
City Council Safety, Housing, Education & Homelessness Committee Presentation

July 23, 2025

Empowering Denver's communities to live better, longer

Presentation Overview

- Background on Healthy Food for Denver's Kids (HFDK) Program and Commission
- Evaluation and Funding Activity
- Compliance and Contract Process
- Request of 13 Bills/Resolutions for Approval
- Financials

Current Food Insecurity in Denver

- Approximately 15% (~107,328) of Denverites are food insecure, with statistically higher rates among parents of children under 18 ^[1]
- Among low-income households with children under 18 living at home, ~17% of parents cut the size of their kid's meals because there was not enough money for food ^[1]
- Uncertain impact on community due to proposed changes to eligibility and funding for federal nutrition assistance programs (e.g., SNAP and Medicaid)



[1] According to a 2024 food insecurity survey conducted by DDPHE



What is Healthy Foods for Denver's Kids?

- Resident-led ballot measure (302) approved by Denver voters in November of 2018
- Provides 10-years of funding from sales tax to invest in food and related food education for Denver's low-income and under-served youth

History of Healthy Food for Denver's Kids

2018

APPROVED BY VOTERS

59% of Denver voters approved a ballot measure to increase taxes to establish a fund for healthy food and food-based education for Denver youth (Ordinance 302).

PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

HFDK begins collecting tax revenue, the program's community leadership and staff are selected, and funding goals are set.

2019

FIRST ROUND OF FUNDING IS RELEASED TO COMMUNITIES ACROSS DENVER

Through general grants and COVID-19 emergency hunger relief grants, funds are sent into communities across Denver to support food access and food-based education programming for the first time.

2020

ANNUAL FUNDING IS RELEASED TO SUPPORT OUR VISION

Each year, Healthy Food for Denver's Kids funds community-driven and innovative programs to reach our vision that "All Denver kids have reliable access to nutritious and culturally diverse food and food education that helps them grow, learn, and thrive for life."

2021 - 2029

HFDK Commission

13-members

- 3 city leaders
- 2 members of City Council
- 4 residents of the city
- 4 representatives of city-wide organizations involved in food

DDPHE is the operational support for HFDK and implements Commission decisions





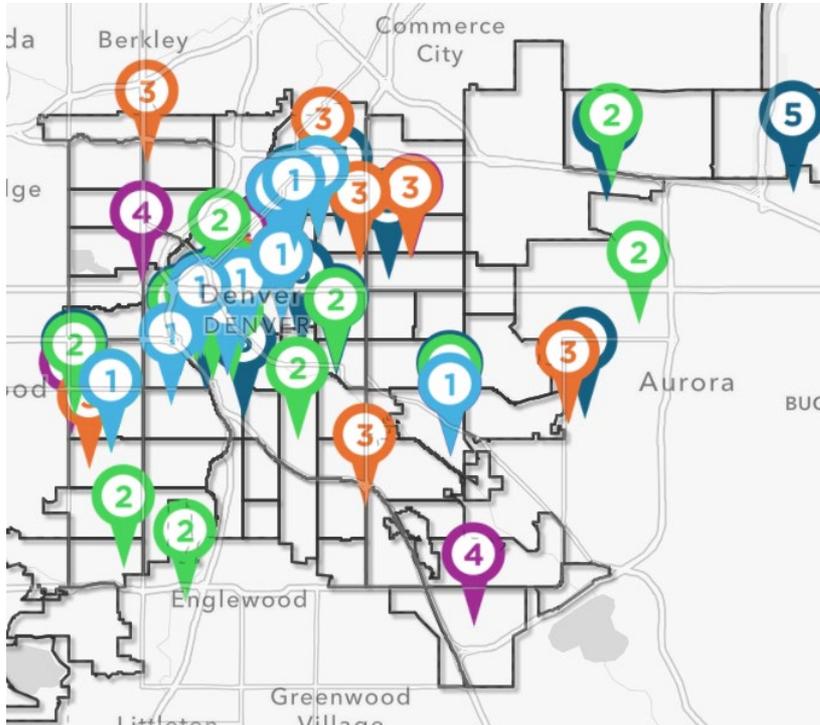
Who is Eligible for Funding?

