

Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board

<https://www.seattle.gov/sweetened-beverage-tax-community-advisory-board>

Date: June 28, 2022

To: Mayor Bruce Harrell

From: The Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board

Subject: 2023 Budget Recommendations for Sweetened Beverage Tax Revenue

Cc: Councilmember Lisa Herbold, Councilmember Tammy J. Morales, Councilmember Kshama Sawant, Councilmember Alex Pedersen, Councilmember Debora Juarez, Councilmember Dan Strauss, Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis, Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda, Councilmember Sara Nelson; CBO Director Julie Dingley

Dear Mayor Harrell,

On behalf of the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB), we are writing to deliver the CAB's 2023 Budget Recommendations.

It has been five years since the Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) ordinance was passed and the CAB began making budget recommendations to City of Seattle leadership. The enclosed recommendations were developed and approved by a full board of 11 CAB members, all of whom are committed to our [core values and budget principles](#) grounded in race and social justice. The recommendations reflect our ongoing commitment to ensuring SBT resources are allocated in accordance with community priorities in ways that benefit communities experiencing the greatest economic, health, and education inequities—Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, and refugees.

While the impact of COVID-19 on the economy has nearly ended for many, conditions for those struggling before the pandemic are worsening due to spiraling inflation and food prices. Additionally, temporary federal spending that expanded resources to help with pandemic-related economic hardship have ended or will end soon. For example, pandemic unemployment insurance, increased housing assistance, and the expanded Child Tax Credit have all ended. Once the public health emergency is officially lifted, we anticipate the end of universal school meals, a significant drop in summer meals sites for children this year, and an end to the increased SNAP benefits. SBT investments in food and child care are more critical than ever to help those most impacted absorb the financial shocks during these uncertain times.

According to revenue forecasts available to us in May 2022, City financial analysts are projecting stable SBT revenue next year, with possible small increases through 2025. Our enclosed budget recommendations are informed by this financial outlook, and focus primarily on deepening existing SBT investments with any available SBT Fund balance.

Our top-line recommendations are to (1) increase investment in **Fresh Bucks** and the program partners that are essential to making this program successful, (2) continue the **Food Equity Fund** at its 2022 levels by permanently backfilling the \$750,000 that was added one-time as part of the Equitable Communities

Initiative, and (3) invest \$150,000 one-time to support an equity-focused outreach campaign for the **Developmental Bridge Program**.

We appreciate the opportunity to advise you on the SBT spending plan and look forward to deepening relationships with your new administration, starting with a meeting we have scheduled with your staff July 1. Recognizing there are also several new Councilmembers who were not in office when the SBT was introduced, we are also setting up introductory meetings with their offices to share the CAB's priorities and hear theirs. Lastly, we would like to thank the many staff across multiple City departments (Neighborhoods, Human Services, Sustainability & Environment, Education & Early Learning) who continue to keep the CAB apprised of the programs and services supported with SBT revenue.

In closing, we hope these recommendations help the City make strategic investments in programs and services that advance equity in food access and early childhood outcomes. We also thank you in advance for ensuring available resources are allocated in accordance with community priorities.

Sincerely,



Jen Moss, Co-Chair



Tanika Thompson, Co-Chair

Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board

Jaimée Marsh	Position 1, Food Access Representative
Barbara Baquero	Position 2, Food Access Representative
Rebecca Finkel	Position 3, Food Access Representative
Bilan Aden	Position 4, Community Representative
Tanika Thompson	Position 5, Community Representative
Christina Wong	Position 6, Public Health Representative
Kristin Sukys	Position 7, Public Health Representative
Jen Moss	Position 8, Public Health Representative
Barbara Rockey	Position 9, Public Health Representative
Munira Mohamed	Position 10, Early Learning Representative
Dan Torres	Position 11, Early Learning Representative

Core Values

The CAB uses the following core values as a foundation for decision-making and action:

Racial Justice and Social Equity – We will strive for equitable distribution of resources and power to address the effects of classism and historic racism and its impact on health and education disparity. We commit to applying a racial equity lens¹ when developing budget recommendations and programmatic guidance, as well as to our internal work practices.

Cultural humility – We recognize we will not know all the nuances of the cultural ways for everyone represented in the City of Seattle and therefore approach with humility, an open mind, and respect.

Voice of the community – We will center on the communities most impacted by health and education inequities and make space for them to speak their concerns and solutions.

