



## Staff Report

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Steven D. Jones, Community Development Director  
**DATE:** September 2, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Discuss a Potential Municipal Code Amendment to Streamline the Current Food Truck Review and Approval Process

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**Description:** Discussion of current regulatory approach to food trucks to assess whether a code amendment or policy changes are warranted to improve efficiency, support entrepreneurship, and align with modern mobile vending trends.

### **Background and Analysis:**

The City of Beaumont currently identifies and regulates food trucks as mobile food vendors through a combination of local zoning, permitting, and health regulations in coordination with Riverside County. On April 5, 2022, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1147 to update food truck permit language within the Beaumont Municipal Code (BMC) to align with state law. Ordinance No. 1147 became effective on May 5, 2022, and added BMC Chapter 5.72 (Food Trucks) to promote public health, safety, and welfare while providing an opportunity for a variety of innovative and unconventional business activities.

In recent years, food trucks have become increasingly popular as a flexible and affordable food option and opportunity for community engagement and incubator business with potential growth.

### **Current Status:**

- Zoning and Land Use Restrictions.
  - Food trucks permits are regulated to ensure no interference with the performance of public safety officers or pedestrian or vehicular traffic, ensure safe food handling with sanitary conditions, and ensure reasonable access for the sharing, maintenance, and use of the public right-of-way.
- Permit Processing.
  - Food truck vendors must obtain a business license after having obtained a Riverside County health permit, and in some cases, a temporary or special event permit or a plot plan to regularly operate on private property.

Otherwise, they are allowed to operate on the public sidewalk as long as they do not block pedestrian or vehicular access.

- Operational standards.
  - Hours of operation can be 24 hours but are limited to no more than 4 hours at one location; waste disposal or commissary affiliation, signage, and utility are regulated, but current codes and enforcement processes may lack clarity.

Key issues identified include:

1. Frequency of health department inspections;
2. Designated vending zones;
3. 4-hour allowance to serve from a single location, including facing the adjacent sidewalk;
4. Unclear process for food truck permittees to follow;
5. Impacts on brick-and-mortar businesses.

The business license renewal process for recurring vendors, private property hosting permit approval processing, and events on City property or City-sponsored events could also be clarified for concise guidelines and streamlined permit processing. Stakeholders have expressed interest in a more predictable and business-friendly approach.

### **Potential Council Considerations:**

#### **Business-Friendly Customer Service Pamphlets**

To support improved customer service and streamline the food truck permitting process, staff propose updated materials, including a revised food truck permit application and an informational brochure. These reworked resources would provide a clear, concise summary of the steps required to obtain a food truck permit in the City of Beaumont, including zoning requirements, health and safety standards, and applicable fees. By simplifying the application and offering accessible guidance in a user-friendly format, these updates aim to reduce processing time, improve compliance, and enhance transparency for both new and returning vendors.

#### **Clarity on Impact to Wastewater**

Food trucks proposing to operate on private property must show they are part of a commissary or restaurant where grease interceptors have been approved. Part of the reason for recent delays in the permitting process is that some food truck operators did not show such an association and identified maintaining their trucks from a home location. This caused the Wastewater Department to require additional proof of proper grease disposal, which delayed their permit process. If the Code and policies are

amended to “require” truck storage and maintenance from an associated restaurant and/or approved commissary, the approval process would move much faster.

### Quarterly Inspections

Quarterly inspections are required due to potential food truck maintenance issues that arise. However, requiring quarterly food truck permit license inspections, while other business licenses are only subject to annual renewals, has several important operational, administrative, and policy implications. To address business community concerns of perceived inequity and unfair treatment, a public health or safety need for justification in requiring quarterly license inspections could be incorporated into the proposed brochure. The additional time and cost associated with more frequent inspections could deter small or new vendors from entering the market, especially if they only operate part-time or seasonally. It may be appropriate to consider tiered inspection models for food trucks that have been shown to be out of compliance with regulatory provisions or have been reported to be the source of food-borne illnesses by Riverside County. The administrative costs and budgetary implications of quarterly inspections mean a significant demand for Planning, Code Enforcement/Community Enhancement, and Fire Services staff.

The business license revocation process is reserved for persistent safety or nuisance issues not promptly addressed to reduce complaints and violations. Annual or semi-annual inspections may help ensure compliance with health, fire, zoning, and operational requirements in a way that is balanced with administrative feasibility and based on risk factors associated with food truck vendor type.

### City Parks and Special Events

Food trucks have become an integral component of City events and have contributed significantly to their overall success. Attachment B is a list of events organized by the Beaumont Community Services Department (aka, Parks and Recreation) that currently include food truck participation. The list identifies event locations and indicates which events were reviewed by the Development Review Committee (DRC) for discussion or approval.

