



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

DATE: July 12, 2016

TO: Gregory A. Sundstrom, City Manager

COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole

LIAISON: Gregory A. Sundstrom, City Manager

FROM: Elizabeth White, Acting City Attorney
Department of Law

SUBJECT: **Resolution providing for the publication of and scheduling a public hearing to consider a new mobile food truck ordinance (Pilot Mobile Food Businesses)**

The attached resolution sets the date and time for a public hearing on Tuesday July 26, 2016, to provide the community an opportunity to comment on the concepts included in a new mobile food truck ordinance and related issues. The proposed ordinance would be placed in Title VI of the City Code entitled Food and Health by adding Chapter 74 to be called PILOT MOBILE FOOD BUSINESSES and would allow food truck vendors to operate in certain public areas and public rights-of-way.

In her 2016 State of the City address, Mayor Bliss called for recommendations to amend City food truck policy in a way that better supports culinary entrepreneurship, small business development and placemaking.

Community members who participated in GR Forward, an amendment to the City Master Plan adopted by the City Commission in December 2015, consistently held the belief that expanded food truck use in Grand Rapids is good for local entrepreneurs, good for the local economy and good for programming public spaces. Credible evidence also suggests food truck businesses, effectively managed, are good for the City's culinary scene and help promote a more vibrant restaurant industry.

Sharing similar objectives, the Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) Board of Advisors took an official action recommending that the Grand Rapids City Commission adopt a new ordinance to establish expanded mobile food vending operating areas within the public realm, where such areas respect the proximity of existing stakeholders and restaurants. The DGRI Board of Advisors also urged the City of Grand Rapids to adopt a streamlined regulatory approach to permitting mobile food vending operations in a manner that protects public interests, reduces red tape and supports small business development and activates public space.

Working together, DGRI and City Staff have surveyed approximately 30 food truck operators within 100 miles of Grand Rapids, interviewed approximately 40 restaurateurs, led a focus group discussion with 13 food truck operators, and have engaged in dialogue with key stakeholders including but not limited to the Grand Rapids Chamber, the Hispanic Chamber, LINC, as well as the DGRI citizen-led Alliances for Vibrancy and Livability.

Based on these ongoing discussions, DGRI and City Staff recommend a market-based PILOT Mobile Food Business Ordinance that does the following:

1. Establishes licensure of the food truck business rather than the individual employees of the business
2. Enables food trucks to independently operate in public open spaces and rights-of-ways.
3. Prioritizes protection of public health, safety and welfare in both business permitting and activity.
4. Establishes reasonable fees that off-set costs generated by food truck operations, as applicable.
5. Includes regulatory requirements (health department, fire department, Clerk's office, etc) with clear descriptions of what is expected and who to contact with questions.
6. Clearly articulates all vendor responsibilities relating to sanitation, food safety, trash, etc.

Comments to City Commissioners from residents regarding the proposed changes can be forwarded to the City Clerk.

JKW/dwk

YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE recommends setting a public hearing on July 26, 2016, for the purposes of considering a new PILOT Mobile Food Business Ordinance and for discussing related issues.

WHEREAS:

1. The City Commission wishes to consider amending the City food truck policy in a way that better supports culinary entrepreneurship, small business development and placemaking; and

2. The City Commission further desires to consider adoption of a new ordinance to establish mobile food vending operating areas within the public realm, where such areas respect the proximity of existing stakeholders and restaurants, provide a streamlined regulatory approach to permitting mobile food vending operations in a manner that protects public interests, and support small business development and activates public space; therefore

RESOLVED:

1. That a public hearing on a PILOT Mobile Food Business Ordinance and related issues be held on Tuesday, July 26, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, 300 Monroe Avenue NW; and

2. The attached Ordinance to amend Title VI of the City Code entitled Food and Health to add Chapter 74, Sections 6.100 through 6.115, shall be published in the Proceedings; and

3. That the City Clerk is directed to publish and provide all notices of the public hearing and the summary of Ordinance; and

4. As authorized by Article V, Section 10(b) of the City Charter, the attached summary of the Ordinance be published in the official newspaper in lieu of publishing the full text thereof; and

5. The proposed ordinance shall be considered for adoption on August 23, 2016; and

6. That all resolutions and parts of resolutions, insofar as the same conflict with the provisions of this resolution, be and the same hereby are rescinded.