

Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB)

2024 Briefing Book

Presented by CAB Co-Chairs:

Tanika Thompson Bird

Jen Moss



Photo credit: Seattle Farm to Table



Outline*

- Background on the Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT)
- Role of the SBT Community Advisory Board (CAB)
- Highlights from SBT-funded Programs and Services
- 2025 Budget Recommendations

(*Outline Footnote)

- Not included in this presentation – the 5-year Sweetened Beverage Tax Evaluation (authorized by Section 5B of [Ordinance 125324](#)).
- Visit [CAB webpage](#) for details and final evaluation reports.
- [Summary of Overall Evaluation Findings](#)

Background on the SBT



Sweetened Beverage Tax

Supporting healthy food and child health and development



Beginning in 2018, Seattle started taxing sugar-sweetened beverage products distributed within the city ([Ordinance 125324](#)). The Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) is not a sales tax charged directly on consumers. Instead, this tax makes distributors pay a tax (of 1.75 cents per ounce) on sugar-sweetened beverage products they distribute within the City of Seattle.

Why did Seattle pass this tax?

The tax was designed to improve the health of Seattle residents by reducing the sales and consumption of sugary drinks. In addition, the tax revenue is primarily used to support healthy food access, child development, and early learning programs. Research has shown that sugary drinks can lead to long-term weight gain, which can increase risk of developing **type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure,** and heart disease. Sugary drinks also lead to cavities. A 20-ounce bottle of soda can pack over 15 teaspoons of added sugar and over 250 calories with poor nutritional value.



- SBT started in 2018
- [Tax is levied on distributors of sugary beverages \(1.75 cents per ounce\)](#)
- Designed to improve the health of Seattle residents by reducing the sales and consumption of sugary drinks
- Raises revenue that **shall expand** programs that increase food security and access to healthy food and support children's health and early learning ([SMC 5.53.055](#))



[Click here](#) to access our fact sheet in multiple languages

Community Efforts to Protect SBT Revenues

- In 2017, community coalitions led efforts to ensure SBT revenue would have a direct benefit in communities most impacted by a regressive tax.
- In 2019, then Mayor Durkan tried to use higher than expected SBT revenues to balance the city budget by *swapping* General Fund revenue that already supported food programs and replacing them with the “extra” SBT revenues. **The effect – funding for food programs would not increase.**
- **Community advocates led the fight to ensure SBT revenue would be used as intended** and reinvested into communities long affected by food insecurity and education divestments.



SBT is a Restricted Revenue Source (and should remain restricted)

- In 2019, City Council passed legislation that established the **SBT Fund 00155**, clarified and strengthened SBT spending guidance, and codified SBT allocation of proceeds in the **Seattle Municipal Code**.
- All proceeds of the tax **shall support** either the expansion or creation of new programs that address:
 - Access to healthy, affordable food and close the food security gap
 - Prenatal-to-age-three and kindergarden readiness for populations facing disparities based on race, gender, or other socioeconomic factors.

[SMC 5.53.055 –Sweetened beverage tax—Allocation of proceeds](#)

Local News | Local Politics

Seattle City Council locks in fund for soda-tax revenue, overriding Mayor Durkan's veto

The Seattle Times

Aug. 12, 2019 at 5:51 pm | Updated Aug. 12, 2019 at 9:26 pm



Five-Year Review

Read the [CAB's January 2024 blog post](#) for more information

After 5 years of implementation, the SBT is working as intended:

- [Sales of sugary drinks are down](#)
- [People are more aware](#) that sugary drinks increase the risk of serious health problems.
- Revenue from the tax – about \$22 million annually – is **equitably invested** in communities long affected by food insecurity, education divestments, and poor nutrition and their long-term.



