

SOUTH JORDAN CITY
CITY COUNCIL STUDY MEETING

OCTOBER 7, 2025

Present: Mayor Dawn R. Ramsey, Council Member Patrick Harris, Council Member Kathie Johnson, Council Member Don Shelton, Council Member Tamara Zander, Council Member Jason McGuire, City Manager Dustin Lewis, City Attorney Ryan Loose, CFO Sunil Naidu, Police Chief Jeff Carr, Deputy Fire Chief Ryan Lessner, Director of Engineering & City Engineer Brad Klavano, Director of Recreation Janell Payne, Associate Director of Public Works Joey Collins, Director of Planning & Economic Development Brian Preece, Director of Administrative Services Melinda Seager, Director of Human Resources Teresa Cook, CTO Matthew Davis, GIS Coordinator Matt Jarman, Communications Manager/PIO Rachael Van Cleave, Deputy City Recorder Ambra Holland, Planning Commissioner Michele Hollist

Absent:

Other (Electronic) Attendance: Candice Randall, Tomas Longholtz

Other (In-Person) Attendance: Jennifer Kiddle, Jennifer Zollinger, Lilly Wong, Grace Wong, Taylor Hollist

4:36 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING

A. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introduction - By Mayor Dawn R. Ramsey

Mayor Ramsey welcomed everyone present and introduced the meeting.

B. Invocation – By Council Member, Kathie Johnson

Council Member Johnson offered the invocation.

C. Mayor and Council Coordination

D. Discussion/Review of City Council Meeting

Presentation Items:

- Proclamation Honoring Mason Sauzo - April Play Ball Player of the Month.
- Utah PTA Centennial Celebration Proclamation.

Public Hearing Items:

- Resolution R2025-52, Adopting the City of South Jordan 2025 Water Conservation Plan.
- Resolution R2025-49, Amending Chapter 7 of the South Jordan Plan to comply with new requirements of State Law.
- Ordinance 2025-16, Amending Chapters 17.18 (Uses), 17.30 (Agricultural Zones), 17.40 (Residential Zones), 17.54 (Redwood Road Mixed Use Zones), 17.72 (Planned

Community Zone) of the South Jordan City Municipal Code to comply with changes in State Legislation.

E. Discussion Item:

E.1. Home Occupation/Preschools Requirements. (By City Manager, Dustin Lewis)

City Manager Dustin Lewis provided an overview of the city's ordinance regarding home-based preschools and reviewed handouts (Attachment A) containing a summary spreadsheet with examples from other cities for reference. He explained that this discussion had been requested for the work session three weeks prior to allow the council to review and consider specific questions regarding the ordinance. Staff prepared materials highlighting key issues and parameters for discussion, including comparisons with other cities and states. Key discussion points included whether non-resident employees should be allowed (currently prohibited in South Jordan), vehicle trip limits for student drop-offs and pick-ups (South Jordan allows 12 one-way trips, roughly six round trips per day), class size limits (which vary across municipalities from six to 24 students, with some determined on a case-by-case basis), and whether the licensee's own children count toward the total number of children at the home. He noted that these topics had been flagged by a resident and emphasized as items requiring council clarification.

Council Member McGuire asked whether there is any state regulation requiring a specific adult-to-child ratio for home-based preschools. City Manager Lewis clarified that adult-to-child ratio requirements are generally more applicable to daycare facilities rather than home-based preschools. He explained that the information was provided to give the council context for their discussion.

Council Member Shelton asked whether, on the daycare side, the licensee's own children are counted as part of the total number of children in the home. Deputy City Recorder Ambra Holland explained that on the daycare side, the licensee's own children are counted toward the total, with age considered, for example, a baby versus a seven-year-old may be treated differently when determining the maximum number of children allowed.

City Manager Dustin Lewis clarified that while counting the licensee's own children is primarily a daycare consideration, some city ordinances blur the lines between daycare and preschool. He noted that most ordinances apply to home-based operations, with some cities creating specific provisions for preschools, others for daycares, and some leaving the distinction vague.

Council Member Zander asked for clarification regarding the age at which a licensee's own children count toward the total number of children in a home-based program. Deputy City Recorder Holland responded that age seven was used as an example, but she was unsure of the exact age and would need to check the specific requirement.

