



# Planning Family Friendly Cities: Context and Opportunities

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# Context for Family Friendly Planning

- City as Growth Machine –
  - » Real estate, businesses and government
  - » Goal – Increase Tax Base
- Entrepreneurial City –
  - » Globally competitive, ‘creative class’ for a new economy
  - » Goal- business and jobs, city image
- Decline in Social Welfare State –
  - » Personal responsibility, entitlements based on work, economic citizenship vs social citizenship



## Where does this leave families?

- Growth Machine – Redevelop the city
  - » Affordable housing not the most profitable investment
    - Families cost more to serve, do not contribute as much to local tax base
- Entrepreneurial City – Focus on creative class young professionals and empty nesters – not families with children
- Economic Productivity - Invest in those with the highest return, not necessarily families with kids

Hard to justify social investments with an economic productivity argument



## Positive Openings in the Economic Development Logic

- Labor scarcity – long commutes to work, especially for low wage jobs staffed by young parents
- Creative Society – Need to support more than the elite “creative class”
- Young people as an economic development investment –
  - » Brain research, returns to preschool
  - » Need to attract and keep young adults
- But still not focused on families or community context.



# Peculiar US Challenges

- **Private Frame** – Family care is the private responsibility of parents - Failures are moral, not structural
- **Private Work Place Benefits** – not public policy
  - Full time work: U.S. 40 hrs/week, Europe 35-39 hrs/week
  - Required vacation: U.S. 0 days, Europe 20-25 days/year.
  - Maternity leave: U.S. 0 weeks, Europe: 12 – 42 weeks
- **Unseen Economy of Care** –
  - » Formal child care rarely included in economic development planning
  - » Most care is informal (parents, friends, neighbors), not valued in GDP.
- **Limited Public Expenditure** –
  - » US spends less than 0.5% of GDP on child care/preschool, Europe spends 2-6% of GDP
- **New Calls for Public Investment limited to preschool**– not a broader, comprehensive approach (Pew Foundation, Partnership for America's Economic Prosperity)



## Local Planners see Broader Context

- Child Care as “critical community infrastructure” (*Planning Magazine* June 2007)
- Coalitions of Child Care, Business and Economic Development Leaders (over 70 across the country)
  - » 83% of Chamber and business leaders see child care as part of economic development strategy (Cornell New York Survey)
- Most planners also see their role (APA survey on family friendly cities)
- Local Innovation – apply planning tools to improve services (Kristen Anderson)
- Goal: System Change
  - » Children in the context of *families and communities* (Kellogg Foundation)



# A comprehensive approach

Family Friendly Planning addresses needs of:

- » Children - Human development
- » Parents – Labor mobilization, career ladders and support as caregivers
- » Regional Economy – planning, social infrastructure, economic development

No Longer an Endangered Species (Endangered Idea)





## Cornell's Linking Economic Development and Child Care Reports can be found at <http://economicdevelopment.cce.cornell.edu>

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