SBT Works – And People are Noticing

Seattle's sweetened beverage tax is funding food sovereignty work



KNKX Public Radio | By Bellamy Pailthorp
Published August 18, 2023 at 4:35 AM PDT

▶ LISTEN • 3:38



Mayor Bruce Harrell's Work to End Food Insecurity in Seattle



United States Conference of Mayors · Follow

Published in United States Conference of Mayors · 4 min read · Jan 2, 2024



COMMUNITY

Food Equity Fund Supports Intergenerational, Multicultural Food and Farm Projects

OCTOBER 4, 2022 EDITOR



Seattle Turns Soda Tax Revenue into Emergency Grocery Vouchers During Pandemic

\$5 million generated from the soda tax was quickly deployed to provide much-needed assistance.



GREGORY SCRUGGS MARCH 30, 2020

The Seattle Times

Opinion

Sweet success: Seattle's sugary drink tax is reducing health inequities

Feb. 3, 2023 at 1:11 pm | Updated Feb. 3, 2023 at 2:11 pm



NEWS & STORIES

Seattle's low income communities benefit from soda tax revenue, UW study says



Ruby de Luna

July 13, 2022 / 2:19 pm

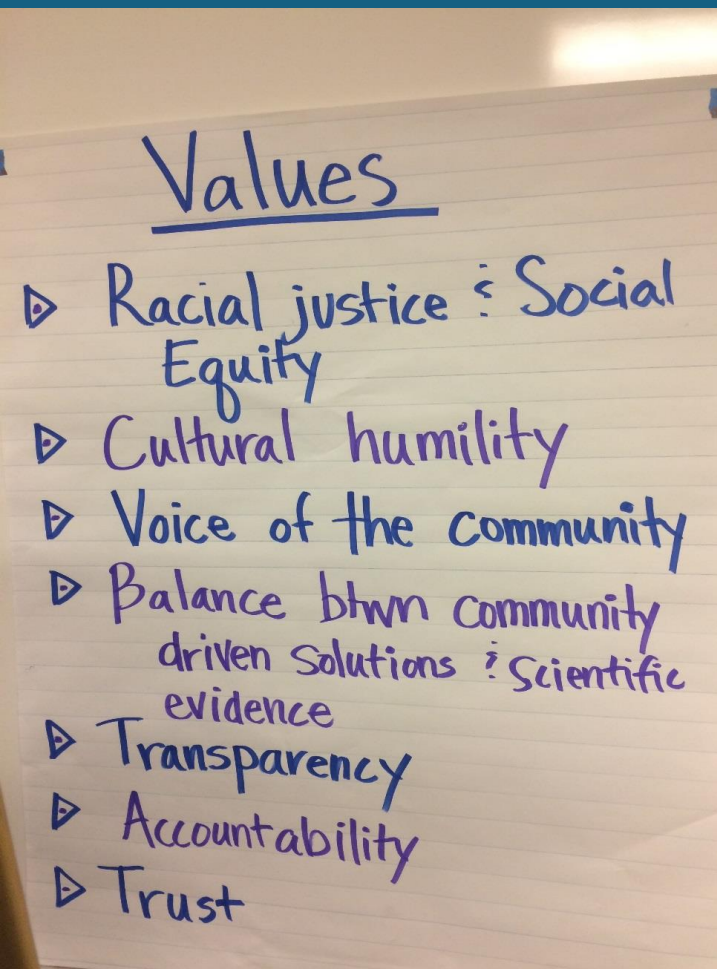


Role of the SBT Community Advisory Board (CAB)



- Established by [Ordinance 125324](#)
- Advises and makes [recommendations](#) to the Mayor and City Council on programs and services supported by the SBT
 - Budget
 - Policy
 - Program implementation
- Serves as a conduit and voice for community priorities
- *See Appendix slides for a timeline of CAB impact*

CAB's Process and Approach



- Monthly meetings, open to the public
- Values-driven facilitation and decision making
 - Vision, Values, Budget Principles
 - Bylaws
- Informed by community priorities, current context, and program information

CAB 2024 Priorities

- Build and strengthen relationships with City officials
- Educate City officials on the SBT Fund and the programs/services it supports
- Transmit annual budget recommendations to Mayor and City Council
- Work with Appointing Authorities to fill vacant CAB seats
- Continue advising SBT-funded departments on program implementation
- Produce 2023 SBT Annual Report



SBT Program Highlights

Photo credits: Public Health – Seattle & King County (upper right), Food Equity Fund (lower right), stock image (lower left).