City Manager Lewis addressed resident questions regarding the number of sessions allowed per day and per week for home-based preschools. He explained that the current ordinance limits programs to two sessions per day and four sessions per week. He noted that other municipalities vary widely, with some allowing up to four sessions per day, others setting three, some having no

limits, and some handling it on a case-by-case basis. He highlighted that the definition can be unclear, particularly when different age groups have varying schedules, which can result in different total sessions depending on programming. He acknowledged that this complexity has led residents to request council clarification.

Council Member Shelton asked for clarification what a session does. City Manager Lewis clarified that, in this context, a “session” refers to a single class period, such as an morning session with a defined group of children. Two sessions per day would typically mean one morning and one afternoon session. He noted that the weekly limit of four sessions is separate from the daily count, so two sessions per day over multiple days does not automatically exceed the weekly maximum; the total is calculated based on the combined number of sessions held throughout the week.

Council Member McGuire suggested that the session limits should be interpreted more like days of operation rather than individual sessions.

City Manager Lewis stated that the city’s current ordinance limits preschool session length to three hours, but many municipalities do not regulate this detail or address it only on a case-by-case basis. Some cities allow up to four hours per session. He noted that the lack of clarity in South Jordan’s definition has caused confusion and suggested that creating a clearer structure may be beneficial. However, he also questioned whether regulating session length at this level of detail is necessary, encouraging the council to consider whether this requirement should remain in the ordinance.

Council Member Shelton asked whether removing limits on preschool session length could unintentionally allow preschools to function as de facto daycares. He questioned whether that distinction would trigger different considerations or regulatory needs.

City Manager Lewis noted that removing limits on session length could allow preschools to operate similarly to daycares, which may lead providers to use the model to circumvent daycare regulations. He also outlined another key consideration; proximity. While South Jordan’s current ordinance is silent on spacing requirements, several other cities limit preschools or similar home occupations to one within a 300-foot radius, with some adding additional restrictions if more than one exists within a quarter mile. He explained that without proximity rules, multiple preschools could cluster within a small neighborhood or cul-de-sac, potentially resulting in significant traffic congestion during drop-off and pick-up times. Some cities address this by requiring notification to neighbors within 300 feet, allowing them an opportunity to provide input during the application process.

Council Member Zander inquired about how neighbors are notified when a home-based preschool is established. She noted that since these operations fall under the city’s home occupation regulations, the business license process might provide such notification. It was clarified that this notification used to occur but may not be consistently applied currently, and that in Daybreak, it is handled as a specific HOA feature.

City Manager Lewis provided further context on considerations for home-based preschools. He explained that when conditional use permits (CUPs) were used in the past, they helped mitigate impacts on neighbors, particularly related to congestion. He noted that multiple preschools on the same street with overlapping drop-off and pick-up times could create traffic issues, and some cities

address this by requiring breaks between sessions, which South Jordan currently does not regulate. He also highlighted that South Jordan has age restrictions for preschool students (ages three to five), making the city somewhat of an outlier compared to most cities that do not impose such limits. He noted potential concerns with shared driveways, where parking for drop-offs could create conflicts, although the city does not currently regulate this. Additional considerations observed in other municipalities include maintaining a residential appearance, restricting signage and commercial vehicles, limiting outdoor play areas to backyards, and requiring safety checks such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, aligning with general home occupation standards.

Council Member McGuire inquired further about the safety check requirements, seeking clarification on what is currently mandated for home-based preschools. City Manager Lewis explained that safety checks for home-based preschools are conducted by the Fire Marshal and are designed to maintain the residential character of neighborhoods. He then introduced the “cheat sheet” handout (Attachment A), which provides comparative examples of how other cities regulate home-based preschools.

City Manager Lewis directed the council’s attention to the South Jordan home occupation ordinance, specifically the section on preschools (Section 5.38.030). He emphasized that this is the section for discussion regarding potential clarifications, modifications, or additions. He referenced the comparative materials from other cities included in the handout, as well as concerns previously raised by a resident, noting that the document also contained examples of Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) and Conditional Education Permits (CEPs) issued in 2004 and 2016 that adjusted student limits to 12 per day. He explained that these examples illustrate potential variability in rules across different preschools. He then opened the discussion for the council to identify key issues, suggest ordinance adjustments, and direct staff on drafting potential revisions, with staff available to answer questions during the deliberation.