Non-profits, public schools (including DPS) and Denver city agencies through competitive grantmaking processes

Funded projects include:

- Healthy meals and snacks
- Classes on nutrition, cooking, wellness, gardening, and food justice
- Free food distribution, including mobile food markets and school food pantries
- SNAP and WIC outreach and enrollment

HFDK Evaluation & Technical Assistance



HFDK Grantee Main Addresses (by Cohort)

- Third party evaluator (Change Matrix from 2020-2023 and CAI from 2023-2027)
- Grantee-level data analysis (quarterly reporting) to measure outcomes and identify best practices
- A citywide impact evaluation and landscape analysis, including Geographic Information System (GIS) StoryMaps
- Grantee technical assistance for evaluation and programmatic support



\$85.8 million
Grant dollars invested



107
Unique organizations
funded



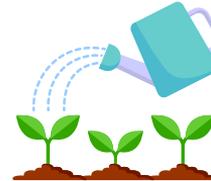
47,895,735
Meals and snacks served



34,261,369
Pounds of food distributed
to youth and families



537,441
Pounds of food harvested
from local gardens and farms



674
New youth jobs created



43,416
Total instruction hours
for food/nutrition education



149,185
Families/households
served in 33 languages

HFDK Halfway Celebration

- **June 2, 2025:** Denver City Council recognized HFDK through Proclamation No. 25-0834
- **June 7, 2025:** 500+ community members joined HFDK at the Denver Zoo for a celebratory event with kid-friendly activities, healthy snacks, grantee tabling, and special remarks from Councilmember Kashmann and Commission CO-Chair Linh Tran



HFDK Funding Timeline for Annual Cohorts

Year	Funding Cohort	Grant details
2020	HFDK01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 HFDK01 contracts
2021	HFDK02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 new HFDK02 contracts and extensions for HFDK01
2022	HFDK03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 new HFDK03 contracts and extensions for HFDK01 and HFDK02
2023	HFDK04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 new HFDK04 contracts and extensions for HFDK02
2024	HFDK05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 new HFDK05 contracts and extensions for HFDK03
2025	HFDK06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 new HFDK06 contracts • HFDK04 renewals will take place December 31, 2025

HFDK Micro-Grants

- A funding tool to promote equity and responsiveness
- A total of more than \$2,000,000 will have been awarded in micro-grants since 2020

Year	Number of Contracts	Average Grant Size	Total Amount Awarded	Micro-Grant Focus
2020	53	\$16,409	\$869,653	COVID-19 emergency hunger relief grants
2021	10	\$9,555	\$95,550	Healthy food access for youth and families
2024	12	\$48,717	\$584,606	Newcomer youth and their families
2025	10 (estimated)	\$50,000 (estimated)	\$500,000 (allocated)	Community food access

2025 Contract Process for HFDK06

Request for
Letter of
Interest (LOI)