Please see our most recent [2022 Annual Report](#) for more information.

2023 Annual Report coming soon!

The Need

Food Security Programs

- Food security is essential to health, wellbeing, and child development.
- 10% of Seattle adults experience food insecurity. This means they lack access to sufficient or adequate quality food to meet their basic needs.
 - Due to socioeconomic inequities, rates of food insecurity are **three to four times higher** households of color.
- High food prices is making it even harder for lower income Seattle residents. [Food prices](#) increased 25% between 2023 and 2019.

Prenatal-to-Three Programs

- Prenatal to age three period of development sets the foundation for all future health and wellbeing.
- Infants and toddlers need loving, stimulating, stable, and secure care environments.
- Social, economic, and environmental disparities and adversity in the early years of a child's life lead to disparities in health and educational outcomes later.

The Need (continued)

Food Security Programs

Can't keep up with Seattle-area rising food prices? You're not alone

May 10, 2024 at 6:00 am | Updated May 10, 2024 at 6:00 am



1 of 5 | Roy McCreel, manager of Northwest Harvest's SODO Community Market, sorts produce into a container before restocking them at the section in Seattle on Wednesday. The SODO Community Market serves as a no-cost grocery. —(by Gabriel / The Seattle Times) More

By Victor Whitman
Special to The Seattle Times

Affordability crisis

This story is part of a Seattle Times focus on the affordability crisis in the Northwest. In an occasional series of stories, we will explore the high cost of living and wealth disparities that shape our region; examine policies that impact prices for everything from housing to health care; and offer tips for making your money go further.

Thirty-year-old Janell Braxton usually finds a way to stretch her food budget just enough to get by each week. But it doesn't help that food prices keep rising.

Braxton, a volunteer and aspiring writer who is legally blind, buys food that is cheap and filling, like Top Ramen noodles. She said she adds an egg to the ramen bowl when she can afford to buy a dozen eggs. But the price of eggs and chicken has been "intense" since COVID.

Seattle Times, May 10, 2024

Prenatal-to-Three Programs

Seattle-area child care is scarce, costly and out of reach. Here's why

Aug. 4, 2023 at 6:00 am | Updated Aug. 4, 2023 at 6:00 am



1 of 6 | Derek Edder, 5, mixes ingredients for ice pops in the summer program run by Launch at Madison Elementary School in Seattle for preschool and school-age children. Families looking for child care in the Seattle area face... —(by M. Hansen / The Seattle Times) More

By Victor Whitman
Special to The Seattle Times

Hanan Sammour struggled so much this summer to find child care for one of her two children that she had to drop out of a required internship at a medical clinic.

Sammour, a Bellevue single mother, was in the last step in a program at Highline College to become a medical assistant, when she could not find child care for her 8-year-old who has special needs.

"I tried summer camps, I tried day cares, everywhere, no luck," she said in July as she continued her search, hoping she could return to the program this fall.

Sammour is not alone. The Seattle area has a child care crisis, weighing on families who often feel trapped between work or study requirements, scarce child care options and excessive rates — especially if they don't qualify for subsidies.

Seattle Times, August 23, 2023

Programs/Services Supported by SBT

Food Security Programs - \$14.3M

- Fresh Bucks
- **Food Equity Fund***
- Food banks and meal programs
- Farm to Preschool
- Community and Older Adult Meal Programs
- **Healthy Food in Schools***
- Food and recreational programming

