

Applicant Outreach Summary

2024 July 30



Community Outreach on Planning & Development Applicant-led Outreach Summary

Please complete this form and include with your application submission

Project name: Tuscany Daycare (Child Care Service)

Did you conduct community outreach on your application? ☒ YES or ☐ NO

If no, please provide your rationale for why you did not conduct outreach.

Outreach Strategy

Provide an overview of your outreach strategy, summary of tactics and techniques you undertook (Include dates, locations, # of participants and any other relevant details)

We spoke with our neighbors, and we also used the Tuscany Community pages on the social media to discuss it with the Tuscany community at large. This was a very useful interaction and it helped people understand how the daycares are regulated and approved. Most of the concern raised by people were based on the disinformation about the project. We addressed each of these concerns and found that most of the people agreed with our answers. We got appreciation from so many parents who are excited to see a proper daycare in this community.

Affected Parties

Who did you connect with in your outreach program? List all groups you connected with. (Please do not include individual names)

Neighbors and the Tuscany Community members who are in 1000s on the Tuscany Community Pages on the Facebook. They were able to spread it further by sharing the post on other social media platforms and we were able to reach the whole Tuscany community. It was result of this large engagement that so many people actual spoke to the City against this project. However a vast majority supported this project.

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What did you hear?

Provide a summary of main issues and ideas that were raised by participants in your outreach.

We summarized the concerns in 12 points and answered each of that point in detail. All those points and our answers have been addressed in the last section of this document. Major concerns were based on disinformation. Most of the people did not know that daycares are regulated and regularly inspected by the City. And that there is dedicated department in the City which regulates and inspects all the daycares. They did not know that there is a limit on staff to child ratio and group sizes for each age group. Most of the people believed that the number of kids should be reduced from 59 kids. Now we have amended the plan to cater only 39 kids.

How did input influence decisions?

Provide a summary of how the issues and ideas summarized above influenced project decisions. If they did not, provide a response for why.

Based on the public opinion and feedback we have amended the plan now and did a 40% reduction in number of kids as compared to our initial plan. There was similar direction from the City as well.

How did you close the loop?

Provide a summary of how you shared outreach outcomes and final project decisions with those who participated in your outreach. (Please include any reports or supplementary materials as attachments)

Our best strategy was to listen to all the points, and summarize all of them then replied each point raised and then posted it on the same community pages. It helped us to get great support from the majority. It also helped us that the major pivot point was number of kids which have been drastically reduced from the initial plan. Details of all that discussion has been summarized below.

1- There should not be a business in the residential area.

Answer. Schools and Pre-schools don't seem good fit in commercial areas. This is not like a grocery shop or bar where public will be visiting. This will be a daycare with known capacity and just registered parents visiting in specific hours on the known working days only. It's in front of a large school anyway.

2- The traffic in this street is already crazy at rush hours because of school pick n drops and this will add further to the problem.

Answer: The daycare hours start 6 AM and parents drop their kids an hour before the school starts. Similarly they pick them at 5-6 PM when the street is free from the school rush. While the parents coming at school will be mostly those who are already coming here to drop their kids at TMC School. So, it will not add any additional traffic at any time.

3- This will make it noisy for the neighbors.

Answer: this daycare will be just in front of the playground of TMC School and its play area will be on the open/green side opposite to our neighbors. Kids age will be 2-5 years and the play hours will be same as of the school. So, it won't add any decibel to the existing noise in the area.

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4- Since it will be adding parking slots in the backyard side, the back alley's quiet street will have high traffic.

Answer: the backyard parking slots will be for the staff parking so it will still remain quiet. Most of the pick and drop will be on the front (school) side which will be adding only two additional slots in the front side.

5- The planned 59 kids are too many for this property.

Answer: After lots of discussion with many community members and also following the city directions, we have amended our plan to cater 39 kids only. Please note due to the limit on the staff to child ration, the average occupancy is 60-70 percent of the allocated capacity in most of the daycares. We also have to consider that reducing the size of the daycare any further will make it totally uneconomical and it won't be able to sustain.

6- This will not be safe for so many kids at one place.

Answer: Now this was the comment when we proposed 59 kids now we have reduced it to 39. However it's important to note that this place will be modified to meet the safety standards. It will have fire alarms and proper exits and ventilation as per the city guidelines. City has a special department to monitor and control daycares. It's bound to have a proper licensed daycare manager/director and trained staff with continuous supervision and surveillance to meet the city requirements. Those who are knowledgeable about how it operates, know that daycare centers are much safer and better regulated compared to the day-homes. And that's why government is promoting such facilities.

7- The owners should find a commercial property for this activity.

Answer: unfortunately the commercial area in Tuscany is very small with no further room available. That's why hundreds of Tuscany parents go to Dalhousie and Royal Oak to drop their kids in daycares.

8- This location is very busy and not suitable for a daycare.

Answer: This location is best possible in whole Tuscany since its corner of a large crossing with Tuscany Club on one corner and School ground on the other and green belt on the side. This is in front of the school play area and a preschool and daycare is best suited next to the similar activity. Also there are 2 bus stops next to it which is a great plus for parents and staffs who prefer to come by bus.

9- The property value of the neighbors will go down.

Answer: it depends on who is the buyer. We also bought this property because our kids were able to walk to the school. Most of the families with younger kids prefer such locations where they don't have to worry about pick and drops.

10- There is no precedent in the city for a commercial daycare in residential areas.

Answer: There are hundreds of similar daycares in almost all communities in residential areas, mostly on corner slot. Even in Tuscany, there is a similar daycare few hundred meters

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from this property. (Search on Google maps) They are licensed for 30 kids because that is smaller house with no parking options.

11- It will effect the business of existing day-homes.

Answer: The new \$10 per day per child program is for daycares and it will benefit so many families financially. Some people still prefer day-home environment. It will definitely help families going outside Tuscany for their kids daycare needs.

12 - So many people talking against this proposed daycare.

Answer: daycares have much stricter regulations and controls from the city compared to day-homes. There are hundreds of families with younger kids who are excited and happy to see if it is coming here. We also respect what people think and respect their opinion but we don't want to rally for our opinion and don't want to influence anyone on social media or elsewhere. We will be happy with whatever City decides at the end of the day. Its important to note that the Facebook post against this proposal only got 29 Likes while our post with the above answers got 64 Likes and so many people defended and encouraged us to open this daycare for the community. (proofs can be provided on request)

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