

# Milwaukee Ald. Rainey: Statement on Council approval of key budget item to encourage entrepreneurship to address food deserts

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During the Common Council's budget adoption meeting earlier this week, my colleagues approved an important budget amendment I offered that should help continue the momentum we need to battle Milwaukee's food desert problem.

The amendment that was approved will increase by \$200,000 our seed fund to encourage entrepreneurialism in providing healthy food options in food deserts. The funding works to find creative ways for grocery and food businesses to provide healthy, nutritious foods in neighborhoods where no grocery stores are currently located. Our effort to attract these businesses is critical and must be sustained as we do our due diligence to properly nourish our next generation of leaders and difference makers across Milwaukee.

Just as we work to reduce lead risks and protect our city's children from environmental hazards, we must also do all we can to make sure they grow up with strong bodies and minds fueled by nutritious and healthy foods.

The measure approved earlier this week will tap best practices and only rewards entrepreneurs if they have a sustainable business model. Additionally, the philanthropic community is also involved as the American Heart Association has indicated they can match those dollars (this is significant as I believe the amount needed to fully address this problem would be \$2 million).

I want to thank my colleagues for their support with this important budget item, and

I look forward to continuing to do all I can to bring healthy food options to every corner of my district and across Milwaukee.