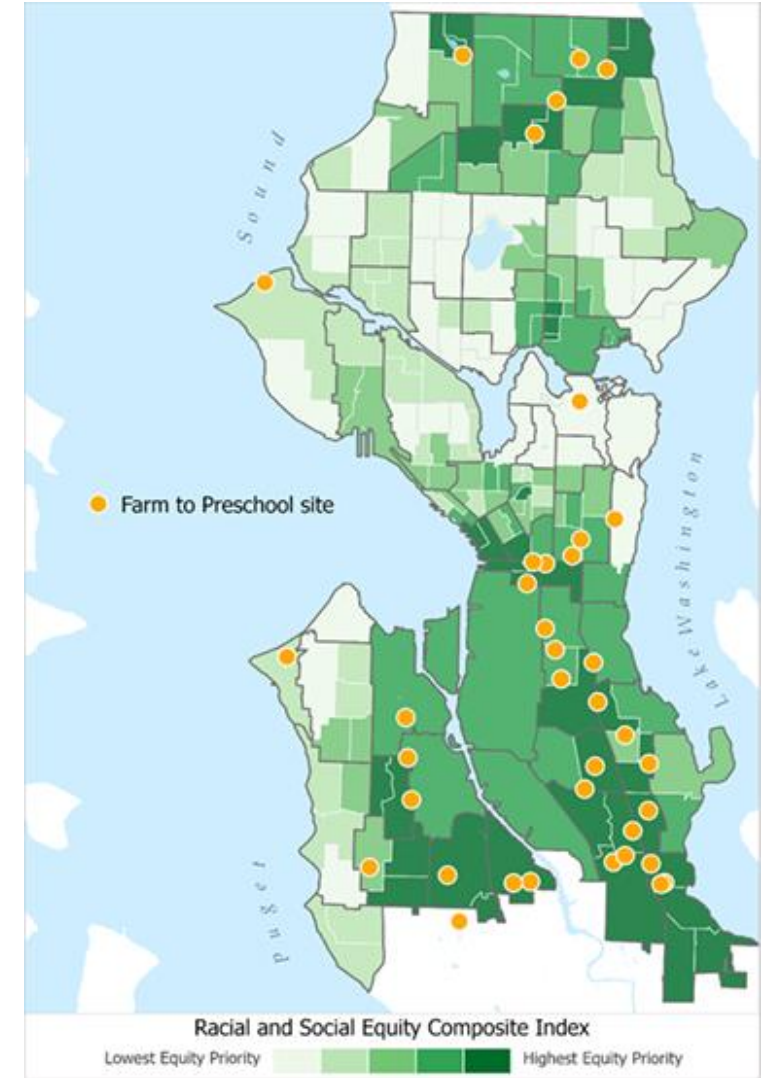
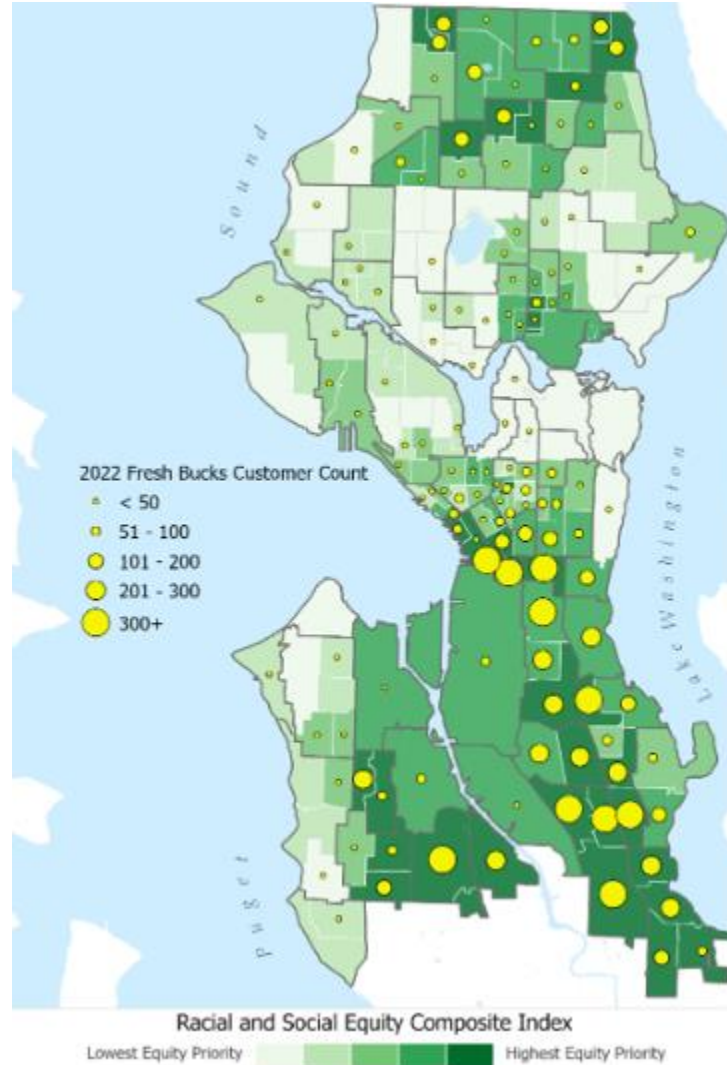
