



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Governor Cuomo Announces Mobile Markets Awards As Part Of \$1.4 Billion Vital Brooklyn Initiative

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| ISSUE: **VITAL BROOKLYN, ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD, FARMERS' MARKET**



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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES MOBILE MARKETS AWARDS AS PART OF \$1.4 BILLION VITAL BROOKLYN INITIATIVE

Second Round Brings Total Investment in Food Access in Central Brooklyn to Nearly \$2 Million and Increases the Number of Residents Served

Program Funds Additional Mobile Markets and Improves Access to Fresh Foods in Central Brooklyn

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that nearly \$250,000 was awarded to support three additional mobile farmers' markets and food pantries through the second round of the Mobile Markets Grant Program, which was launched last year as part of the Governor's \$1.4 billion Vital Brooklyn initiative. The program funds mobile farmers' markets and food pantries that supply fresh produce and other quality foods, increasing food access and addressing chronic food insecurity for residents in Central Brooklyn communities.

"Through the Vital Brooklyn initiative and the Mobile Markets Grant program, we have increased access to fresh produce and other quality foods for our Central Brooklyn residents," Governor Cuomo said. "Not only is this initiative ensuring that we reach underserved neighborhoods, we are also providing our farmers with new markets to sell

their products and grow their businesses."

Mobile food access units are an important means for reaching those most in need of fresh, healthy food. Establishing mobile markets is more flexible and less expensive than constructing and operating full-scale grocery stores or new food pantries. They serve multiple neighborhoods and better reach people with limited mobility. The following projects were awarded:

The Doe Fund- Good Food Works Mobile Market Expansion- \$28,675

The Good Food Works Mobile Market will expand a unique mobile market model that includes healthy prepared meals in addition to groceries. Products will be SNAP-eligible, locally sourced and sold from a fleet of refrigerated, mobile vending carts in Central Brooklyn. Services will reach Brownsville, Bushwick and Bedford Stuyvesant.

Interfaith Medical Center- Central Brooklyn Farmacy Mobile Market- \$118,599

The Central Brooklyn Farmacy Mobile Market will transport locally grown produce to be sold weekly at affordable prices in front of five Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) sites located in Central Brooklyn. Services will reach Brownsville, Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Flatbush and East New York.

Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty- Mobile Pantry Project-
\$127,530

The Mobile Pantry Project will increase access to healthy, fresh, locally sourced food for underserved residents of Central Brooklyn. Services will reach Crown Heights, Canarsie, East Flatbush and East New York.

The second round of the Mobile Markets Grant program builds on the success of the awardees announced in the first round. In 2018, five organizations were collectively awarded approximately \$500,000 in funding to expand on existing or implement new mobile market programs to serve Central Brooklyn neighborhoods. All organizations funded in the first round of the program are currently serving Central Brooklyn residents.

Currently, eight of the ten community districts facing the highest rates of food insecurity in Brooklyn and the fastest growing rates of food insecurity in the city are in Central Brooklyn. Analysis has shown that low income residents in Brooklyn may travel three times farther to access groceries than higher income residents.

Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "Through the Governor's Vital Brooklyn initiative, we can make a significant impact on the Central Brooklyn community by ensuring its residents are able to easily purchase healthy foods at convenient locations year round."

Senator Velmanette Montgomery said,

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We are pleased to announce these Vital Brooklyn grants which will allow for the expansion of our mobile markets. This means that more high-quality fresh foods and prepared foods will be within reach for residents throughout Central Brooklyn. Proper nutrition is critical to our seniors' health, the school performance of our children and the quality of life for all of our residents. This program will make it easier for families in Central Brooklyn to access foods they need to put wholesome food on the table.

Senator Kevin Parker said, "We are excited that these three mobile markets will be able to bring more fresh and nutritious foods to our families in Central Brooklyn. We know that nutrition is essential for learning and having access to more fresh ingredients and wholesome prepared meals will be a game changer for our community. Today we further ensure that we meet the basic needs of our children so they can focus on school to develop into the leaders that we know they can be."

Sen. Roxanne Persaud said, "The meals we consume throughout the day sets the tone for how productive we are at work, school and other important endeavors. Greater access to healthy foods not only helps our community members get the nutrition they need to stay healthy, but assists them in keeping on track as they go about their daily lives. I commend Governor Cuomo for securing funding for another round of the Mobile Markets Grant Program, which helps local farmers thrive and our neighbors eat well."