Balance between community-driven solutions and scientific evidence – We acknowledge that innovative community ideas can provide important solutions to consider in balance with evidence-based programs.

Transparency – We commit to open and honest communication within the Community Advisory Board, community and government regarding the tax decision making and how funds are used and distributed.

Accountability – We are responsible to hold the City accountable to the actions outlined in the ordinance and advise the City Council and Mayor based on our role of representing the community.

Trust – We commit to cultivating trust by building and repairing relationships

¹ The SBT CAB uses the [racial equity lens framework](#) developed by facilitator and consultant Maketa Wilborn.

2023 Budget Recommendations for Sweetened Beverage Tax Revenue

BACKGROUND

According to the ordinance that established the Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT), the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB) *“shall make recommendations on how and to what extent the Mayor and City Council should establish and/or fund programs and activities consistent with the intent of this ordinance.”* The CAB consists of a broad and diverse range of subject matter experts, stakeholder representatives, and community leaders committed to advancing equity in health, healthy food access, and child wellbeing. As a CAB, we affirm the importance of ensuring that SBT revenue is used to invest in the priorities of Seattle communities most burdened by health and education inequities that exist due to structural racism—Black, Indigenous, and communities of color.

In 2022, while the impact of COVID-19 on the economy has nearly ended, spiraling inflation and food prices due to the war in Ukraine and disruptions in the global supply are disproportionately hurting lower income residents, families, and low-wage Seattle workers. According to revenue forecasts available at the time we developed these recommendations, SBT revenue is projected to remain stable in 2023. All programming currently funded by SBT can continue in 2023 at the same levels, even while maintaining a reserve of \$2.2 million to help backfill any future revenue shortfalls and account for cost-of-living wage increases (see SBT Financial Plan on page 5). The financial outlook for 2023 also includes **at least \$1.2 million in unreserved balance funds** that could meet one-time or small ongoing budget needs. The CAB’s budget recommendations for 2023 include priorities that could possibly be met by those unreserved funds and/or any future revenue surpluses.

PROCESS

Our process to develop the 2023 Budget Recommendations began in February 2022. From March through May 2022, we received regular briefings from program staff in the Human Services Department (HSD), the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL), the Department of Neighborhoods (DON), and the Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) about programs and services currently supported by SBT funds. Additionally, we received regular briefings from the City Budget Office on the 2022 and 2023 revenue forecasts. With these briefings, we gained a shared understanding of the financial, budget, and programmatic landscape.

We know budgetary decisions have a real impact on the community, which is why we place importance on community input – especially from those most impacted by health and education inequities. From April to May 2021, the CAB refreshed its understanding of current community priorities by reviewing preliminary findings from recent community engagement efforts associated with the process to update Food Action Plan, as well as recent community reports focused on food access, early learning, and COVID-19 recovery efforts. We coupled this information with our own knowledge of community priorities as representatives of BIPOC communities and/or organizations that serve BIPOC communities.

In May and June 2022, we held nearly seven hours of deliberative and interactive meetings to develop and refine our budget recommendations. All [meetings](#) were open to the public and provided opportunities for comment. We used a variety of tools to help establish our priorities for 2023. At every major decision point, we considered how our recommendations aligned with our equity-driven values, budget principles and community engagement findings, which helped us find consensus.

BUDGET SITUATION

In May and June 2022, the CAB was briefed on the SBT Financial Plan (see table below). The City Budget Office (CBO) and Finance and Administrative Services Department (FAS) are forecasting approximately **\$22.9 million** will be collected by the SBT in 2023. Of this, approximately **\$22.8 million** is dedicated to food access programming and prenatal-to-three and early childhood education and services. Another portion of the funds (**\$2.16 million**) would be set aside in Planning Reserves—\$2 million for the Revenue Stabilization Reserve² and \$164,000 for cost-of-living wage adjustments. After these commitments, in 2023 there is an estimated **\$1.2 million** in the SBT Fund balance. These “unreserved” funds are not guaranteed year over year and according to the CBO are most appropriate for one-time investments.

Looking ahead to 2024 and 2025, the CBO and FAS project revenues to remain fairly stable at around \$23 million. The unreserved SBT Fund balance is approximately \$1 million and \$803,000 respectively.

Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund (00155) - Financial Plan

Amounts in \$1,000s	2021	2022		2023	2024	2025
	Actual Spending	Adopted	Projected (6.2.22)	Projected	Projected	Projected
Beginning Budgetary Fund Balance						
Beginning Balance Sheet Fund Balance	6,096	2,895	8,078	3,361	3,391	3,262
Budgetary Fund Balance Adjustment						
Beginning Budgetary Fund Balance	6,096	2,895	8,078	3,361	3,391	3,262
Sources of Funds						
Sweetened Beverage Tax	21,236	20,384	22,191	22,857	23,314	23,780
Transfer from General Fund		1,389	0			
Transfer from Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund		945	0			
Total Budgetary Revenues	21,236	22,718	22,191	22,857	23,314	23,780
Expenditures						
Office of City Auditor	200	0	800	0	0	0
Office of Sustainability and Environment	7,381	5,948	5,973	6,174	6,341	6,512
Department of Education and Early Learning	5,661	7,832	9,618	8,130	8,349	8,575
Human Services Department	4,700	4,935	7,242	5,123	5,261	5,403
Department of Parks and Recreation	65	303	303	314	323	331
Department of Neighborhoods	1,247	2,973	2,973	3,086	3,169	3,255
Total Budgetary Expenditures	19,253	21,991	26,909	22,826	23,443	24,076
Planning Reserves						
Revenue Stabilization Reserve	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Worker Retraining						
Planning Reserve	164	164	164	164	164	164
Total Reserves	2,164	2,164	2,164	2,164	2,164	2,164
Ending Unreserved Budgetary Fund Balance	5,914	1,458	1,197	1,227	1,098	803

² In 2019, [Ord. 125995](#) created a cash balance reserve of up to \$2 million in the SBT Fund to offset future revenue shortfalls and maintain program expenditures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The CAB is supportive of the City's ongoing SBT investments in food access and child health and early learning, including programs such as Fresh Bucks, the Food Equity Fund, the Prenatal-to-Three Grant Program, food bank and meal programs, Healthy Food in School programming, childcare nutrition, the Child Care Assistance Program, and early childhood health and development supports. These programs are strongly aligned with CAB values and current community priorities. To avoid spreading SBT investments too thin, we recommend any unreserved or surplus revenue be invested into current programs and services, to make them more effective, deepen their impact, and to increase program resiliency. In particular, we recommend investments that help to ensure existing SBT-funded programs are serving priority populations in culturally responsive, community-centered, and effective ways.

Our 2023 budget recommendations specifically address the following:

- use of \$2.3 million in SBT Fund balance for food banks and meal programs;
- priorities for how to use the remaining SBT Fund balance; and
- implementation considerations for existing programs supported by SBT.

Use of \$2.3 million SBT Fund balance for food banks and meal programs

The SBT Fund balance is considerably smaller than the CAB's original expectation due to the Executive's recent decision to use \$2.3 million for food banks and meal programs. In May 2022, the CBO informed us the SBT Fund balance was \$3.5 million, information that was shared specifically to help inform our 2023 budget recommendations. Two weeks later, the CBO returned to the CAB during the same meeting where we were to finalize our budget recommendations and informed us the SBT Fund balance was reduced to \$1.2 million due to the Executive's decision to use \$2.3 million SBT for food banks and meals for people staying in homeless shelters or residing in permanent supportive housing programs.

We do not dispute that food banks and meal programs are eligible expenditures for SBT revenue, nor do we deny the increased need for emergency food services during these challenging times. However, we are disappointed in how the CBO unilaterally used SBT revenue to fulfill a [Council Budget Action](#) (CBA) passed in 2021 to maintain increased funding for food banks and meal programs. By ordinance, the primary purpose of the CAB is to advise the Mayor and City Council on the use of SBT revenue. For the CBO to inform us on the same day that we were scheduled to finalize our budget recommendations that the majority of unreserved funds were being allocated without our input undermines our role. Furthermore, given that the CBA identified other fund sources to increase food bank funding, this situation is all too reminiscent of the previous administration's attempt in 2019 to supplant the General Fund with SBT, a tactic that deeply frustrated the community and resulted in new budget legislation to protect the SBT from supplantation.

Moving forward, we ask that the Executive respect the role of the CAB and consult us prior to making significant decisions about SBT revenue.

