



UPDATE ON FOOD TRUCKS AND SIDEWALK VENDORS

Community & Economic Development

Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee
January 11, 2021

RiversideCA.gov

1

BACKGROUND – FOOD TRUCKS

1. Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.36 was adopted in 2011 to regulate Mobile Food Vendors, otherwise known as "Food Trucks."
2. This chapter finds that Mobile Food Vendors pose a special risk to the public in terms of creating traffic and pedestrian hazards and potentially selling unregulated non-food items to minors.
3. The chapter requires, among other things:
 - a) Operator's to obtain City Business License and County Health Permit;
 - b) Limits the sale to "pre-packaged" food items only and prohibits on-board food preparation;
 - c) Requires drivers to keep areas free of trash and park in a legal/safe manner;
 - d) Prohibits operation in a park, near a restaurant or a school; and
 - e) Prohibits conducting business with a minor without adult supervision.



2

RiversideCA.gov

2

BACKGROUND – FOOD TRUCKS

1. Food Trucks are allowed with appropriate permits and approvals as part of a special event or other authorized occasion.



2. State/County Orders and Guidance relating to COVID-19



3

RiversideCA.gov

3

BACKGROUND – SIDEWALK VENDORS

1. Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.38 was amended in July 2020 and regulates sidewalk and pedestrian vending activity.
2. Current City Code substantially complies with California Government Code enacted in 2019 pertaining to sidewalk vending.
3. Restrictions on sidewalk vending must be directly related to an objective health, safety or welfare concern.
4. At the time the City Council amended Chapter 5.38, they also instructed staff to explore other opportunities to regulate sidewalk vending specific to the City of Riverside.
5. Staff performed outreach with all involved City Departments (Police, Parks & Recreation, Traffic Engineering, City Attorney, Code Enforcement) as well as the Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice



4

RiversideCA.gov

4

ENFORCEMENT

Current penalties for violations of RMC Chapters 5.36 and 5.38 include:

1. Administrative citations and fines.
2. Criminal citations and prosecution in limited circumstances (Violations of sidewalk vendor ordinance is not subject to criminal citations).
3. Confiscation of perishable food items if there are Health/Safety concerns.



5

RiversideCA.gov

5

DISCUSSION – SIDEWALK VENDORS

1. The City's existing sidewalk vending ordinance is in compliance with the California Government Code and currently contains broad allowances for sidewalk vending activity as long as the proprietor obtains the proper permits and licenses. The City also has the opportunity to add additional restrictions tailored to the needs of the City as long as these restrictions have a direct relation to an objective health/safety concern.
2. State/County Orders and Guidance relating to COVID-19
3. The following proposed additional restrictions are being recommended with the concurrence of the Chief of Police, Public Works Director, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director, City Engineer and City Attorney.
4. All of the proposed restrictions would be in addition to what already exists in the sidewalk vending code.



6

RiversideCA.gov

6

DISCUSSION – SIDEWALK VENDORS

Three primary areas of further restriction under consideration are: 1) during peak hours in the Downtown Entertainment District; 2) within certain City Parks; and 3) general right-of-way restrictions.

1. Downtown Entertainment District (D.E.D.):
 1. Staff proposes prohibiting sidewalk vending Thursday-Saturday between the hours of 5:00 P.M. and 3:00 A.M.
 2. The D.E.D. area would be defined as the area bound by Third Street to the east, Tenth Street to the west, Lime Street to the south and Market Street to the north.
 3. Health/Safety concern: during peak weekend hours, this area sees a high volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic that would be exacerbated by the inclusion of sidewalk vendors. In addition, vending could cause illegal parking/stopping in the roadway and provide an opportunity to continue to gather in this area after the bars/restaurants close.



7

RiversideCA.gov

7

DISCUSSION – SIDEWALK VENDORS

2. Parks and Open Space: (Restrictions must be based on an objective health/safety concern and/or to preserve the natural characteristics of the park).

Staff proposes prohibiting sidewalk vending at all times in the following parks and recreational amenities:

Special Use Parks:

1. Carlson Dog Park - Food vending would cause potential issues in areas where off-leash dogs are present.
2. Arlanza Neighborhood Garden – Designed for community gardening and quiet enjoyment.
3. Riverwalk Dog Park - Food vending would cause potential issues in areas where off-leash dogs are present.
4. White Park – Designed for passive use and quiet enjoyment.



8

RiversideCA.gov

8

DISCUSSION – SIDEWALK VENDORS

Regional Reserves/Open Space: (Topography, terrain and grades would be hazardous for sidewalk vendor use. In addition open space/"wilderness" park's natural characteristics would be negatively impacted by the presence of sidewalk vendors).

5. Box Springs Mountain Open Space
6. Challen Park Open Space
7. Mount Rubidoux Park and San Andreas Avenue/Glenwood Drive between Tequesquite Avenue and 14th Street
8. Pachappa Hill Open Space
9. Quail Run Open Space
10. Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Park



9

RiversideCA.gov

9

DISCUSSION – SIDEWALK VENDORS

3. Additional Right-of-Way Restrictions

1. Vending shall be prohibited along the portion of Magnolia Avenue, generally within the Arlington Business District, along which bicyclists are currently allowed to share the sidewalk.
2. Vending shall be prohibited within any designated bikeway, bike lane, or bicycle parking area.
3. Sidewalk vendors shall not obstruct access to public infrastructure including parking meters, parking pay stations, shared mobility parking zones, waste receptacles, etc.
4. Vending shall be prohibited adjacent to any portion of the curb designated as a passenger, commercial, or school loading zone via signage and/or curb markings.
5. Sidewalk vendors shall maintain an unobstructed 4-ft walking path at all times.



10

RiversideCA.gov

10

DISCUSSION – MOBILE FOOD VENDORS

1. Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.36 was adopted in 2011 to regulate Mobile Food Vendors, otherwise known as “Food Trucks.”
2. This chapter finds that Mobile Food Vendors pose a special risk to the public in terms of creating traffic and pedestrian hazards and potentially selling unregulated non-food items to minors.
3. Food truck operators often ask to be allowed to operate in the City of Riverside
4. An amendment to the Riverside Municipal Code would be necessary to allow food truck operators to conduct business in the City, beyond the temporary uses permitted now
5. Additional discussion at the Committee is recommended should it be desirable to amend Chapter 5.36 to address “Food Trucks”



11

RiversideCA.gov

11

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee:

1. Receive the update on Chapters 5.36 and 5.38 of the Riverside Municipal Code regarding Mobile Food Vending and Sidewalk Vending; and
2. Direct staff to take one of the following actions:
 - A) Take no further action on existing sidewalk vendor ordinance (maintain status-quo); or
 - B) Prepare amendments to RMC 5.38 – Sidewalk Vending, to provide additional restrictions as recommended, for City Council consideration and subsequent approval; or
 - C) Research opportunities to lessen sidewalk vending restrictions from those that currently exist, for City Council consideration and subsequent approval.



12

RiversideCA.gov

12

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee:

3. Direct staff to take one of the following actions:

- A) Take no further action on existing mobile food vendor ordinance (maintain status- quo); or
- B) Prepare amendments to RMC 5.36, to provide additional restrictions as recommended, for City Council consideration and subsequent approval; or
- C) Research opportunities to lessen mobile food vendor restrictions from those that currently exist, for City Council consideration and subsequent approval.



13

RiversideCA.gov