Mayor Ramsey shared her personal experience with home-based preschools, noting that all six of her children attended such programs. She described that the oldest two attended a neighborhood preschool near their home, while the remaining four commuted to a different home preschool after the family moved. She explained the scheduling structure, noting that four-year-old classes had morning and afternoon sessions on alternating days (Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday), and three-year-old classes met on Fridays with multiple sessions. Class sizes often exceeded six children, sometimes reaching twelve, and were staffed by consistent teachers rather than substitutes. She emphasized the importance of maintaining neighborhood and community character while avoiding overly burdensome government regulation. She noted that it may have been over 16 years since some elements were last reviewed in detail. She emphasized that while the city remains committed to preserving quality of life in neighborhoods, the current context makes it appropriate to revisit the ordinance to determine if further updates are necessary. She concluded by noting that while she does not have all the answers, she is open to council discussion and believes the current ordinance could be improved to better balance community needs with practical flexibility for home preschools.

Council Member Johnson emphasized that the most critical consideration for home-based preschools is the potential traffic impact on neighborhoods. She noted that the effects can vary

significantly depending on street layout, such as whether the preschool is located on a cul-de-sac or a through street, and highlighted the importance of coordinating regulations to address these differences.

Council Member Zander raised a related point regarding the impact of common driveways, noting that this was a concern of hers. She inquired whether common driveways exist in areas of the city beyond Daybreak, emphasizing the need to consider how such shared access points could affect preschool operations and neighborhood traffic. City Attorney Ryan Loose confirmed that there are additional areas in the city with shared driveways outside of Daybreak, where multiple homes use a common access point.

Council Member Zander highlighted that the layout and density in Daybreak, particularly homes facing a Paseo with alley access, could create significant congestion if a preschool or daycare operated there. She suggested considering a requirement that such home-based preschools or daycares have direct curb frontage to better manage drop-offs and reduce neighborhood traffic impacts, noting that shared driveways or alley access could exacerbate congestion.

Council Member McGuire noted a similar scenario on his street with homes on a green court, where children are dropped off for a preschool or daycare. He observed that, in that case, there has not been noticeable traffic congestion, suggesting that location-specific impacts may vary.

Council members discussed the differences between green courts and Paseos, noting that green courts generally have more curb frontage, while Paseos often feature narrow strips of grass with limited access. They acknowledged that the discussion did not fully define regulations for each type of frontage. The conversation included consideration of existing HOA guidelines, recognizing that Daybreak and other HOAs may have application processes or policies affecting home-based preschools. Council members agreed that policies should not rely solely on a single HOA's rules, and emphasized that factors such as curb frontage can influence traffic impact. Examples were shared of preschools with good reputations that operated from homes fronting a curb without causing neighborhood disruption. Overall, the discussion focused on potential ways to mitigate traffic and maintain neighborhood quality of life.

Council Member Shelton emphasized that while traffic and neighborhood impact are important, it is also essential to consider the operational needs of preschool providers. He noted the importance of understanding how many sessions per day and per week providers require to run a viable program. He suggested seeking input from preschool operators to better balance neighborhood concerns with the practical needs of parents and providers, proposing that the council consider whether to invite the providers in attendance for input during this discussion or at a later time.

Mayor Ramsey noted that they had not previously informed preschool providers about the opportunity to engage in the discussion, so some may have participated if given the chance. She suggested that it would not be appropriate to open the conversation to outside input at this moment, as it could create confusion and disrupt the meeting's process. She recommended considering provider input at a later, properly noticed time.

City Manager Lewis added that input from neighborhood residents should also be considered, noting that some neighbors may have strong opinions about home-based preschools. He suggested

that a future, properly noticed meeting could provide a balanced opportunity for both providers and residents to give feedback.

Council Member Shelton asked whether input from providers and residents needed to be gathered in a formal council meeting or if it could be handled through a smaller work group with staff and possibly some council members.