As for the \$2.3 million allocation to food banks and meals programs, we have recommendations to target use of the additional support in stronger alignment with the equity principles for SBT revenue and be most responsive to these community priorities:

- **Flexible support beyond traditional food bank and meal services, such as cash assistance distributed through community-based organizations with deep ties to impacted communities.** While food banks and meal programs provide an important service, flexible supports like cash assistance can help people address their unique needs and pain points in their household budgets. When people have the support they need to meet basic needs, this can also help decrease the pressure on food banks. This would be a root-cause solution to mitigate the need for more funds to support food bank operations. There is also growing evidence that cash assistance has great benefits for stress/mental health and overall community health. This is a more equitable use of the funds.
- **Culturally relevant food and other services to improve equitable access to food banks and meal programs.** Based on feedback received during community engagement efforts, we have learned that food bank and meal program clients would benefit from more culturally relevant food and increased accessibility through expanded hours, language/translation services, and mobile/pop-up options in high-need areas.³ With this \$2.3 million, we would like to see food banks and meal programs continue working on addressing these service improvements. While the state is providing some support to help food banks purchase high-demand, high-cost products like produce and culturally relevant foods, much of this resource is going to communities outside of Seattle. The City’s funding should help fill that gap.

Recommendations for other investments with the SBT Fund unreserved balance

In 2023, there is at least \$1.2 million in unreserved SBT funds projected and this amount would increase if actual revenues exceed projections. The CAB recommends using unreserved funds to deepen existing SBT investments as outlined in the following table and described below.

The one-time funding options (Column B) for our top three priority programs (Fresh Bucks, Food Equity Fund, and Developmental Bridge) could be supported with the \$1.2 million projected to be available in 2023. We would also like to see ongoing investments in these and other priority programs listed below, but understand that may only be possible if revenue exceeds projections or more unreserved funding becomes available in future years.

A. Program (in order of CAB priority) <i>(See details below the table)</i>	B. One-time funding option (\$)	C. Ongoing funding option (\$)
1. Fresh Bucks (OSE) a. Support for outreach and enrollment partners b. Support for new retailers c. Increase enrollment to more households (HH)	a. 150,000 b. 150,000 c. N/A	a. 100,000 b. 50,000 c. \$500/HH
2. Food Equity Fund (DON)	750,000	750,000
3. Developmental Bridge outreach (DEEL)	150,000	
4. Food and meals infrastructure grant program (TBD)	500,000	
5. Healthy Food in Schools (OSE)	150,000	150,000

³ [Community Perspectives: Improving Food Access](#) (Northwest Harvest, 2021)

6. Farm to Table (HSD)	200,000	
7. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) outreach (DEEL)	80,000	
8. Food is Medicine pilot (TBD)	300,000	
TOTAL	2,430,000	950,000*

*Excludes amount for Fresh Bucks option (c), which is a scalable budget item depending on how many waitlisted households are enrolled. Costs are \$500/household (HH).

Details:

1. Fresh Bucks (OSE)

The Fresh Bucks program is a foundational SBT-funded program that is a longstanding priority of the CAB and the community. Continuing to support the growth and infrastructure needs of this dynamic program is our top priority. As inflation drives up food prices and other costs, more people are seeking out programs like Fresh Bucks to stretch their food budgets further. We have two primary budget recommendations for one-time support for implementing partners. If ongoing funding becomes available, we would also recommend enrolling more households into the program.

- a. **\$150,000 one-time to increase support for community-based outreach and enrollment partners.** Fresh Bucks works with 19 local community-based organizations (CBOs) and health clinics that are deeply rooted in communities of color to reach people most impacted by food insecurity. These dedicated organizations help reach priority communities in their native languages and provide critical resources through education and program enrollment. In October 2021, Fresh Bucks transitioned from a paper voucher to an electronic benefit program, necessitating these partners engage more deeply with participating households to meet increased customer service needs. Ensuring that all enrolled participants can effectively access and use their e- benefit will continue to require support from these trusted partners. One of the CAB’s core values is to invest in community-led solutions, and increasing investment in CBOs at a time when community needs and overall costs are spiraling is also a high priority.

One-time funding would support needs unique to 2023 related to rolling active users from the 2022 cohort into continued benefits in 2023. Funding would support CBOs to engage with active users in their communities and preferred languages to ensure they understand how to activate and use the benefit and where they can shop. We also recommend this funding support an estimated 20% overhead for CBO-led activities. If ongoing funding is available, we also recommend an ongoing increase of \$100,000 for these community-based implementing partners.

