

Food for Thought:

Recent Trends in City Council-funded Allocations for Food for New Yorkers

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Introduction

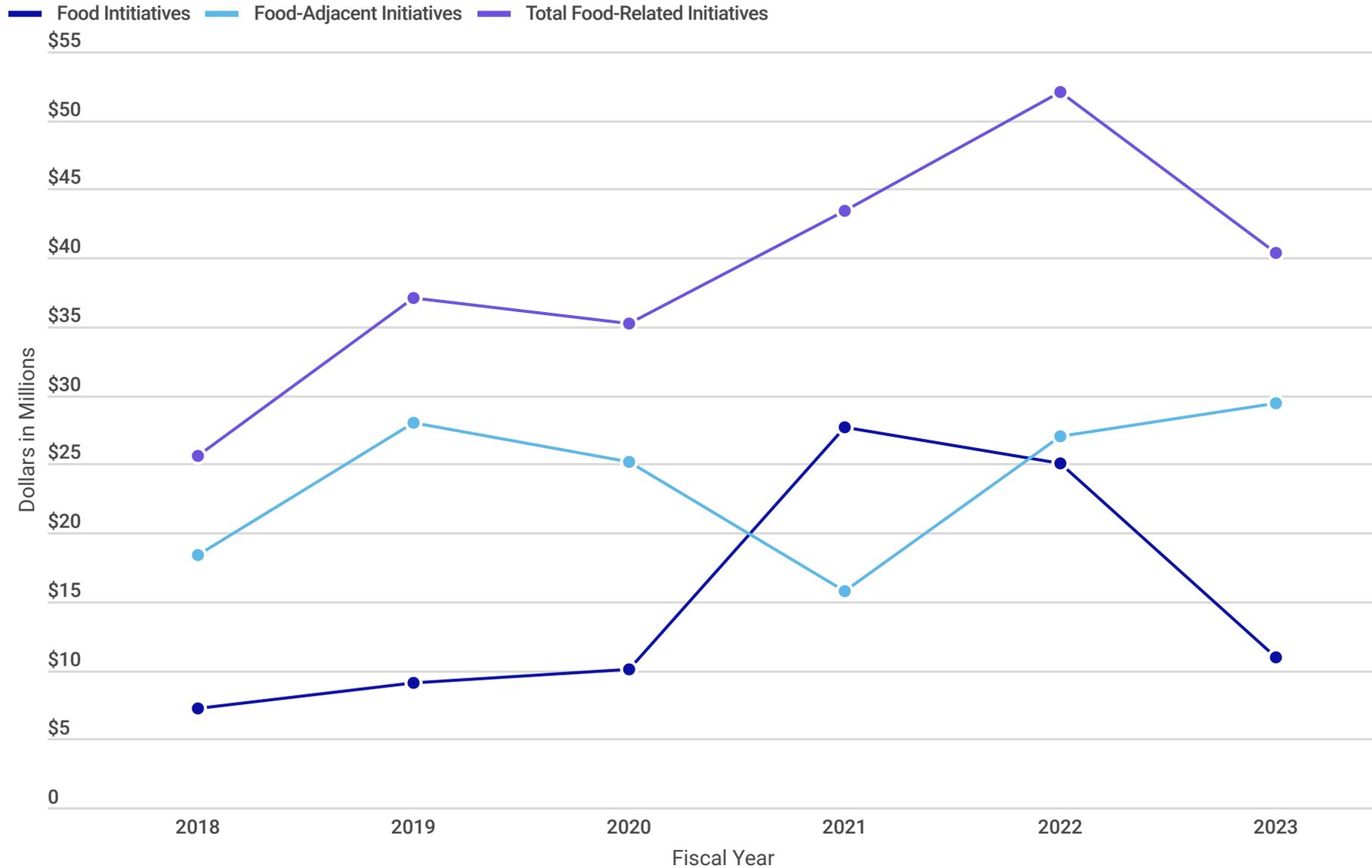
New York City Council Discretionary Funding (also known as Schedule C funding) “is a duly appropriated sum of money in the City’s expense budget allocated to an eligible not-for-profit [organization](#).” At the request of the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, following previous food funding analysis that they have conducted, IBO analyzed Schedule C funding over the past six years related to food—including food pantries, prepared food, food education, and more.

- Schedule C funds are grouped by the City Council into various initiative categories, one of which is “food initiatives,” where food is the central and/or only focus.
 - There are three consistent subcategories within “food initiatives”: food pantries, food access and benefits, and access to healthy food and nutritional education
- In addition to compiling the funding in this category, IBO also categorized and analyzed “food-adjacent initiatives,” where the purpose of funds listed in the Schedule C database includes some food component, but where food is not the primary or sole focus. IBO used a keyword search in the description field of the Schedule C funding documentation to compile this category. In all of the “food-adjacent initiatives,” the extent to which the funding is used to cover food expenses cannot be evaluated. Three examples include funding to support:
 - “Virtual and recreational programming, and food services at a senior center.”
 - “Community fitness classes and instruction [and] classes related to nutrition, women's health, domestic violence, mental health resources, and food insecurity.”
 - “Gardening, horticulture, and nutrition programming for youth in city schools.”