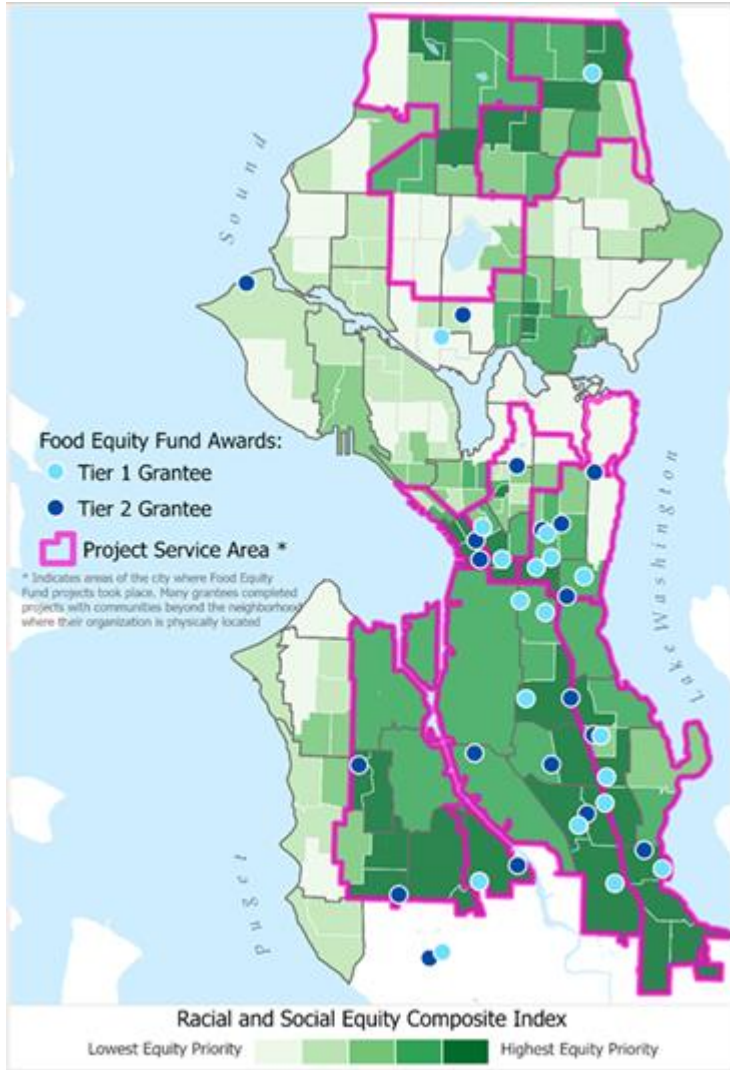
Prenatal-to-Three Programs - \$7.8M