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Senator Julia Salazar said, "We thank the Governor for funding this important initiative to make healthier food options available to families in our Brooklyn communities. Access to fresh produce and nutritious foods plays a valuable role in addressing public health concerns and making our communities more vibrant."

Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte said, "The Mobile Markets is a great way to support access to healthy food. Creating healthy eating habits takes a while, but with increased access surrounding us, we stand a greater chance of maintaining those healthy habits. We need to break the cycle of consuming unhealthy processed foods so our next generation can develop and have access to good options."

Assembly Member Maritza Davila, "Thank you, Governor Cuomo, for awarding nearly \$250,000 for the support of three additional mobile farmers' markets and food pantries for the Central Brooklyn community. Programs such as the Vital Brooklyn Initiative, has been a leading role in ensuring that fitness and health remains the forefront for many underserved communities. Many of our residents suffer from health issues, such as diabetes, that are the result of a diet with inaccessibility to fresh and healthy foods. The support for our mobile farmers' markets and food pantries will benefit our residents greatly. It's the first step towards attaining a healthier lifestyle and will also keep our local businesses economically stabled."

Assembly Member Erik Dilan, "The Vital Brooklyn Initiative continues to improve the lives of residents all across Brooklyn. With more funding for the Mobile Market's Grant Program,

Governor Cuomo has created greater access to fresh produce at affordable prices in Central Brooklyn than ever before. I commend the Governor for prioritizing healthy living for every New Yorker."

Assembly Member Mosley said, "Access to fresh produce and foods is becoming more difficult to obtain as we continue to lose our local markets. Thanks to the Vital Brooklyn Initiative and the Mobile Markets Grant program our seniors and children now have access to the nutrition that they need. We must do all that we can to support and maintain this program so that those most in need can continue to build a better and stronger Brooklyn. That is why I am proud to support the Governor's Vital Brooklyn Initiative and the Mobile Markets Grant program and look forward to expanding it even more."

Assembly Member Nick Perry, "The Governor's Vital Brooklyn program has provided the Governor a great opportunity to champion a vital need of Brooklyn's most vulnerable communities. This second round of funding will sustain a critical program that is bringing healthy foods to the children and adults that need it most. The Mobile Markets program is a great success and I am glad to see it funded even further."

Assembly Member Latrice Walker said, "I applaud the Governor for announcing the awardees for the second round of the Vital Brooklyn initiative's Mobile Markets Grants. I hope to see these three organizations work with local partners to provide quality, nutritious meals to our communities and schools. This is a step in the right direction to increase access to healthy food options and putting an end to food deserts in the Brownsville, East New

York, and East Flatbush communities."

Assembly Member Jaime Williams said, "Mobile Market farms provide tools and innovative solutions that allow the enjoyment and sustenance that comes from eating healthy fresh foods and enjoying nature's bounty. The need to have healthy fresh alternatives should not be a privilege but a right and thanks to the Governor's Vital Brooklyn Initiative; residents of Brooklyn can enjoy this bountiful assorted fresh foods and vegetables. Farming and agriculture are a cornerstone and backbone of New York State's economy. The introduction of new markets allows for our farming industry to once again begin to grow. The Governor's Vital Brooklyn Program and Mobile Market's Grant protects this most important industry and those invested in it such as our NY State Farmers."

Assembly Member Tremaine Wright, "It has been a high priority for Gov. Cuomo, myself and several of my colleague in State government to increase access to fresh, nutritious foods for our residents in Central Brooklyn. I'm proud and pleased to announce the award of these funds, which will expand our mobile markets and improve the lives of many seniors, children and families. We know that everything from health to school performance can be affected by the quality and quantity of food that we eat. These mobile markets make a real difference by delivering meals and fresh products to help our residents, of all ages, enjoy improved health and enhanced quality of life."

The Governor's Vital Brooklyn Initiative is a new holistic initiative that focuses on eight integrated areas of improvement, including healthy food. Vital Brooklyn serves the following

Central Brooklyn neighborhoods: Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, Bushwick, Canarsie, Crown Heights, Cypress Hills/Ocean Hill, East Flatbush, East New York, Prospect Heights, and Prospect Lefferts Gardens.

Since the launch of Vital Brooklyn, New York State has invested nearly \$2 million in new programs and initiatives to increase access to nutritious food in Central Brooklyn. These programs include the mobile markets program, food insecurity screening for seniors, youth run farmers' markets, community gardens, and a food distribution hub siting study.

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