



Memorandum

To: UP Municipal Planning Commissions

From: Ryan Soucy, AICP, CUPPAD Senior Planner

Date: July 16, 2025

Subject: Planning and Zoning for Child Care Facilities

The Upper Peninsula is experiencing a child care crisis, according to the UP Early Childcare Education Task Force. The issues include but are not limited to a severe shortage of available spaces, barriers to starting up new child care facilities, and a limited number of care giving professionals. The problems have grown over the years, and they are challenging the stability of working parents and their employers across the region.

The task force was assembled to understand the range of limitations to child care in the UP and propose solutions that could support the industry. Comprised of workforce and economic development leaders, educators, child care providers, planners, and parents, the task force's primary goal was to develop a child care master plan for the region.

As part of this effort, the three Regional Planning Organizations of the UP developed a component project to study and assess local zoning regulations across 52 local jurisdictions. The findings of the assessment revealed that many zoning ordinances were not in compliance with the State's governing statute, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 regarding the regulation of child care facilities. As a result, the task force determined that a *Best Practices* guide should be developed to guide and encourage planning commissioners to review their ordinances and see where improvements could be made. We request that you please consider a future meeting agenda item to discuss the attached materials and what steps your planning commission can take to support the child care industry in your community.

Thank you for your support and attention on this matter. This is just one of the first actionable steps the task force will be taking to help mitigate this crisis, making the UP economically stronger and more viable for working parents.

Ryan Soucy
Senior Planner
CUPPAD Regional Commission