January 2025-
February 2025

HFDK opens solicitation for Letters of Interest

Offered Technical Assistance from a Grant Writer to review LOIs

Review of
LOI/Invitation
to RFP

February 2025-
March 2025

53 Letters of Interest received

Information session open to the public

32 Organizations Invited to RFP

RFP Process

March 2025-
May 2025

32 Organizations submitted RFP

17 Applications Recommended for Funding

Recommendation
& Vote by
Commission

May 2025

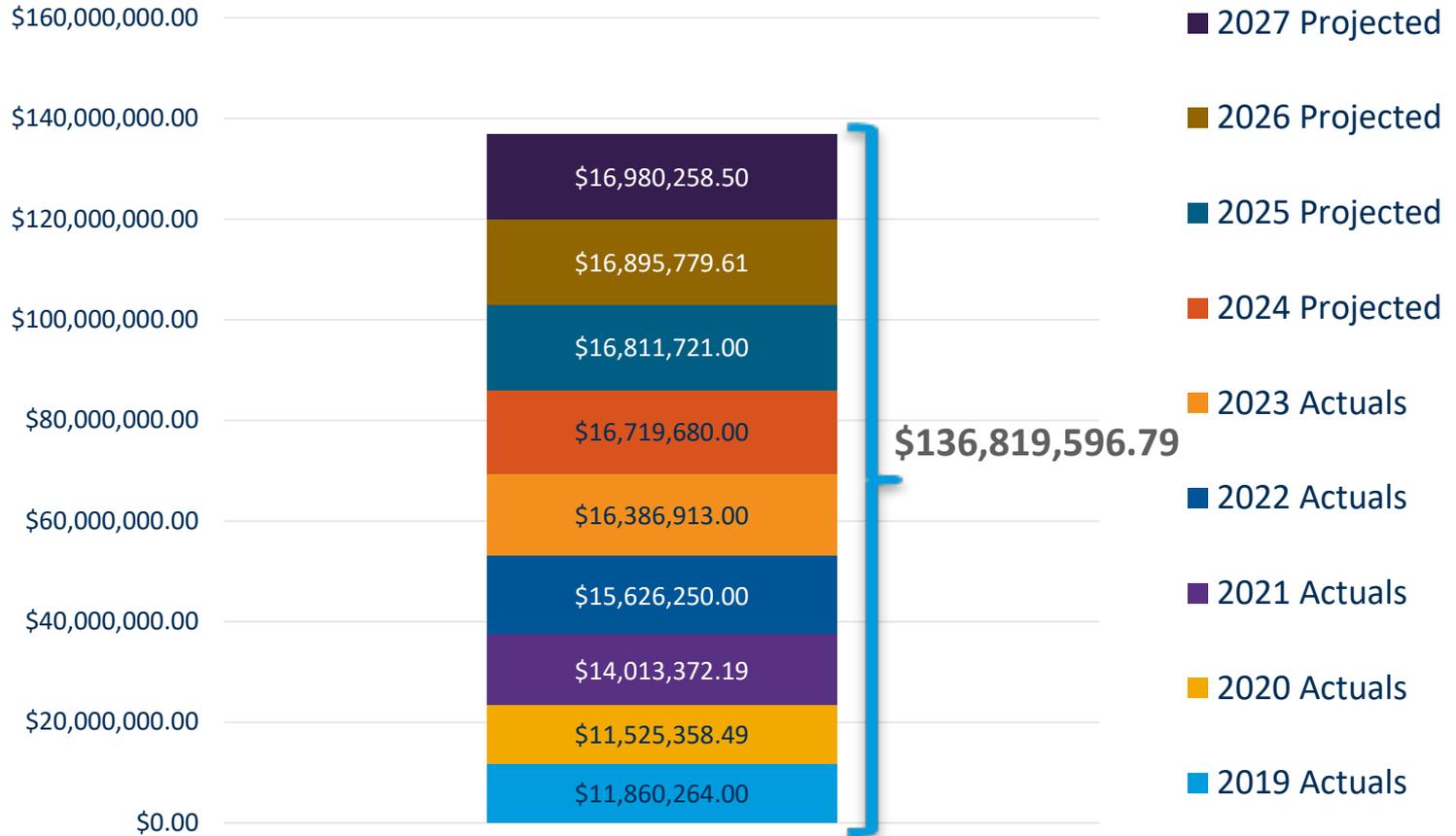
Review panel recommended 17 applications for full funding