In addition to City-sponsored events, an increase in food truck activity at sports league practices and games using City parks, regional parks within the city, and other public areas has been observed. Organizations such as the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), Junior All American Football (JAAF), and local rugby clubs have begun inviting food trucks to set up during their activities to include practice times, regular games, and special event tournaments, typically setting up in parking lots. Community and resident needs for local food options are being served, however, this could potentially become a safety issue if regulation and enforcement are not imposed.

The leagues are also leveraging the use of food trucks as a fundraising tool, with a portion of sales being donated back to the organization. This approach also helps prevent the misuse of snack bars and other City infrastructure areas like canopies, which are not equipped to handle full-scale food preparation. Recently, snack bar operations were shut down by the Community Services Department after the use of fryers and grills to serve restaurant-style meals – beyond the intended use of the facilities and a potential safety hazard – was observed.

The filing/obtaining of special event permits is requested for larger tournaments or unique events. However, what remains unclear is how to handle food truck operations during routine, day-to-day practices and games since food trucks are currently prohibited from staging on public property (e.g., City parks) and publicly owned land. Staff are supportive of the presence of food trucks during these smaller-scale activities, as they enhance the overall park experience with clear guidelines and policies for their use in these situations, but language is needed in the Municipal Code to clarify dos and don'ts.

Potential language could be included in the Municipal Code to reduce the number of required inspections, allow greater operational flexibility during City-sponsored and other events, and streamline permitting. Specifically, the proposed code amendments would reduce the required quarterly inspections for permitted food trucks from a recurring basis to a single, consolidated annual inspection, aligning with the business license renewal process. The amendments would also authorize mobile food vendors to operate at and stage events that are approved or sponsored by the City, recognizing the value of food trucks as contributors to successful community programming. Additionally, the draft language would remove restrictive or duplicative provisions that may unintentionally discourage small business participation, including unnecessary documentation requirements or limitations that overlap with state or county public health authorities. Collectively, these revisions aim to ease the City's approach to mobile vending while supporting safe, accessible, and economically viable food service operations in Beaumont.

City Council direction is sought on whether to pursue changes to BMC Chapter 5.72 (Food Trucks) and associated policies, including the quarterly inspection schedule and its application by vendor type and risk profile, and provisions for potential, limited food truck staging during approved rented/scheduled times on public property.

#### Food Truck Sales from the Public Right-of-way (i.e., sidewalk)

Food truck operators are not considered sidewalk vendors. Yet, the current City Code allows them to serve adjacent to the sidewalk. Historically, food truck vendors had set routes within private property and were allowed to stay at a location for approximately 1 to 2 hours. These locations were typically businesses that wanted convenience for their

workers, such as industrial warehouses and office parks with limited food options. Under an agreement with the property owners, food truck operators would have a set route for the day that would guarantee them a steady flow of income from known customers. This has changed over time. Food truck operators are now operating within the public right-of-way, depending on code allowances from different jurisdictions. Below are tables that identify food truck permit location operational standards within other jurisdictions:

Table 1 - Los Angeles County

	Location Requirements
Los Angeles County	Route sheet subject to review and approval
Azusa	Prohibited <sup>1</sup>
Los Angeles (City)	Public property, one (1) hour maximum

Table 2 - Orange County

	Location Requirements
Orange County	Private property only
Fountain Valley	Private property only
Orange (City)	Public property, four (4) hours <sup>2</sup> maximum

Table 3 – Riverside County

	Location Requirements
Riverside County	Private property only
Banning	Private property only
<b>Beaumont</b>	<b>Public property, four (4) hours maximum</b>
Calimesa	Private “business location” <sup>3</sup> property only
Hemet	Public property, four (4) hours maximum

<sup>1</sup> Except ice cream trucks.

<sup>2</sup> Residential zone provisions limit to 10-minute stops maximum.

<sup>3</sup> No municipal [code](#) provisions.

Table 4 - San Bernardino County

	Location Requirements
San Bernardino County	Private property only
Colton	Private property only
Redlands	Public property, four (4) hours maximum
Yucaipa	Public property, six (6) hours maximum

**Fiscal Impact:**

The cost to prepare this staff report was approximately \$450.

If directed to draft a Code amendment, staff and legal review costs would be incurred for introduction and public consideration/publishing. The required inspections, however, would continue to be covered under existing fees and deposits for special event permits, which cover costs for staff time.

**Recommended Action:**

Direct staff to prepare an ordinance amending BMC Chapter 5.72 (Food Trucks) to streamline, clarify, and ensure reduced impacts from food truck operators.

**Attachments:**

- A. BMC Chapter 5.72
- B. Events Organized by Beaumont Community Services