



# SALEM

## FOOD SECURITY PLANNING GRANT



# SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

Salem, NJ • April 29, 2025

## GRANT OBJECTIVE

Provide attainable and community-supported recommendations for improving food access and food security in Salem



**The goal of this study is to provide recommendations to:**

- Improve access to healthy, affordable food
- Support economic revitalization in Salem
- Repurpose a vacant city-owned site for community benefit





# KEY FINDINGS: MARKET ANALYSIS

## COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

- Small population of 5,285 (2,172 households)
- Young population, and many households with children
- Very high unemployment
- Grocery spending expected to grow 14-15% over next five years
- No full-service grocery store since 2017

## CHALLENGES

- Nearest supermarkets 20-40+ minutes away by car
- 28% of households without a vehicle
- Limited public transportation
- Local stores have high prices and very limited healthy options
- 34% of households use SNAP benefits
- Local food access = health + equity + economic issue



## KEY FINDINGS: COMMUNITY INPUT

COMMUNITY SURVEY, INTERVIEWS, AND A PRIOR PUBLIC MEETING

- Most people prepare food at home at least 5 days a week and shop for groceries once a week
- Large majority shop at supermarkets and purchase wide variety of groceries, but many people also visit local dollar stores
- Most people visit supermarkets in Pennsville & Woodstown, but some travel farther
- Many people also use local food pantries
- Quality and price of products most important, but also present challenges
- Travel distance to the store is biggest problem, and current options in Salem do not meet resident needs
- Residents would much rather have a grocery store than any other type of food establishment

## WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

- Salem residents – especially those without transportation or sufficient income – face severe food access barriers
- Development of new food retail could:
  - Improve health outcomes
  - Create local jobs
  - Support the revitalization of downtown Salem





## WHAT IS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS?

- Strong community engagement and buy-in
- A food retail model that is:
  - *Affordable*
  - *Accessible*
  - *Sustainable*
- Careful site planning to address physical site constraints
- Commitment to resilient, inclusive development





# STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDATION #1

### **Public-Private Partnership Grocery Store**

- Use alternate city-owned site (e.g., 17 New Market or 152 Yorke St.)
- City offers low/no-cost lease to attract operator
- Experienced operator responsible for management, inventory, hiring, etc.
- Store must accept SNAP & WIC
- Ideal: Incorporate local produce, prepared foods





## RECOMMENDATION #2

### **Supermarket Shuttle**

- Short-term improvement for food access
- Fixed-route shuttle to a nearby supermarket that accepts SNAP, WIC
- Partner with supermarket, local healthcare institution, or insurance company
- Model from PA shows success in similar towns





## KEY FINDINGS: SITE EVALUATION

- Renovation costs and structural integrity are unknown
- Environmental assessment has not yet been done
- Flooding risks nearby, but site itself currently outside main flood zone
- Truck access & delivery space limited
- City-owned vacant lot at 21 New Market and paved lot across New Market St. present potential

## RECOMMENDATION #3

### Reuse of 25 New Market Street as a Workforce Development Hub



Use site for a training/employment center if building is viable



Potential focus areas: green energy, healthcare, logistics, trades



Strong local and regional partnerships essential



Support both local workforce and downtown revitalization





## A FEW ADDITIONAL IDEAS:

- ✓ Farmers market or CSA program with tiered pricing
- ✓ Free grocery store (a.k.a. free choice pantry)
- ✓ Community food buying club

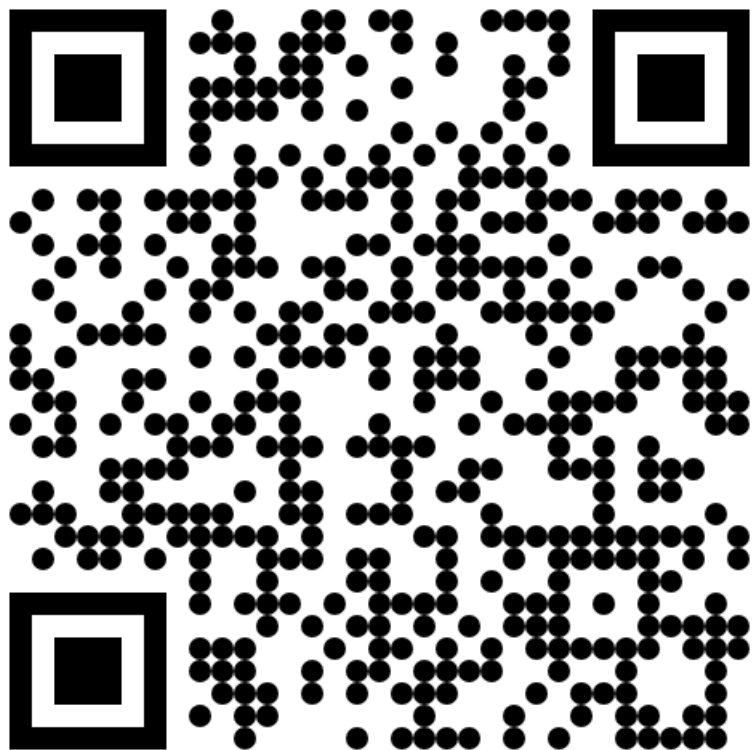






COMMENTS  
AND  
QUESTIONS?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION!**



Scan for Salem Food Security  
Study Webpage



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