for further funding consideration: the purchase of a full-size bus committed to the Recreation Department’s childcare programs and related enrichment activities.

Timeline:

June 2023	Internal review of City childcare project interests and needs, including: Human Resources, Social Sustainability Department, Economic Health Office, Recreation Department
August 2023	Collaborative review of project ideas and mapping of considerations 7 projects culled to 4
September 2023	Deeper scoping and site visits New project added and 3 removed 2 viable options
Oct –Nov 2023	Further project scoping TBL & Equity Scans 1 viable option remaining to use partial funds
Spring 2024	Project consideration by CMO and support confirmed
September 2024	Appropriation consideration by City Council

Funding Preferences: • Long-term impact • Leverage opportunities • Durable partnerships
 • Low-income households & Historically Underrepresented Groups • Simplicity

Project Options Removed from Consideration

Why Removed

		Why Removed
Grants to Community Partners	SSD	Significant ARPA funds recently awarded (through 2024).
Shared Space/Hub for Childcare Providers	SSD	Scope and ongoing funding necessary for such a project are beyond the funds available and the capacity of SSD to lead.
Lactation Rooms in City Spaces	HR	Need could be met from other budget sources if prioritized.
Childcare Navigator for Employees/Community	HR	Need could be met from other budget sources if prioritized.
Relocation & Expansion of Midtown Camp Funquest	REC	Lease arrangement only offered short-term relocation, especially given capital upgrade needs at site (church).
Playground Replacement at Aztlan Center	REC	Significant mitigation and cost needed to prep site. Likely a 2-3 year project. New dedicated tax funds could support in the future.
Revolving Loan Fund for Childcare Specific Businesses	EHO	Unable to negotiate accommodating terms with RLF vendor to offer this service.