Note: This analysis only includes City Council Schedule C funding; it does not include other city, state, or federal funding dedicated to food programs.

Discretionary Funds Awarded to Food-Related Initiatives Increased Almost 60 Percent from 2018 to 2023

Inflation adjusted 2023 dollars



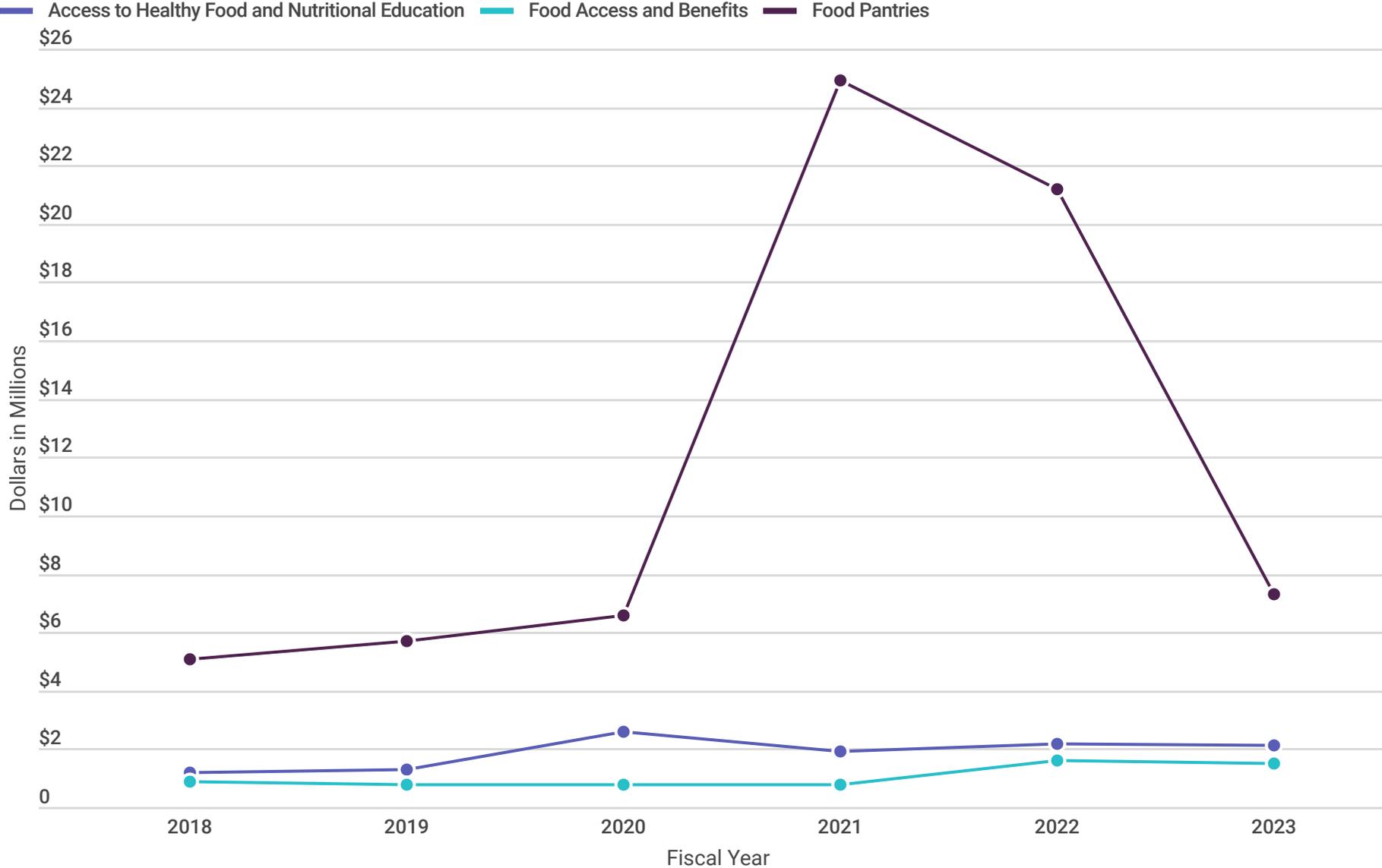
SOURCE: IBO analysis of City Council expense funding data

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- IBO analysis of discretionary funding in the period 2018 to 2023 (all years refer to fiscal years) reveals that the total amount of City Council discretionary dollars allocated to all food-related initiatives—combined allocations to food initiatives and food-adjacent initiatives—ranged between \$25.6 million and \$52 million (all funding amounts are in real 2023 dollars).
- Funding for food initiatives specifically rose in 2021 (\$27.7 million) and 2022 (\$25 million) due to the sharp and widespread increase in food insecurity in the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic before returning to approximately \$10 million in 2023.