- Child Care Assistance Program
- **Prenatal-to-Three Grant Program***
- Health and Developmental Supports
- Coaching and Training for Providers
- Home Visiting
- Family Child Care Support

**Created in direct response to CAB recommendations*

[2022 Annual Report](#) (p12) has a budget breakdown by program

Focused and Equitable Investments



See our [2022 Annual Report](#) for more SBT programs/services mapped over the City's [Racial and Social Equity Composite Index](#)

Outcomes

Food Security Investments

- **12,000** lower income households redeemed **\$4.65M** in Fresh Bucks benefits, generating **\$7.36M** in the local economy
- **41** community-based organizations awarded **\$3.8M** through the Food Equity Fund
- **20** food banks served **250,000** visitors, focusing on nutritious, culturally relevant foods
- **1,650,000+** meals provided in community and congregate meal settings for elders
- **5,250** students at **23** income-eligible schools received extra fruit and veggie snacks twice a week
- **34,200** produce bags (80% local, 17% BIPOC farms) distributed at **47** preschool sites

[2022 Annual Report](#) (pp 13-33)



SBT Partners - Food Security Programs

SBT supported the work of **105** community-based organizations

African Community Housing & Development	Empowering Youth and Families Outreach	Local Yokels	Society of St. Vincent de Paul
American Polynesian Organization	Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle	Mary's Place	Solid Ground
Ammana Warehouse & Grocer	Family Works	Mendoza's Mexican Mercado	Somali Health Board
Asian Counseling and Referral Service	FareStart	Mercy Housing	Sound Generations
Atlantic Street Center	Farmstand Local Foods LLC	Neighborcare Health Systems	South Park Senior Citizens
Ballard Food Bank	FEEST	Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance	Ta'alem Community Center
Beacon Food Forest	Filipino Community of Seattle	Neighborhood House	The Food Bank at St. Mary's
Black Dollar Days Task Force	Food For All Youth Leadership Program	North Helpline	Tilth Alliance
Black Farmers Collective	Food Lifeline	Nourishian for Life	Tongan Food Pantry
Black Star Farmers	Freeway Park Association	Odessa Brown Children's Clinic	Ukrainian Community Center of WA - Seattle
Build Lake City Together	Friends of FEED	OSL	United Indians of All Tribes
Byrd Barr Place	Fruteria Sandoval	Pacific Coast Harvest	University District Service League
Casa Latina	Got Green	Percussion Farms and Preserves	Villa Comunitaria
Central Area Senior Center	Harameyn Halal Grocer	Phinney Neighborhood Association	Wa Na Wari
Central Co-op	Harborview Medical Center	Pike Market Senior Center	West Seattle Food Bank
Cham Refugees Community	Hip Hop is Green	Pike Place Market Foundation	White Center Food Bank
Chief Seattle Club	Horn of Africa Services	Pike Place Market PDA	Young Adult Shelter Seattle
Children's Home Society of Washington	HT Oaktree	Public Health Seattle & King County	Young Women Empowered (Y-WE)
Chinatown International District PDA	Hunger Intervention Program	Puget Sound Labor Agency	
Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC)	Interim Community Development Association	Queen Anne Farmers Market	
City Fruit	International Community Health Services	Queer The Land	
Community House Mental Health Agency, Inc.	Jewish Family Service of Seattle	Rainier Beach Action Coalition	
Community Lunch on Capitol Hill	Kaiser Permanente	Rainier Valley Food Bank	
Community Roots Housing	Kandelina	Rainier Valley Steering Committee	
Cultivate South Park	Khmer Community of Seattle King County	Recovery Café	
Delridge Grocery Co-op	Lake City Collective	ROOTS	
East African Community Services	Latino Community Fund	Safeway Corporation	
El Centro de la Raza	Legacy of Equality Leadership and Organizing (LELO)	Seattle Farmers Market Association	
Empowering Youth and Families Outreach	Lifelong	Seattle Indian Center	

[2022 Annual Report \(pp 33-13\)](#)

Outcomes

Prenatal-to-Three Investments

- 11 grassroots organizations awarded \$1.5 million in funding to provide prenatal and perinatal supports to underserved families
- 820 children from 604 income-eligible families (85% BIPOC) received subsidies to help cover the cost of child care
- 195 families served with intensive developmental support
- 350 families served with home visiting supports (46 visits per family)
- 12 child care programs serving 945 children received high-quality coaching and professional development on child development

[2022 Annual Report](#) (pp 34-48)



