
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Khalif J. Rainey
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Alderman Rainey targets fresh food access and neighborhood infrastructure in budget amendments

Budget amendments sponsored by **Alderman Khalif J. Rainey** seek to bolster the city's Fresh Food Access Fund and to put a full-time monitor in the role of addressing key infrastructure issues in distressed Milwaukee neighborhoods.

In an amendment to the mayor's proposed 2021 city budget, Alderman Rainey has proposed adding \$200,000 to the Fresh Food Access Fund (operated by the Department of City Development) to continue providing support for increasing access to fresh food choices in city neighborhoods that do not have grocery stores or other outlets selling fresh and nutritious foods.

Alderman Rainey, chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee, is the author of legislation that led the Common Council to seek collaborative public-private partnerships to provide healthy food options in the city's restrictive access areas or "food deserts." In November 2018, the Council approved an amendment that increased the food access seed fund by \$200,000 to enhance entrepreneurialism, encourage healthy eating, and to provide a hand-up to neighborhoods that need added health and nutrition initiatives.

The access fund provides financial support and grants to businesses and organizations that boost the access of healthy food choices. For example, these eligible projects range from mobile market stops and improved nutrition education to accessible transportation for grocery shopping, along with expanding the availability of locally grown foods.

"My amendment seeks to continue the effort to address food inequality in Milwaukee," Alderman Rainey said.

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Amendments/ADD ONE

“We deserve a city where no one child goes hungry and families can thrive. Reducing poverty begins with addressing the impact that food inequality has on our local neighborhoods, and the fact that nearly 70 percent of our county’s zip codes contain food deserts. The (COVID-19) pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity for families, and when kids go hungry and don’t have access to fresh and nutritious foods, they’re less likely to pay attention in school and put focus where it matters,” he said.

The **second amendment** sponsored by Alderman Rainey would create a new position (infrastructure monitor) in the Common Council – City Clerk’s Office dedicated solely to directing city resources to help improve city neighborhoods that too often do not receive the attention they need and deserve, the alderman said.

For instance, the monitor would have the role of requesting direct attention and resources to potholes, non-functioning city street lighting, unsecured city property, deteriorating sidewalks and other infrastructure, and illegal dumping.

“My district and other districts have seen a significant increase in cases of illegal dumping, where building materials, hazardous materials, appliances, and all kinds of other debris are dumped in alleys, yards of vacant properties, and on open lots,” he said. “We receive numerous citizen complaints about these issues, which can have a significant impact on the quality of life for residents. It’s long past time to have this monitor solely working on these issues to help improve our neighborhoods.”

The Finance and Personnel Committee will take up these and other Council amendments to the 2021 budget when it meets at 9 a.m. TOMORROW - Thursday (October 29). The committee’s deliberations will continue on Friday, October 30 if needed.

Thursday’s virtual meeting will be televised live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.