May 30, 2025: HFDK Commission voted to approve the 17 contracts

June 1, 2025: Contracting process started

Name of Organization	Resolution #	Total Amount	Council District
Clayton Early Learning	RR25-1020	\$1,000,000.00	1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11
Colorado Food Cluster, Inc.	RR25-1021	\$859,859.22	1, 9, 10, 6,
Denver Health and Hospital Authority	BR25-1029	\$1,000,000.00	Citywide
Denver Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services	BR25-1030	\$863,500.00	Citywide
East Colfax Community Collective	RR25-1022	\$795,323.24	5, 6, 8, 11
FrontLine Farming	RR25-1023	\$989,374.82	1, 7, 9, 11
Hadanou Collective (Fiscal Sponsor for Southwest Food Coalition)	RR25-1024	\$999,680.00	2, 3, 7
Hunger Free Colorado	RR25-1025	\$983,116.56	Citywide
Kaizen Food Rescue	RR25-1026	\$999,999.87	7, 8, 11
The Consumption Literacy Project	RR25-1027	\$1,000,000.00	3, 8, 9, 11
The Village at CLA within Denver Public Schools	BR25-1031	\$574,179.52	1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10
WeeCycle	RR25-1028	\$999,999.58	Citywide
Center for Work Education & Employment, Inc.	TBD	\$544,512.78	1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11

HFDK Revenues

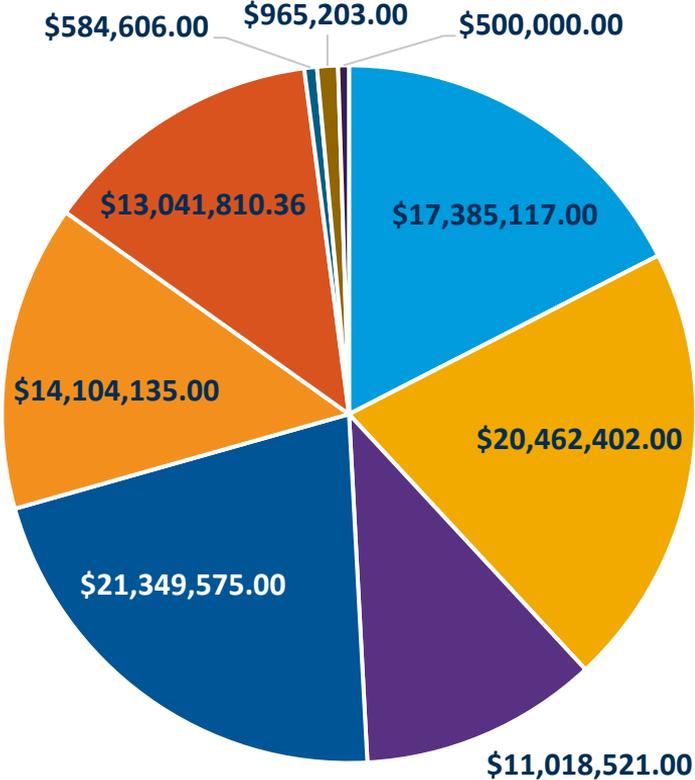


*2024-2027 are projected figures (from BMO) and subject to change

Grants Awarded

The \$37M difference between revenue and grants is as follows:

- \$13.6M available for Administration (2019-2027)
- \$6.8M in Contingency (2019-2027)
- \$16.8M for future HFDK07 & Microgrants



- HFDK01 (Aug 2020-July 2023)
- HFDK02 (Aug 2021-July 2024)
- HFDK03 (Aug 2022-July 2024)
- HFDK04 (Aug 2023- Dec 31, 2025)
- HFDK05 (Aug 2024-July 2027)
- HFDK06 (Aug 2025- July 2028)
- Micro-grants, Newcomer Youth (Aug 2024-July 2025)
- Micro-grants & Emergency COVID-19 Grants (2020-2021)
- Micro-grants Emergency Food Access (Jan 2026- Dec 2026)

HFDK Halfway Celebration Video



To highlight HFDK's collective impact, DDPHE released a **Halfway Celebration video** that features Commissioners, staff, and three grantee organizations.

Thank you and Q+A

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Learn more about
HFDK here:

