



# Promoting Healthy Habits and Public Health Outcomes

The City of Santa Cruz takes pride in its commitment to creating a safe, healthy environment for its residents. As a community, we aspire to prioritize the well-being of our citizens, especially when it comes to public health. To improve community health, the City of Santa Cruz is exploring options for a Sugar-Sweetened Beverage (SSB) Tax which applies to any liquids that are sweetened with various forms of added sugars such as regular soda, fruit drinks and energy drinks.

## Health Risks from SSBs

SSBs are the leading source of added sugars in the American diet. An excess of added sugars in a diet can result in serious health risks like weight gain, obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, tooth decay and more. SSB consumption is associated with adverse health outcomes. Limiting sugary drink intake can help individuals maintain a healthy lifestyle and dietary patterns.



## Impact on Vulnerable Populations

Children and minority populations are disproportionately affected by the negative health effects associated with the consumption of sugary beverages. Research reveals a disproportionate impact on Black and Brown children, who are at a significantly higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. 40% of all children will develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetimes; the projected rate for Latino and African American children is even greater, at 50%. In a recent report published by Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz County, "Healthy weight is a significant issue in Santa Cruz County, with a larger proportion of children who are overweight for their age compared to all California children. In addition, adult obesity... [is] highest among the county's Latino population." Beverage companies heavily market sugary drinks to youth and communities of color.

By taking measures to reduce sugary beverage consumption, the City of Santa Cruz aims to address health disparities, promote healthier habits and improve the well-being of vulnerable populations. SSBs have a proven track record of promoting healthier habits; purchases declined in Oakland for all types of SSB's including sweetened soda by 23.1% since the adoption of their SSB tax in 2017.





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## A Potential Measure for a Healthier Santa Cruz

While no final decisions have been made, the Santa Cruz City Council ad hoc subcommittee is considering proposing a tax of 2¢ per fluid ounce on the distribution of sugar sweetened beverage products in the City to promote a healthier Santa Cruz. The potential measure could raise up \$1.3 million annually to help improve essential City services, including benefiting neighborhood parks, beaches and open space; providing youth and senior programs; expanding community recreational programs and addressing public safety and bike and pedestrian safety.

## Fiscal Accountability and Local Control

The City of Santa Cruz would ensure any measure would have common sense features built in to protect consumers and taxpayers.

- A Community Oversight Panel would be mandated to oversee and report annually on the impact of the measure and include recommendations to support and improve community wellness
- Funds would be reinvested into the local community to improve the health and well-being of City residents
- The measure would include an exemption for small businesses
- The measure would only be applied to beverages with added sugar, and all grocery or consumer food products are excluded
- Diet soda, natural juices, milk and milk substitutes, diet supplements and alcohol would all be excluded

## LEARN MORE!

For more information or to provide input, visit our website at [CityofSantaCruz.com](http://CityofSantaCruz.com) or contact 831-420-5010 or email [ssbt@santacruzca.gov](mailto:ssbt@santacruzca.gov)