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Meat Vans Will Return to Moscow Neighborhoods With Little Retail

By The Moscow Times

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Moscow authorities plan to bring back mobile meat shops, which could appear on city streets as early as year's end.

Acting Mayor Sergei Sobyanin approved the project,which would send meat vans to areas with little retail infrastructure, Kommersant reported.

The project's potential participants — the Cherkizovo and Dymov meat processing plants and the Setun and Avtomarket-Mikoms meat traders — are relying on long-term cooperation with the city authorities due to significant investments in the project.

The areas where mobile meat sales are most needed are generally considered less profitable than locations around metro stations and residents have few options to buy necessary goods. To assuage fears of wayward meat vans, all vehicles will be equipped with satellite navigation systems that can track their movements along pre-approved routes.

The program is focused more on providing services than generating profit, Alexei Nemeryuk, the head of the city's trade and services department, said.

The vans were popular under former mayor Yuri Luzhkov but have become less common as many areas of Moscow have developed a high retail capacity.

Authorities will also charge owners a 30,000 ruble ($900) to 40,000 ($1200) ruble monthly fee to operate in the city and require that the mobile shops meet high hygiene standards.

Representatives of participating meat processing plants say a fully equipped van for mobile sales would cost over $75,000 and owners would want commitment to the program's longevity so they can be assured of making a profit.

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