Among Food Initiatives, Food Pantries Received the Most City Council Discretionary Funding, Especially in the Aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Inflation adjusted 2023 dollars



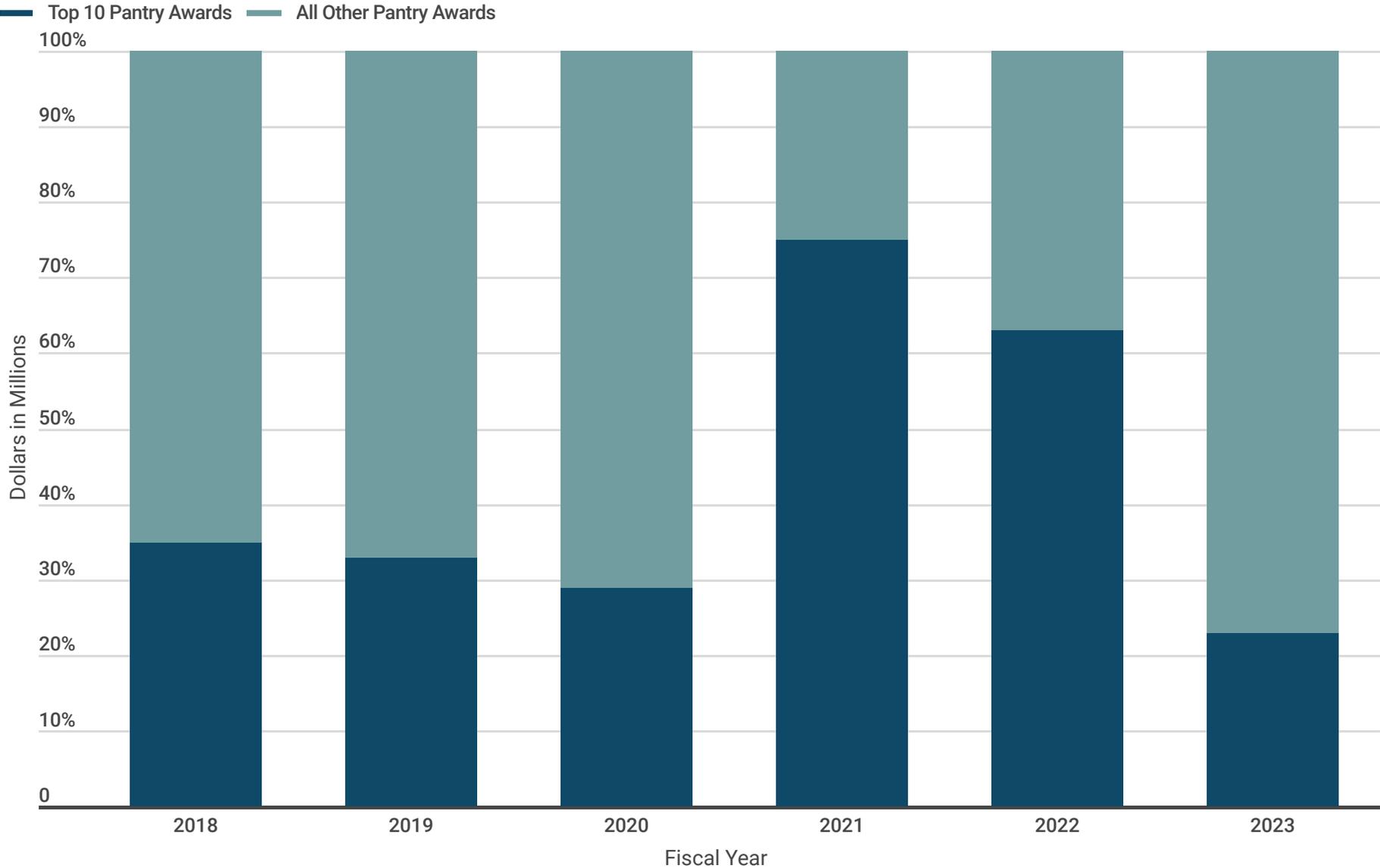
- There are three specific initiatives within the "food initiatives" category: food pantries, food access and benefits, and access to healthy food and nutritional education. In 2019, there also was an initiative for a halal and kosher school lunch pilot, but it was \$1 million for one year only and is not shown.

- Of the three main initiatives, food pantries received the most funding in all six years and also experienced the biggest increase in funding in 2021 and 2022, increasing from \$6.6 million in 2020 to \$24.9 million in 2021 and \$21.2 million in 2022. Funding then decreased to \$7.3 million in 2023.

