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Birth to Five Illinois, Region 4 (Boone & Winnebago Counties)  
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To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing in support of Rockford Housing Development Corporation's strategic vision and plan to transform the former 14-acre brownfield on South Avon Street into an affordable housing community. The proposed development will benefit both individuals and the community at large, as the development will include collaborative programming, community health support, and access to child care. All of which must be built-in supports for any community to thrive.

Of particular interest to Birth to Five Illinois, is the incorporated child care center within this proposal. Child care is not only fundamental but again, necessary to the success of a community. As you are likely aware, we are currently navigating a child care crisis in this nation and Rockford too, has its own unique child care challenges.

Not only is affordable, accessible, and equitable child care difficult to find, it can be one of many barriers faced by people experiencing poverty. According to the Early Development Instrument (2022) the [Ellis Heights East/Coronado-Haskell](#) area is ranked "High" in its number of equity challenges. You can also gather from the (Figure A) infographic that there is a lack of built-in child care supports for this particular area. This zone is indeed in need of improved housing, education, arts and commerce, and environmental justice proposed within this community build. This project could literally save lives and begin to transform generational poverty into generational wealth.

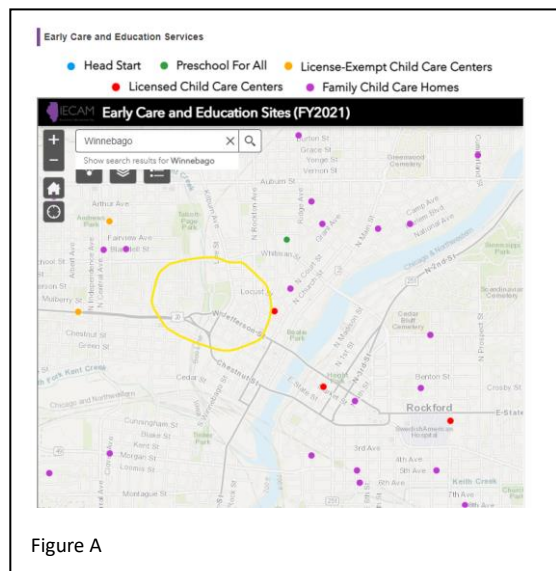


Figure A

Our community deserves this opportunity. We implore you to consider what could be and what will not be if this project is halted.

Sincerely,

Livia Bane, Regional Manager

Kelly McNeal, Family & Community Engagement Specialist

Lisa Coen, Administrative Support