City Manager Lewis suggested that the council could approach this creatively by appointing one or two members to work with staff in a smaller group to gather input from providers and neighbors. He emphasized that while this work could help prepare information, any formal action would still need to occur in a public meeting.

Council Member McGuire suggested that it would be beneficial for the council to first review the prepared materials to clarify their positions, and then meet with the working group to ensure those align with the needs of preschool providers. He noted that prior requests from providers, such as having two sessions per day (morning and afternoon), should be considered, as these factors directly tie into traffic flow and parking concerns.

Council Member Shelton emphasized that the council should consider key operational details for preschools, including the number of sessions per day, the number of sessions per week, and the number of children in each session, as these factors impact both viability for providers and neighborhood traffic. He added that the council currently lacks clarity on the operational needs of preschool providers, including what residents running these businesses require and what the community demand is, noting that understanding these factors is important for informed decision-making.

Mayor Ramsey noted that preschool demand can be very high, citing her own experience where children had to be placed on a waiting list from birth due to the popularity and quality of the program, highlighting the importance of recognizing community need when considering operational guidelines.

Council Member Zander shared her perspective as both a neighbor and a community member, noting that she lived near a home-based preschool for over a decade before the operator relocated to a commercial building in South Jordan. She observed that the preschool ran responsibly and efficiently, with no complaints from neighbors regarding traffic or operations. She emphasized that while there are considerations for regulation, she believes overly prescriptive rules can verge on government overreach and that the city should avoid micromanaging these operators. She suggested setting clear, simple parameters, such as limiting the number of sessions per day, two sessions being reasonable, to give neighbors predictability without imposing excessive controls. She stressed that preschool operators are competent and conscientious, focusing on the well-being of the children, and that the city's role should be to address only the few key points that directly impact neighborhoods, then allow operators to manage their business effectively.

Council Member Johnson suggested addressing traffic concerns by requiring preschool operators to submit a plan for managing drop-off activity. She emphasized that the plan should focus on the flow and coordination of vehicles during drop-off times, rather than the number of parking spaces, recognizing that each site and situation could differ.

City Manager Lewis explained that some cities require preschools to submit a drop-off and parking plan when operating under a CEP, as part of the approval process for this type of home-based business.

Council Member Zander expressed support for requiring preschools to submit a drop-off and parking plan as an exercise in planning, but emphasized that the city should avoid overly prescriptive or micromanaging rules, such as restricting specific turning movements, to ensure the regulations remain practical and reasonable for operators.

Council Member Johnson added that any required drop-off or parking plan must be manageable and effective; if the plan does not work in practice, the preschool should face consequences, including potential loss of its license.

Council Member Zander emphasized the importance of trusting business owners to manage their operations responsibly, citing a friend who runs a successful dance studio without prescriptive regulations like mandatory breaks between sessions. She suggested that, similarly, preschool operators are experienced and capable of managing drop-offs and scheduling efficiently, and cautioned against excessive city oversight that could become micromanaging.

City Manager Lewis noted that certain regulations, such as limiting vehicle trips, could be circumvented depending on the location. For example, a home-based business on a dead-end street could have client's park at a nearby church lot and walk to the residence, effectively bypassing the trip limit. He highlighted that similar situations could occur elsewhere in the community, emphasizing the need for practical and enforceable guidelines.

Mayor Ramsey raised a question regarding how vehicle trips are counted for home-based preschools. She noted that while the current system counts one trip in and one trip out as two trips, from a practical standpoint, a single round trip to a location, like going to a store, feels like one trip. She suggested reconsidering whether the existing method of counting trips accurately reflects real-world traffic impacts.

Council Member Harris commented on vehicle trips and related regulations, noting that many issues, such as class size, are inherently tied to the number of students and their drop-offs. He suggested that if the council sets a clear limit for class size, he referenced 24 students, then other related regulations largely manage themselves, reducing the need for prescriptive rules on every individual aspect. He added that establishing the appropriate class size should be the primary focus, emphasizing that once the class size is set correctly, other considerations related to drop-offs and operations will fall into place, and additional detailed regulations are unnecessary.

Council Member Zander added that home size and available space can vary significantly, noting that a larger home with ample space might safely accommodate more children than a smaller home. She cautioned against over-regulating based on square footage, emphasizing that focusing on class size rather than trying to micromanage individual home layouts is more practical.

City Manager Lewis noted that while the council is asking the right questions, they also need to balance neighborhood character. He emphasized that limits on student numbers should consider how non-business-owning residents might perceive and respond to higher enrollment, as allowing

too many children could generate complaints from neighbors concerned about traffic and neighborhood impact.

Council Member Harris stated that there should be a reasonable cap on the number of children allowed in a home-based preschool. He emphasized that once a business reaches a certain size, it should no longer operate as a home-based business but instead move to a commercial location. He noted that while larger homes might accommodate more children, operating a large preschool in a residential neighborhood could disrupt neighbors, and the city should ensure that any cap aligns with standards in other municipalities.

City Manager Lewis noted that as the council considers updates to home-based preschool regulations, they should also be aware that other cities have addressed similar issues for home-based instructional activities, such as swimming lessons, tennis lessons, and other private instruction. He highlighted that South Jordan has homes with pools, tennis courts, and pickleball courts, and while these are not preschools, the considerations around instruction and neighborhood impact could be relevant when making regulatory changes.

Council Member Harris stated that while he supports being generous in setting limits for home-based preschools, he believes there should be clear boundaries to prevent operators from exceeding reasonable limits. He emphasized the need for regulations that allow flexibility but ensure that operators do not overextend in ways that could negatively impact neighborhoods.

Mayor Ramsey highlighted the benefits of neighborhood preschools, noting that families often appreciate having a preschool within walking distance, which reduces traffic and fosters community engagement. She emphasized that the city currently has no proximity requirements and supports maintaining that flexibility, as market demand generally prevents oversaturation in any one area, such as multiple preschools on a single cul-de-sac. She noted that any potential issues could be addressed if they arise, but such conflicts are unlikely. She stressed the importance of not restricting qualified individuals, such as parents who choose to operate a preschool near their home, based on location or personal circumstances, and affirmed that responsible operators, guided by common sense and market demand, already effectively manage preschool operations.

Council Member McGuire provided his perspective on key aspects of home-based preschools. He supported allowing non-resident employees, noting potential benefits for programs serving children with special needs. He indicated that traffic flow did not require additional regulation and that class sizes of eight students per day largely self-regulate. He agreed that licensee children should not count toward the total and that two sessions per day, five days per week, is reasonable, allowing operators to determine their own hours of operation. He recommended minimal city involvement beyond these points, with the exception of common driveways, which he suggested should be prohibited due to enforcement difficulties.

Council Member Zander clarified the implication of prohibiting the use of common driveways. She noted that on streets where some homes share a driveway, such as one house facing the curb with a shared driveway for four others, residents in the back units would be unable to operate a preschool if the common driveway restriction is applied.

Council Member McGuire clarified that homes with shared driveways could still operate a preschool, but vehicles could not use the shared driveway for drop-offs or pick-ups. Instead, parents and guardians would need to use street parking, similar to standard residential parking practices.

Council Member Zander expressed some hesitation regarding the proposed cap of eight students per class. She noted the need to consult with preschool operators to understand typical class sizes and operational feasibility, suggesting that many could effectively manage 10 to 12 students. She referenced a resident inquiry indicating that the current ordinance allows eight students, but there are families on waiting lists, highlighting the need for clarification in the code and potential adjustment of the cap. Council Member McGuire indicated agreement with potentially adjusting the class size limit, signaling support for revisiting the number to better align with operational needs and demand. Council Member Zander expressed support for maintaining two sessions per day, citing a positive experience with a neighbor who operated a preschool under that schedule. She noted some uncertainty regarding class size limits and suggested considering a cap of 12 students per class while allowing operators to determine what is reasonable based on their individual space and circumstances.

Mayor Ramsey invited public input, noting that while this is not a formal roundtable, anyone wishing to share their perspective on class size, whether 8, 10, or 12 students per session, was welcome to come forward and share their thoughts.

Jennifer Kiddle, owner of Popcorn Pop-In Preschool in South Jordan, addressed the council regarding class size and parking. She explained that she currently operates with 12 students per class, which she finds optimal because it accommodates absences, twins, and overall planning. She noted that her classes are managed with the help of a family member who lives locally and assists daily. Regarding parking and drop-off, she described a streamlined process; parents line up along the street, she retrieves each child in under two minutes, and there is no need for parents to exit their vehicles. She emphasized that their procedure avoids double parking and using neighbors' driveways, and she recommended considering the number of street outlets when evaluating potential preschool locations, as streets with multiple outlets mitigate congestion. She concluded that in her location, parking and traffic have not been an issue.

Council Member Harris indicated agreement with setting the class size at 12 students per class.

Council Member Zander added that having a helper alongside the lead teacher is ideal and should not be restricted, emphasizing that most preschool operators are dedicated individuals who genuinely care for the children in their care.

Council Member Harris suggested limiting class size to 12 students and avoiding overregulation of other aspects, noting that most operational concerns, like traffic flow, are naturally managed. He did emphasize addressing the issue of common driveways but felt additional restrictions were unnecessary.

Council Member Shelton clarified that preschools could have a maximum of 12 students per session, with two sessions per day, operating five days a week, and may have one or two helpers as needed.

Council Member Zander added that non-resident employees are permitted and that the operator's own children do not count toward the maximum class size.

Council members discussed and agreed to not cap number of employees. .

City Manager Lewis summarized the council's approach; the city will not regulate parking or traffic flow, but will set a maximum class size of 12 students per day, not counting the operator's own children. Two sessions per day will be allowed, with no specific limit on the number of sessions per week, effectively leaving that decision to the operator while maintaining the class size cap as the primary limiting factor.

Council Member Zander noted that while theoretically up to 10 sessions could be scheduled, in practice it's unlikely anyone would operate beyond two sessions per day. She asked whether the council wants to set a limit of five days per week or leave it flexible, allowing operators to determine their own schedule within the two-session-per-day framework.

City Manager Lewis summarized that the council could remain silent on several operational details, proximity, breaks between sessions, and age restrictions, allowing these aspects to self-regulate. He noted that common driveways should include guidance emphasizing respect for neighbors to maintain the neighborhood atmosphere. He outlined five key points for the council's consideration and proposed that staff take a first pass at redrafting the ordinance section. He added that fire inspections for preschools will follow the same language and requirements currently applied to daycares, ensuring consistent safety standards across home-based child care operations.

Council Member Johnson emphasized that while the city will not regulate traffic or parking in detail, the code should include a note reminding preschool operators to be considerate and careful with drop-off procedures to minimize impact on neighbors.

City Manager Lewis suggested that the city could provide guidance or best practices to help other preschool operators manage drop-offs and traffic efficiently, using the example provided by Jennifer Kiddle as a model.

Council Member McGuire noted that, based on personal experience with preschools and similar businesses like dance studios, operators typically take the initiative to establish efficient drop-off and operational procedures on their own, without requiring city intervention.

Mayor Ramsey concluded the discussion by emphasizing that updating the preschool policy will result in a more current and effective framework that better serves South Jordan residents. She noted that the city can revisit the policy if any issues arise, though she anticipates few problems. She thanked the participants, including preschool operators, for their input and stressed the city's commitment to maintaining a family-friendly, business-friendly, and neighborhood-focused environment. She noted that the updated policy will return as a formal agenda item for further review and potential code amendments.

Council Member McGuire motioned to recess the City Council Study Meeting and move to Executive Closed Session to discuss the character, professional competence, physical or

mental health of an individual. Council Member Zander seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.

RECESS CITY COUNCIL STUDY MEETING AND MOVE TO EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION

F. Executive Closed Sessions:

F.1. Discussion of the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION AND RETURN TO CITY COUNCIL STUDY MEETING

Council Member Zander motioned to adjourn the Executive Closed Session and move back to the City Council Study Meeting. Council Member McGuire seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.

Council Member Johnson motioned to adjourn the October 7, 2025 City Council Study Meeting. Council Member Shelton seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, unanimous in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

The October 7, 2025 City Council Study Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.