

City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: AUGUST 20, 2024

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARDS: ALL
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO RMC 5.36 – MOBILE FOOD VENDING

ISSUE:

Adopt the proposed code amendment regarding mobile vending vehicle parking restrictions fifty (50) feet from any commercial, industrial and residential driveways.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council adopt the proposed code amendment regarding mobile vending vehicle parking restrictions near commercial, industrial and residential driveways.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Land Use Committee with Chair Mill and Members Robillard and Falcone met on May 13, 2024 to consider an update and recommendations for a code amendments to the City’s Mobile Food Vending Ordinance (RMC 5.36). After discussion, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed amendment to RMC 5.36 – Mobile Food Vendors.

BACKGROUND:

The City’s current Mobile Food Vending Ordinance does not regulate the distance a mobile food vending vehicle should park from a driveway. On May 13, 2024, the Land Use Committee met to receive an update and discuss code amendments regarding mobile food vending vehicles. The Committee directed staff to return to Committee with additional options for regulating mobile food vending and directed staff to immediately amend the current ordinance to restrict mobile vending vehicles from parking within 50’ of driveways pursuant to an enforcement directive issued by the City Engineer.

DISCUSSION:

RMC 5.36.070 currently restricts vending vehicles from parking within 100 feet of intersections, traffic signals, and marked or unmarked crosswalks when making or attempting to make a sale. RMC 5.36.070 further restricts mobile food merchants from operating in a manner that blocks or

obstructs the free movement of pedestrians or vehicles and provides the Director of Public Works with the authority to create 'no parking zones' deemed necessary for the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles.

In response to the observed parking patterns along Diana Street and in keeping with the authority granted under RMC 5.36 the Public Works Department quickly instituted a restriction of all mobile food vendors from parking within 50 feet of any commercial, industrial, or residential driveway. While urban roadways routinely allow for parking in proximity to driveways, the height of food trucks may cause difficulty for motorists when exiting a driveway. Commercial vehicles are generally restricted from parking on Riverside's roadways outside designated commercial vehicle parking zones. The Committee recommended bringing forth an amendment to RMC 5.36 to formalize the restriction of food truck parking within fifty (50) feet of any driveway. The amendment (Attachment 2) would add:

5.36.070

"O. Mobile food vending vehicles shall be restricted from parking within fifty (50) feet of any commercial, industrial or residential driveway."

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

Strategic Priority 2: Community Well-being – Ensure safe and inclusive neighborhoods where everyone can thrive.

Goals:

2.4 – Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage community engagement, and build public trust.

2.5 - Foster relationships between community members, partner organizations, and public safety professionals to define, prioritize, and address community safety and social service needs.

1. **Community Trust** – Staff continues to engage community and team members on a regular basis regarding food trucks and educates the food truck operators in the field, building a relationship with them and the customers. The City strives to balance the need for food truck and sidewalk vending opportunities with safeguarding public safety.
2. **Equity** – This item is being undertaken to provide equal entrepreneurship opportunities for segments of the business community that have been highly regulated and restricted while at the same time, providing for a safe environment for residents and the community.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Increased food truck and sidewalk vending activity in the City of Riverside can potentially generate additional sales tax and permit fee revenue. In addition, it can potentially attract additional visitors to areas such as the Downtown Entertainment District by providing additional dining options, thereby further increasing sales tax revenue for area businesses.
4. **Innovation** – The "street food" culture is a growing trend in many progressive areas of the country. Providing a regulatory framework that encourages this entrepreneurship while still safeguarding the public's health, safety and welfare would place Riverside among those

model cities that are beginning to incorporate this “street food” culture into their downtowns.


- 5. Sustainability & Resiliency** – Continuing to expand food options meets current demands for food options without compromising the needs of the future. Food trucks enjoy a degree of popularity, and this economic opportunity will positively impact the City’s capacity to persevere, adapt and grow.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Gary T. Merk, Code Enforcement Manager
Approved by: Jennifer A. Lilley, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Concurs with;



Sean H. Mill, Chair
Land Use Committee

Attachment: Draft Ordinance