



UPDATE ON MOBILE FOOD TRUCKS

Community & Economic Development

Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee

September 13, 2021

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BACKGROUND

- Within the public right-of-way, mobile food vending is protected by California Vehicle Code Section 22455.
- The City is able to adopt requirements to regulate the time, place, and manner of mobile food truck operations as needed in the interest of public health and safety.
- California Retail Food Code regulates health and sanitation aspects of food vending, including from food trucks.
- Riverside County Health Department inspects and approves all food facilities, including food trucks and issues permit/sticker.



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BACKGROUND

Current Riverside Municipal Code Section 5.36 regulates food trucks and currently limits them to selling “pre-packaged” food only – no onboard cooking or food preparation is allowed.

Reasons commonly given for support:

1. They provide an opportunity to increase jobs and businesses;
2. They offer opportunities to provide food choices where zoning precludes restaurants;
3. They can increase activity in struggling business districts;
4. They signal to other potential businesses that the community is adapting to the evolving economy and supporting entrepreneurship; and
5. They are a way for restaurateurs to test the local market for future brick-and-mortar facilities.



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BACKGROUND

Reasons commonly given in opposition:

Public Safety

1. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic concerns
2. View obstructions for law enforcement
3. Increase in calls for service/disturbing the peace

Community Impacts

1. security, trash, odors, noise, sanitation

Economic Impacts

1. Competition with brick-and-mortar restaurants



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BACKGROUND

Community feedback:

1. Some fully supported legalized food trucks offering cooked food throughout the City;
2. Others supported the concept of food trucks serving cooked food, but thought that they should be restricted/regulated and allowed to operate only in certain parts of the City that are not serviced by restaurants; and
3. Others felt that a decision on this matter should be postponed for at least 12 months to allow local restaurants a chance to recover from COVID-19 challenges without also needing to compete with an influx of additional mobile food vending businesses.



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DISCUSSION

On May 27, 2021, Staff presented four options for consideration by the Land Use, Sustainability & Resilience Committee regarding food trucks:

1. Continue to restrict mobile food trucks to special events and pre-packaged food.
2. Prepare an ordinance to amend RMC Chapter 5.36 to allow mobile food trucks to operate in compliance with state and county guidelines.
3. Prepare an ordinance to amend to RMC Chapter 5.36 to allow mobile food trucks to operate in compliance with state and county guidelines and in specific locations with operational requirements.
4. Prepare an ordinance to amend RMC Chapter 5.36 to implement a two-year pilot program that is flexible, encourages innovation, and helps uncover and address issues unique to individual communities.



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DISCUSSION

On May 27, 2021, the Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee voted 3-0 as follows:

After discussion, it was moved by Member Edwards and seconded by Chair Plascencia to direct staff to draft an ordinance amending Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.36 to allow mobile food trucks to operate in compliance with State and County guidelines and return a draft of the ordinance to this committee in September 2021.

The draft of this ordinance is attached as "Attachment 1" to the Staff Report.



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DISCUSSION

Public Health, Safety & Welfare Restrictions

1. Trucks shall not be left unattended or parked overnight in the public right-of-way.
2. Trucks shall not operate within 100 feet of intersections, traffic signals, and marked or unmarked crosswalks.
3. Trucks shall not operate out of metered parking stalls and shall respect all curb markings.
4. Trucks shall not operate within any designated bikeway, bike lane, or bicycle parking area.
5. Sales shall occur out of the portion of the vending vehicle that faces the sidewalk.
6. Trucks shall not block or obstruct pedestrians or vehicles.
7. There must be garbage receptacles and cleanup.
8. Ice cream vending must be compliant with state law.



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DISCUSSION

Public Health, Safety & Welfare Restrictions

- 9. Not permitted in parks.
 - However, the City Manager or his or her designee may permit a mobile food vendor to operate in a City park in conjunction with a special event pursuant to Chapter 2.28 of this Code or any other City sponsored or approved event.

- 10. Trucks without a permit to operate in a special event must remain 500 feet away from the boundary of the special event for the duration of the event.



STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan Priorities

 #3 Economic Opportunity

Cross-Cutting Threads



Community Trust



Fiscal Responsibility



Sustainability & Resiliency



Equity



Innovation



RECOMMENDATION

That the Land Use, Sustainability and Resilience Committee:

1. Review the attached proposed ordinance regarding regulations of mobile food trucks and make an appropriate recommendation to the City Council.



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