SOURCE: IBO analysis of City Council expense funding data

Top 10 Food Pantry Awards Made Up More Than 60 Percent Of All Food Pantry Funding During the Height of the Pandemic

Inflation adjusted 2023 dollars



- The 2021 and 2022 funding increase for food pantries was mainly driven by an increase in the size of the ten largest awards every year. These top ten awards totaled approximately \$1.8 million in other years but rose to \$18.6 million and \$13.4 million in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

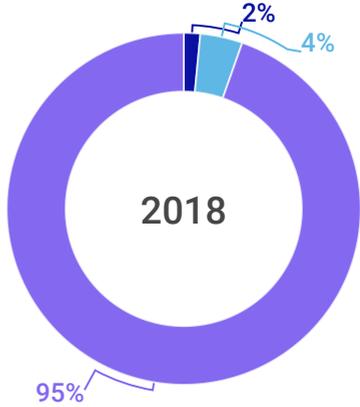
- The top ten awards represented between 23 percent and 35 percent of all food pantries awards in other years but jumped to 75 percent and 63 percent of all food pantries awards in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

- Top 10 Food Pantry Award Recipients in 2023**
- Food Bank For New York City
 - New York Common Pantry, Inc.
 - Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty, Inc.
 - Coalition for the Homeless, Inc.
 - South Asian Council for Social Services
 - Campaign Against Hunger, Inc., The
 - Reaching Out Community Services, Inc.
 - TSQ, Inc.
 - Word of Life International, Inc.
 - Campaign Against Hunger, Inc., The

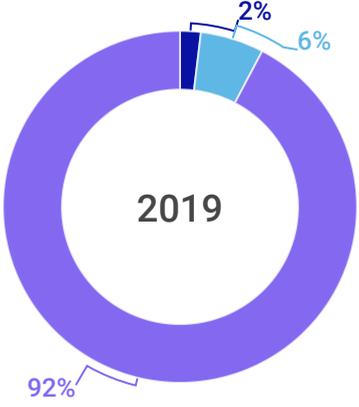
SOURCE: IBO analysis of City Council expense funding data

Breakdown of Total Schedule C Funding by Fiscal Year

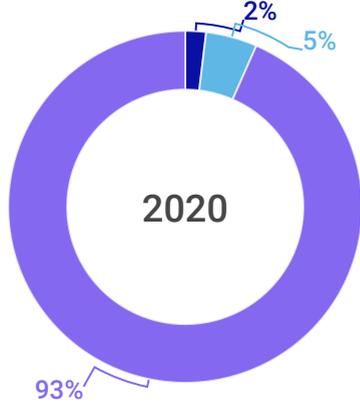
● Food Initiatives ● Food-Adjacent Initiatives ● All Other Initiatives



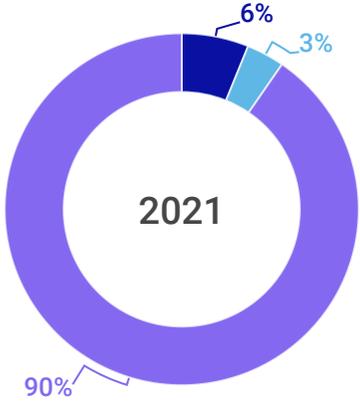
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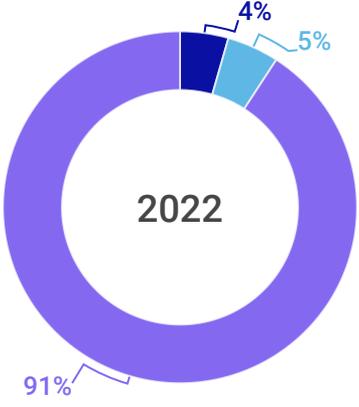
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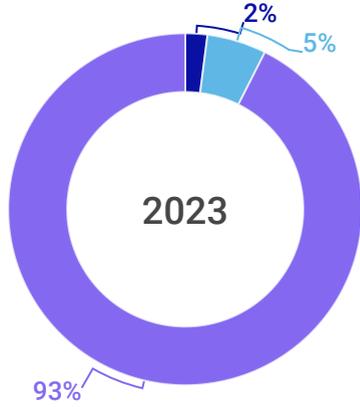
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Fiscal Year	Total Schedule C
2018	\$476,694,928
2019	\$482,313,960
2020	\$535,151,623
2021	\$452,228,303
2022	\$567,530,622
2023	\$541,426,995

- When compared with all Schedule C funding, Food Initiatives made up 1-2 percent of all funding in most years, but during 2021 that total jumped to 6 percent, and remained elevated at 4 percent in 2022.

SOURCE: IBO analysis of City Council expense funding data
 NOTE: All funding amounts are in real dollars, adjusted to June 2023.