

Project History (ZA-2021-5040-CU)

History of the subject site

The proposed project site was built in 1955 as a church and operated under a grandfathered conditional use permit until late 2019, when the congregation of New Gospel Church felt there was no longer a need for their Filipino-centric religious assembly, given the demographic and economic changes in the community. They desired to retire their church operations to a greater cause valuable to the community. There was no appetite from other churches to acquire this location. Upon careful consideration, they agreed to sell the property to two young mothers from the community who wanted to create a childcare center for the locals rather than a developer.

The proposed project

Two young mothers, Szilvi Kovacs and Albina Baranova, who live in the Venice/Mar Vista community, struggled to find quality early education and childcare for their toddlers. After much struggle, they felt so much pain that they decided to start a family daycare to provide quality early education and care to their children and other families in the community. They created a unique curriculum that combined the educational approach of Maria Montessori and Reggio Emilia no other program in Southern California offers.

Due to the licensing limitations for large family daycares of up to 12 kids allowed, they quickly reached capacity. After having over 40 families on the waitlist, they started exploring ways to make their unique and affordable program available to more families.

They quickly learned that finding a facility that meets various criteria on the Westside, specifically in Mar Vista, Venice, Playa Vista, and adjacent communities, is almost impossible due to exorbitant rents and a lack of crucial features such as outdoor space.

In the process of exploring options and validating the need in the community, back in the Fall of 2018, they met with the staff of Mike Bonin's office, namely Jesus David Orozco "Chuy," Senior Field Deputy, and the current president of the Del Rey neighborhood council Matt Wersinger (<https://www.delreync.org/board-members>). They confirmed a dire need for preschool and childcare facilities in the growing Westside communities, especially the so-called Silicon Beach, including Venice, CA.

Independent research (https://insightcced.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/INSIGHT_CostofBeingCalifornian_6_web.pdf) and media coverage (<https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2021/07/29/2-on-your-side-childcare-crisis-update/>) prove our practical observations that the community urgently needs expansion of quality childcare centers, especially those created by people from the community.

Since Kids Collective applied for a conditional use permit at 1935 South Walgrove Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90066, the conditions have worsened. Szilvi Kovacs (license #197494891, 6562 W 83rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90045) is being evicted because the house she rented and used as a family daycare is being sold to a developer, leading to a loss of a beloved childcare home for the families and kids.

Among in-home family child care sites, 14% shuttered — a loss of some 3,635 sites — between January 2020 and January 2021, according to data from the Child Care Resource and Referral Network. Among larger centers, 33% closed, accounting for 4,873 centers. According to CalMatters, the total number of closed facilities reached 8,500 by mid-2021.

The project's approval is critical for the community and is supported by over 100 parents via signed letters of support.

Occupancy

- Maximum occupancy of 68 children
- Eight staffers

The maximum occupancy is estimated based on existing requirements from CDSS and is subject to CDSS' approval.

We have worked with LADBS, and they are satisfied with the submitted plans. The plan approval by LADBS is subject to the confirmation of the conditional use permit.

LAFD will participate in the project approval when obtaining a certificate of occupancy.

Staff parking

- Staffers will be incentivized to carpool, walk, bike, or be dropped off to reduce the use of assigned parking spaces on the North-West side of the building in the alley immediately adjacent to Walgrove Ave to three spaces, which will leave two standard parking spaces and an accessible parking space available to visitors;

Operation hours

The childcare center will operate from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday except for Federal holidays.

Service area

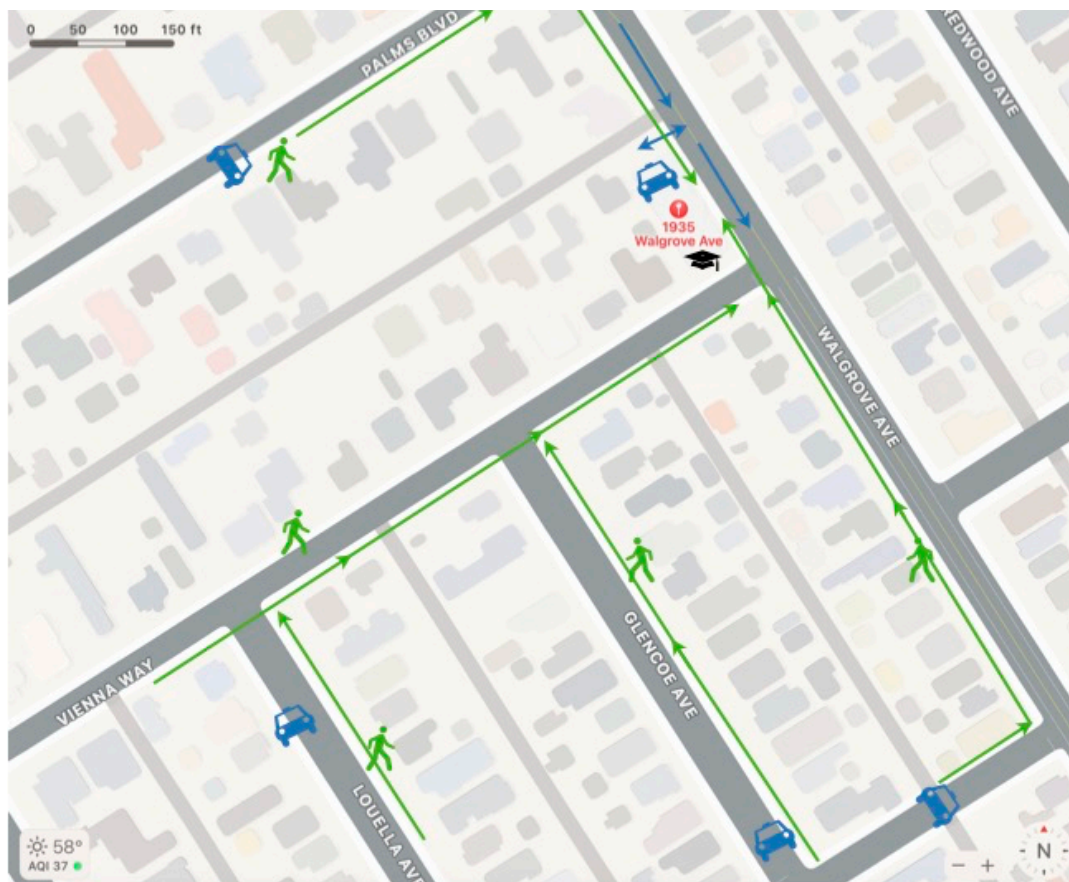
The project is designed to serve the local community and provide the neighborhood and adjacent areas with quality childcare. Enrollment will prioritize families that:

- live in the neighborhood and can walk or bike to the preschool;
- have older siblings attending neighborhood schools (Walgrove Elementary, Mark Twain Middle School).

Parking, Pick-Ups/Drop-Offs, Traffic, and Parking Mitigation

The map below demonstrates possible drop-off and pick-up scenarios:

- Two designated parking spots in the alley next to Walgrove Ave are reserved for drop-offs and pick-ups. One disabled parking space is prioritized for parents with disabilities;
- Public parking areas along the adjacent streets - Walgrove Ave, Palms Blvd, Vienna Way, Glenco Ave, Louella Ave, Glyndon Ave, Preston Way. These streets are in low-density residents areas, with residents having access to two to three parking spaces in their homes, hence allowing for ample and unrestricted public parking;
- It also shows foot traffic toward the childcare center from residents who walk over kids and bike them or parents who park nearby for up to 10 minutes to walk them over to the designated meet and greet areas **in the alley** and on **Walgrove Ave**.



- 50% of enrolled families (up to 34 kids) are estimated to walk or bike to our childcare center;

- Enrollment will prioritize families living in the neighborhood who can walk or bike to the preschool or have older siblings attending neighborhood schools (Walgrove Elementary, Mark Twain Middle School, Broadway Elementary).

- The remaining 50% of families (up to 34 kids) will be instructed to use curb parking on Walgrove Ave in front of the childcare center, subject to availability, or park on adjacent streets (Vienna Way, Carlton Way, Glencoe Ave, Louella Ave, etc.), then walk their child to the drop-off and pick-up area at the front entrance where they will be greeted by a teacher, escorting children in and out. Further instructions for the parents are provided below under “**Parent instructions for drop-offs and pick-ups**”;

- Having dedicated teachers meet kids at the front entrance will reduce the drop-off and pick-up times to approximately one minute per child and will reduce the time parents park in the street to under five minutes;

- Parents will be instructed not to use or block the alley to address neighbors' concerns unless the assigned parking spots are available. Otherwise, they will need to find street parking and walk over to the designated pick-up and drop-off areas;

- Based on the community feedback, in addition to a full-day program from 8 am to 5 pm, we plan to introduce an extended-day program from 8 am to 2:30 pm for parents who pick up siblings at nearby elementary and middle schools. The maximum capacity will remain the same. However, the pick-up schedule will be stretched over multiple windows to reduce impact in half (“Parent instructions for drop-offs and pick-ups”);

- Additionally, we can provide staggered drop-off and pick-up schedules in three 10-minute intervals between 8:00-8:30 am, 2:00-2:30 pm, and 4:30-5 pm to evenly distribute drop-offs and pick-ups for up to 34 kids;

- We will stay in touch with neighbors, monitor their concerns, and improve our operational procedures as needed.

Noise Mitigation

- Our curriculum focuses on early education via activities that require focus and concentration, such as painting, crafting, yoga, gardening, and math with a low noise profile;

- We operate within standard business hours from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, when residents are at work;

- The maximum outdoor capacity will not exceed 24 children at a time;

- We will plan greenery along the walls surrounding the school to serve as an additional natural noise barrier.

Parent instructions for drop-offs and pick-ups

Dear Parent, our childcare center follows strict rules for dropping off and picking up students. Please read these instructions carefully:

- Walk or bike to school to reduce traffic in the neighborhood whenever possible;
- Drop off and pick up your child at the time slots according to your child's group:
 - Irises / Daisies: Drop off between 8:00 am - 8:10 am, Pick up between 2:15 pm - 2:30 pm (up to 24 students)
 - Sunflowers / Lilies: Drop off between 8:10 am - 8:20 am, Pick up between 4:30 pm - 4:45 pm (up to 24 students)
 - Poppies / Tulips: Drop off between 8:20 am - 8:30 am, Pick up between 4:45 pm - 5 pm (up to 20 students)
- Please pull into the parking lot only if there are available parking spots for drop off and pick up. A teacher will escort your child into the building. Make sure you exit the lot promptly by making a right turn on Walgrove Ave to make it available to other families;
- If there is no parking spot available, use public parking on Walgrove Ave. and nearby streets (see the map below) for short-term parking not exceeding 10 minutes to walk over your child to the childcare center via the main entrance on Walgrove Ave. or the side entrance where a teacher will meet your child and escort them into the building.
- **Never block or park in the alley west of the building.** Cars left in the alley will be towed at the owners' expense.

