

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Breaks Ground On New ShopRite Grocery Store Project in Atlantic City

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ATLANTIC CITY – Governor Murphy, joined by Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, Senate President Steve Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) Chair Modia Butler, and Village Super Market, Inc. Executive Vice President Bill Sumas today broke ground on a new ShopRite supermarket in Atlantic City. The store will ensure that Atlantic City is no longer a food desert, and will provide area residents with high-quality and affordable grocery options.

“Atlantic City residents should not have to leave town in order to shop for groceries for themselves and their families,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Our Administration, the CRDA, Mayor Small, and others have been working long and hard to make today a possibility, and I am happy to be standing today alongside our partners to break ground on a brand-new ShopRite for Atlantic City.”

“With today’s groundbreaking, Atlantic city is on the cusp of having its first full-service supermarket in more than 15 years. It goes without saying that Atlantic City cannot reach its full potential without a full-service supermarket that offers fresh produce and high-quality food,” **said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs**. “Governor Murphy and I understand that access to nutritious food will make a huge and positive impact on the health of people who live in Atlantic City.”

“This is an important step forward for Atlantic City and the entire region,” **said Senate President Steve Sweeney**. “Atlantic City will no longer be a food desert. Bringing a grocery store to the community provides residents access to fresh foods at affordable prices, so families in Atlantic City can have what all parents want for their children: healthy, well-balanced diets. I look forward to seeing the positive impact this new grocery store will have on the Atlantic City community and its residents.”

“With the promise of accessible and affordable fresh and nutritious foods, the groundbreaking on this ShopRite marks an end to the food desert that has for too long been to the detriment of Atlantic City residents,” **said Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**. “Tackling food insecurity is not only our political duty but a moral obligation. Through vehicles like the Economic Recovery Act of 2020, we continue to tangibly work at eliminating food deserts affecting 340,000 New Jerseyans. The first of many grocery stores we hope to see built for communities in need, this ShopRite will be hugely consequential for the health, and social and economic wellness of those it serves.”

The construction of the grocery store will include a 54,609 square foot supermarket, with onsite parking, landscaping, lighting, and fencing. It includes 44,100 square feet of a ground floor retail supermarket with an approximately 10,400 square foot mezzanine for administrative support and 227 parking spaces.

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"This groundbreaking marks the beginning of the end of Atlantic City's days as a food desert," **said Senator Vince Polistina**. "When the new ShopRite opens, residents will once again have easy access to a local supermarket and affordable, healthy food options. This CRDA project perfectly demonstrates how the success of our casino industry translates into investments that help revitalize Atlantic City for the benefit of the community."

"This long awaited project directly addresses the immediate concerns of Jim Johnson's Building a Foundation for a Shared Prosperity report in 2018 and will negate Atlantic City's status as a food desert," **said CRDA Board Chairman Modia Butler**.

"This full service grocery store is desperately needed here in Atlantic City to finally address the food insecurity too many residents have had to endure for far too long," **said CRDA Executive Director Matt Doherty**.

Food deserts are defined as urban neighborhoods and rural towns without access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. A diet consisting of mostly processed and fast foods can cause serious health concerns including heart disease and obesity.

In August 2018, the CRDA released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Consulting Services – Proposed Grocery Store Development Project to assist the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in locating a potential site and a developer for the development of full-service grocery store. On October 16, 2018, the CRDA awarded a contract to Uplift Solutions Inc. for Grocery Store consultant services associated with the potential development of a grocery store within Atlantic City. Uplift Solutions Inc. recommended block 396 as the site for the grocery store development.

In May 2019, the Authority released a Request for Proposals for potential development partners to develop an approximately 40,000 square foot turn-key grocery store offering access to affordable, fresh foods, and household products.

On August 20, 2019, the Board approved resolutions designating Village to develop and operate a grocery store located on block 396 in Atlantic City at the North West corner of Baltic and Indiana Avenues.

Village, a publicly traded company with sales of over \$1.6 billion annually, operates thirty (30) ShopRite Supermarket Stores in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Village was founded in 1937 by two brothers, Nick and Perry Sumas, and the Sumas family continues to guide Village to this day. Village has an unwavering commitment to New Jersey and its residents, and in particular Atlantic County and Atlantic City, developing and operating five (5) stores in the region. Village has particularly strong community ties to Atlantic City, as one of their founders, Perry Sumas, was the driving force in bringing the LPGA ShopRite Classic to Atlantic County, which has raised millions for local charities.

"The ShopRite groundbreaking makes today an especially great day in the City of Atlantic City," **said Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr.** "This project represents a major leap forward in the revitalization of the great City we call home. More importantly, the supermarket will provide additional opportunities for employment while also improving access to the healthy and affordable food options that our community deserves. Thank you to the CRDA team for their commitment to this project and to Atlantic City residents."

"The placement of a supermarket in Atlantic City is an important and long overdue significant development for the residents of the entire area," **said New Jersey Department of Agriculture Secretary Douglas Fisher**. "It will allow access to the broadest array of offerings that for so long were not available to meet consumer demand. This store will be the foundation and gateway to a healthier lifestyle. Congratulations to all of who collaborated to make this a reality."

A public hearing was conducted on the supermarket application on September 2, 2021 and, based on the evidence and the solid land use planning and engineering testimony provided, the preliminary and final site plan with use, area, and variances were recommended for approval by the CRDA Board.

On September 21, 2021, the Board granted Preliminary Determination of Project Eligibility (PDPE) for the Grocery Store Development Project. As a result of this approval, a public hearing was held on October 6, 2021, which provided an overview of the development of the grocery store with Village stating they have extensive experience in developing and maintaining grocery stores in many urban settings.

On October 19, 2021, the Board granted approval for the Grocery Store Development Project and established a fund reservation in the amount of \$18,752,500 for the construction and fit out of the grocery store by Village Super Market, Inc. on Block 396 in Atlantic City.

"Village Super Market is proud to continue our 84 year tradition of Helping Families Live better by bringing a 44,000 square foot state-of-the-art supermarket to the community," **said Village Super Market Inc. Board Chair Bill Sumas.** "The new store will allow neighborhood residents access to fresh food and everything they need for a full first class shopping experience to feed their family right here in Atlantic City."

"The opening of this new supermarket brings us one step closer to eliminating food deserts in New Jersey and ensuring access to nutritious food for all," **said Carlos Rodriguez, President & CEO of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey.** "I'm proud to join Governor Murphy, ShopRite, and CRDA to celebrate an important moment for our Atlantic City neighbors."

Construction on the new supermarket is anticipated to begin in 2022 and will take approximately 13 to 15 months to complete.

Village has partnered with Community Investment Strategies, Inc., to assist them with community outreach and to create job training and job fairs for Atlantic City residents to get the jobs that are being created by the project.

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