



Legislation Text

File #: 2015-2758, **Version:** 1

Consider an ordinance amending Chapter 46, Sections 46-5 and 46-161, Code of Ordinances (2010 Edition), to allow mobile food establishments in certain areas of the City limits. (First Reading)

The Planning and Development Services Department has received inquiries from business owners about the legality of mobile food establishments (also known as “food trucks”). Currently the city regulates food trucks through the temporary building provisions, which essentially prohibits their use. Staff believes there are situations and locations in the city where food trucks would be an appropriate use.

In 2012 and 2013 the city permitted a food truck pilot program through a development agreement with a downtown property owner. That agreement allowed the creation of a food truck park with many mobile food establishments remaining on a vacant site for a period of up to one year. Through the course of that year many concerns arose regarding the appearance, cleanliness, and access of the park, and it ceased operations. With demand still high for mobile food establishments, the city has decided to take a different approach to the subject.

The intent of this ordinance is to permit mobile food establishments to operate in the city on a temporary basis as accessory uses to existing businesses. They would be prohibited from being the sole use on a vacant lot or a permanent accessory use on any lot. The owner or operator of an existing, approved business must obtain a permit prior to bringing a food truck on-site, and each permit will be valid for one calendar year. Staff has outlined certain uses which may host a food truck:

- Eating and drinking establishments located on lots zoned MU-1 or a PUD which abuts an MU-1 or MU-2 zoned parcel;
- A multi-tenant center where the mobile food establishment is located within an internally oriented pedestrian promenade which is not visible from the public right of way (such as the Outlets);
- Small-scale alcohol production facilities (such as microbreweries);
- Event centers;
- Municipal parks and recreation facilities; and
- Higher education campuses, corporate office campuses, and business/industrial parks.

Each mobile food establishment will be required to obtain approval from the Williamson County and Cities Health District and the Round Rock Fire Department. There are also numerous operating requirements and site-specific location criteria to ensure the operation does not have an adverse impact on neighboring businesses or residents. For example: the establishment may only be open to the public within the hours its hosting business is open to the public; it may not locate on a sidewalk

or on-street parking spaces without city approval; it may not occupy on-site parking spaces in a way that causes the primary use on the lot to go below the Code minimum; and it must be a minimum of 50 feet away from any single family property line. Additionally, sites smaller than one acre are limited to two food trucks at any given time. To guarantee food trucks are temporary uses, they will not be permitted to make a permanent connection to city water/wastewater infrastructure or to electric utilities. Also, food trucks that are visible from the public right-of-way may not remain on-site overnight except on weekends.

The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously recommended approval at their meeting on July 15th, 2015.

Staff recommends approval.