



Legislative Capital Request – Northeast Spokane Non-Traditional Childcare Center

Goal: Increase affordable childcare capacity in Northeast Spokane – including non-traditional hours like swing shifts, weekends, etc. This will provide additional employment opportunities for area residents currently burdened by inability to access childcare and provide area employers a sorely needed boost in local workforce participation.

Request: \$2.5 Million in planning and construction capital to fund the construction of an approximately 10,000sf affordable childcare facility, as a component of a larger mixed-use project currently in planning for a key location in Hillyard.

Capital Request Partners:

- **Northeast Community Center/ The ZONE:** Jene Ray, Director
- **J&H Childcare LLC:** Luc Jasmin, Owner
- **Greater Spokane Incorporated:** Jake Mayson, Director of Public Policy
- **Northeast Public Development Authority:** Jesse Bank, Executive Director

Additional Support: Spokane Teacher’s Credit Union (STCU), Spokane Workforce Council, WorkSource Spokane, Community Minded Enterprises, Area Employers: Jubilant HollisterStier, URM Warehouse, Sonderer Packaging, Global Thrift

Narrative: Northeast Spokane is a childcare desert. Those facilities that do exist are at or over capacity for all age groups, with waitlists, but lack the available space to expand. While this makes securing daytime childcare spots difficult, the area lacks any centers serving service sector and shift work households needing care for swing shifts and weekends. This barrier is a primary reason why households – especially single heads of household – report they are unable to find adequate employment.

The childcare barrier also puts downward pressure on workforce participation – especially at the entry-level, for those with low education and experience. There are numerous large employers within the area – many that operate 24/7 – that are either struggling to recruit staff or vastly expanding their operations and need to make a significant number of new hires. They are eager to access additional talent but often struggle to fill positions due to a lack of childcare to serve this area.

Providing affordable, swing shift and weekend childcare can not only serve to improve the economic condition of area families but can also address one of the primary needs of local employers.

Should this capital request be successful, the proceeds will be used to fund the construction of such a Childcare Center within a larger mixed-use development currently being planned by the Northeast PDA (NEPDA). Funding the Childcare Center in this manner keeps occupancy costs below market as lease rates need not be burdened by the Center’s pro rata share of the overall building’s construction cost. This unique arrangement is made possible by the NEPDA’s public mission and its not-for-profit structure.

Land for the project has been secured by the NEPDA which expects to begin a procurement process for design services in January 2024. Design will be funded via capital already committed to the project in the NEPDA’s 2024 operating budget, a generous donation from STCU, as well as any design proceeds secured via this capital request. In addition to the Childcare Center, the project will include approximately 30 units of affordable housing, as well as a community meeting space, and is sited along a high-frequency transit corridor. Construction is expected to commence as early as is practicable in 2025.

The project benefits from substantial local support, including the nearby Northeast Community Center and The ZONE – a resident-led organization dedicated to breaking down disparities in health, education, and economic outcomes. In addition, the Spokane City Council and Greater Spokane Incorporated have both identified this capital request among their top legislative priorities for the 2024 session. The project has also received significant technical and operational support from J&H Childcare – a seasoned childcare facility operator helmed by Luc Jasmin III.