- b. **\$150,000 one-time to support start-up costs for independent, culturally relevant grocers/vendors that participate in Fresh Bucks.** The shift to a Fresh Bucks e-benefit system comes with some technology startup costs for vendors. Small, locally owned

vendors do not have access to liquid capital and operate on very slim margins, so these startup costs are a barrier to implementation. Funding would support farmers market vendors and independent, culturally specific grocers by covering costs to buy tablets or make other needed technology upgrades. These funds could also fund the development of in-language support for cashiers and customers and cultural liaisons to assist with retailer onboarding. Recruiting more locally owned and culturally specific grocers to become Fresh Bucks retailers in underserved areas would increase program access, utilization, and support equitable economic opportunity for vendors. If ongoing funding is available, we also recommend an ongoing increase of \$50,000 for these small business partners.

- c. **Increase enrollment to serve more income-eligible households (scalable to meet available budget @ \$500/household).** After the above mentioned needs and investments are met, the CAB would like to make Fresh Bucks available to more eligible households. In other words, we do not recommend increasing enrollment without increasing program support for community outreach and enrollment partners and small, independently owned and operated retailers. We are aware there are currently 2,700 households on the Fresh Bucks waitlist who could be served with additional funding, as well as opportunities to enroll more beneficiaries through partnering community health systems as part of the Fresh Bucks Food is Medicine strategy.

If it is not feasible to make a new ongoing investment in 2023, we still recommend investing one-time funds to support Fresh Bucks implementing partners (as described above).

2. Add \$750,000 to the Food Equity Fund (DON) for at least an additional year

The \$3 million Food Equity Fund was developed in 2021 in response to the CAB's repeated recommendations to increase investments in community work led by those most impacted by food and health inequities. This community grants program funds an array of unique and creative community endeavors that seek to increase equitable access and opportunities to grow, to learn about, and/or eat healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant foods. In 2021, in response to recommendation from the Equitable Communities Initiative (ECI) Task Force, the City added \$750,000 in one-time support to the Food Equity Fund, making this a \$3.75 million grant program. The ECI funding ends this year, so the CAB's recommendation is to avoid any reduction in the Food Equity Fund and add \$750,000 SBT for at least an additional year.

In 2022, the requests for Food Equity Fund grants significantly outpaced the amount available (\$8.2 million in fund request for Tier 2 alone). Continuing even this relatively modest increase will help to support more community-designed and community-led solutions to food system challenges, which is a key priority for the CAB. One year of additional funding will have an impact, but if it is possible to add \$750,000 ongoing, we would support that investment.

3. \$150,000 to support an equity-focused outreach campaign for the Developmental Bridge Program (DEEL)

The Developmental Bridge Program provides innovative developmental support for children from birth to age three, focusing on children in an “eligibility gap” to receive early intervention services. In 2021, the program served 184 families, a 167% increase from 2019 enrollment. However, the program lacks racial diversity among its participating families and has expressed a need for funding to address this gap.

The CAB recommends adding \$150,000 in one-time funding to support robust, equitable outreach focused on reaching families who experience systemic barriers to access developmental screenings and early intervention services. In Seattle and across the country, BIPOC, immigrant and refugee and emerging English learner communities face disparities in accessing timely developmental delay screenings. These screenings are critical to identifying young children who may need early interventions to start kindergarten ready for success. Funding would support an outreach campaign that includes coordination of trusted community ambassadors who would identify and facilitate partnerships between the program and cultural institutions. The partnerships forged through the support of community ambassadors will facilitate a sustained capacity and process for future cohorts of participants, long after the initial investment.

4. \$500,000 to develop and fund a food and meal infrastructure grant program (Dept TBD)

A wide range of organizations and entities in our local food system that produce and distribute food and meals to vulnerable populations consistently express a need for infrastructure funding. The list includes food banks, meal programs, child care providers, Farm to Table providers, urban farmers/food producers, and mutual aid groups all in need of supplies and equipment to make their efforts more effective.

The CAB recommends funding for a food and meal infrastructure grant program to support diverse needs for supplies, equipment, transportation, emergency preparedness, cold and dry storage, and other infrastructure-related expenses. In 2019, the CAB recommended a similar investment and Council responded with a budget change during the 2020 budget process that included funding for this type of grant program in the 2020 Adopted Budget. Unfortunately, funding for the program was ultimately cut and redirected to COVID emergency response efforts.

Our current recommendation is to make this grant program available to a broad range of food and meal providers. If funding is made available, the CAB would want to advise departments on how best to develop the funding opportunity.