SBT Partners - Prenatal-to-Three Programs

SBT supported the work of **25** community-based organizations

Atlantic Street

Boyer's Children's Clinic

Children's Home Society of Washington

CISC

Congolese Integration Network

East African Community Services

El Centro de la Raza

Empowering Youth and Families Outreach

Families of Color Seattle

Horn of Africa Services

Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services*

InterCultural Children and Family Services

Iraqi Community Center of Washington

King County Neighborhood House

Korean Community Services Center

Mother Africa*

Northwest Center

Public Health – Seattle & King County

Rainier Valley Midwives

Southeast Youth & Family Services

United Way of King County

Voices of Tomorrow

Washington Multicultural Services Link*

West African Community Council

Wonderland Kids

YWCA Seattle, King, Snohomish

[2022 Annual Report](#) (pp 34-48)

*First-time award recipient of DEEL funding



Photo credits: stock image (left); field trip with HSD Senior Meals program (middle); Farm-to-Preschool program (right).

Recommendations

2025 Budget Recommendations

- 1. Maintain spending restrictions on the SBT Fund.** City Council made important commitments to community stakeholders about how revenues would be used.
Dissolving these commitments will erode trust in City government.
- 2. Prioritize Seattle's food security and prenatal-to-three programs in your 2025 budget.** Food and child development services are **basic needs**, *and the needs right now are great*. These programs are essential to a healthy, thriving and equitable Seattle *and they are working*. We know tough decisions are ahead, but food and children are not the places to make cuts.
- 3. Identify aligned local levies that could help support SBT-funded programs/services and meet the high needs in community.** Consider whether the future families and education levy could help fund prenatal-to-three, child care, and food access programs in preschools and K-12 schools. This would relieve pressure on the SBT Fund.



Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board

[About the Board | seattle.gov](https://seattle.gov)

Photo credits: OSE Fresh Bucks (upper); stock image (lower right).

The End. Thank you!

Appendix

Timeline of the CAB's efforts and impact

Timeline of CAB's Impact



CAB and community leaders successfully advocate for new budget legislation to establish a separate **SBT Fund (00155)** and protect use of SBT revenue ([SMC 5.53.055 - Sweetened beverage tax—Allocation of proceeds](#))

CAB **lifts provisos** placed on SBT spending plan

Food security and prenatal-to-three programs **expanded or created**



2018

CAB is appointed, starts to meet and organize

CAB community engagement (in 2018 and 2019) to inform recommendations



2019

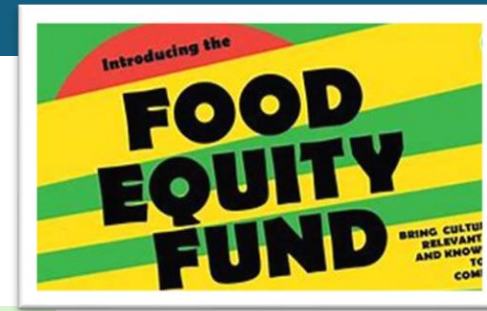
CAB issues inaugural **budget recommendations**, including guidance on RFPs funded by SBT.

Food Access Opportunity Fund created (\$800,000)

HSD Announces Results of the 2019 Food Access Opportunity Fund RFP
 by Michael Taylor-Judd on May 16, 2019

The RFP guides the investment of \$800,000 from the Food Access Opportunity Fund. This funding is provided by the City of Seattle's Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) — established by City Council ([Ordinance 125324](#)) — and aligns with the SBT Community Advisory Board's (CAB) Operating Principles:

Timeline of CAB's Impact



Seattle Turns Soda Tax Revenue into Emergency Grocery Vouchers During Pandemic
\$5 million generated from the soda tax was quickly deployed to provide much-needed assistance.
GREGORY SCRUGGS MARCH 30, 2020



COVID EMERGENCY

\$5 million SBT provides the seed funding to launch the City's **Emergency Grocery Vouchers** program



Food Equity Fund created (\$1.5 million/year)

Prenatal-to-Three (PN3) Community Grant Program created (\$1.5 million one-time)



Food Equity Fund restored to \$3 million/year

PN3 Community Grant Program maintained (\$1.5 million/year)



Timeline of CAB's Impact

