

Project Highlights

\$300,000

in grant funding from the New York Healthy Food & Healthy Communities Fund (HFHC), administered by LIIF.

\$500,000

in loan funding.

5,300

of Highland Falls residents have improved access to healthy food, according to measures used by HFHC.

12,000

square feet of food retail is now serving the community, including a newly renovated space for fresh produce.

20 Jobs

have been created, full- and part-time.

Profile: MyTown Marketplace Highland Falls, New York



MyTown Marketplace, a supermarket that serves the Highland Falls community of New York State, opened in 2011 with a grant provided by the [New York Healthy Food Healthy Communities \(HFHC\) Fund](#). The HFHC Fund is a healthy food financing program that supports healthy food retail projects in communities where residents struggle with limited access to healthy foods. The HFHC Fund is administered by the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF), a national [community development financial institution](#), and The Food Trust, a national food access organization.

In the years before the arrival of MyTown, Highland Falls' only grocery store closed its doors, leaving the community with an 11-mile commute to the closest full-service grocery store. This distance was notably challenging for the population of senior citizens in the community who had limited car access. Highland Falls is a moderate-income community of approximately 5,500 residents in the Mid-Hudson Valley region of the state, roughly 50 miles north of New York City. Close to three-quarters of the area's residents are Caucasian and the town has an expanding Hispanic population.



Although Highland Falls' Mayor Joseph E. D'Onofrio temporarily alleviated the problem of limited access to healthy foods by having local government sponsor a shuttle-bus service to a neighboring supermarket, a long-term solution was needed.

Fortunately for the community, Lisa Berrios and Albert Rodriguez, a husband and wife team, stepped up to the challenge of bringing healthy foods back to Highland Falls. The couple applied to the HFHC Fund and were awarded \$300,000 in grant funding and a \$500,000 loan to help renovate the physical layout of a new supermarket in a vacant retail grocery space, left vacant by a departing grocery store a year earlier. After additions and a needed expansion of the store's fresh produce department, MyTown Marketplace, a now 12,000-square-foot retail space, is serving the Highland Falls community. In addition to LIIF and The Food Trust, supporters of the project included Empire State Development, Goldman Sachs Group Inc., New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the New York State Health Foundation, and The Reinvestment Fund.

Since HFHC's inception in 2010, the program has funded over 10 projects in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the state, and is improving access to healthy foods for thousands of New York residents, including over 5,000 individuals who call Highland Falls home. MyTown Marketplace has brought 20 full- and part-time jobs to the community while improving access to healthy food for local families and individuals. The addition of these jobs to Highland Falls has complemented MyTown's bottom line, by improving the local economy. The store is also a member of the "Pride of New York" local agriculture promotion program.

"Those who live in the area, including us, have desperately needed the reopening of our only full-service supermarket," Lisa Berrios said at the grand opening. "The reopening of MyTown Marketplace could only have been accomplished with the support of the New York Healthy Food & Healthy Communities Fund. The dollars invested in our store, our community, and the health of Highland Falls' families have made a powerful and positive difference in our lives."



For more information about the Healthy Food Access Portal, contact us at info@healthyfoodaccess.org.