5. \$150,000 set aside for forthcoming Healthy Food in Schools recommendations (OSE)

For young people experiencing food insecurity, school may be their most consistent access to meals. As a result, that food should be high quality, nutritious, and culturally relevant. School meals are also incredibly important for community resilience and food security during crises.

Schools were on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing meals even amidst remote learning and experiencing high costs that are anticipated to continue.

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) serves around 27,000 meals/day, which makes it a significant institutional player in food procurement. The CAB applauds the SPS Culinary Services Department's current efforts to procure local food grown by BIPOC farmers and would like to see more of this through the Healthy Food in Schools/Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program that is funded by SBT and managed by SPS and OSE. National supply chain issues and higher food prices are hurting schools. Additionally, the end of national administrative waivers that enabled schools to offer universal meals during COVID could add more challenges to schools with a loss of reimbursements if they don't have ingredients to meet national school meal nutrition standards. Local investments in school food that help Seattle Public Schools source fresh and locally grown ingredients that sidestep national supply chain issues could protect against those losses.

We are aware that SPS and OSE are facilitating a new, multi-stakeholder School Meals and Food Education Working Group that is developing recommendations on how best to enhance school meals and food education for SPS students. OSE also has a temporary Food Systems Design Fellow who will add capacity at OSE to design and test innovations in school food. For all these reasons, we recommend setting aside \$150,000 SBT to be used to implement some of the forthcoming School Meals and Food Education Working Group ideas.

6. \$200,000 to support for Farm to Table procurement from BIPOC farmers (HSD)

Farm to Table makes grant funds available to Seattle Preschool Program sites and child care programs to increase their offerings of fresh, Washington-grown food to the children in their care. Participating sites also participate in nutrition education, field trips, and training for providers, children and families on child nutrition, food preparation, food justice, gardening, and local food procurement.

Farm to Table is working to increase procurement from local, BIPOC farmers. Connecting local, BIPOC farmers to City food programs is important to make our regional food system stronger and more equitable. Farm to Table provides a good opportunity for farmers to connect with other food programs and piloting new procurement relationships helps both the program and the farmers learn about what is needed to source locally and fulfill program orders.

In 2021, in response to recommendations from the Equitable Communities Initiative (ECI) Task Force, \$200,000 was added to Farm to Table to support equitable procurement. This one-time add will sunset in 2022, so the CAB recommends allocating \$200,000 SBT one-time to backfill the ECI funding.

7. \$80,000 one-time for a Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) outreach and promotion (DEEL)

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) helps families living within Seattle city limits who have a parent working or attending school to pay for child care for children 1 month to 12 years of age. According to reports, CCAP is not well known in the community, even though child care

affordability is a major concern throughout Seattle. This recommendation is for a one-time investment to support CCAP outreach and promotion to increase awareness and participation in the program by communities most burdened by affordability issues. This funding would support an eight-week Metro campaign for select stations and lines throughout Seattle, covering both Metro buses and light rail.

8. \$300,000 to support a Food is Medicine pilot program (Dept TBD)

Food is Medicine programs integrate nutrition and health care and are often focused on patient populations coping with or at risk for diet-related illnesses. The CAB is interested in exploring interventions in community health systems that address food insecurity and/or the prevention and management of diet-related illness with nutritious and culturally appropriate foods.

Funding would support a pilot for a community health clinic(s) to offer food prescription program(s) to eligible patients. We recommend the pilot include requirements for participating clinics to screen patients for food insecurity and other social determinants of health and log results in the electronic health record, to encourage community health systems to track how socioeconomic situations impact patient health.

The CAB is also aware of statewide efforts to apply for a Medicaid waiver that might fund this type of programming. We recommend the City join those efforts and advocate for more flexible produce prescription programs than Medicaid may traditionally fund.

Budget-neutral recommendations

The CAB has the following budget-neutral recommendations:

- **Use existing resources to continue efforts aimed at streamlining community grantmaking programs** (like Food Equity Fund and others that support food work) so they are low-barrier and use equitable grantmaking processes.
- **Continue collaborations and efforts to address childcare affordability and support childcare providers.** We are encouraged to see that childcare affordability and access issues that are top community priorities are being addressed by the City, County, and state in a number of ways. We look forward to hearing more about the cost of care study, development of the King County subsidy and Child Care Wage Boost programs, and CCAP expansion and industry stabilization efforts.