City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 26-660, **Version:** 1 **Item #:** A-1

(1) Receive and File a Report on the Potential Food Truck Permit Program to Regulate the Operations of Food Trucks Near Parks; and (2) Provide Recommendations to Staff as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: April 16, 2026

Contact Person/Dept.: Adam Ferguson/PRCS

Phone Number: (310) 253-6685

Fiscal Impact: Yes [X] No [] **General Fund:** Yes [X] No []

Attachments: Yes [X] No []

Public Notification: (E-mail) Meetings and Agendas- Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission (4/14/2026); (E-mail) Parks, Recreation & Community Service Department Updates (4/14/2026)

Department Approval: Adam Ferguson, PRCS Deputy Director (4/14/2026)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commission (1) receive and file a report on the potential food truck permit program to regulate the operations of food trucks near parks and (2) provide recommendations to staff as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND

The Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) currently requires food truck vendors to obtain a street vendor permit, and a business license. Food truck vendors may not operate within 300 feet of public schools or parks. (CCMC § 11.09.215.C) Food trucks may operate as part of a special event permit, which are limited to 12 days per calendar year. (CCMC § 17.520.015.B.1.a.)

During the February 9, 2026, City Council Regular Meeting, residents asked to agendize this discussion regarding food truck vending rules and regulations, specifically as they pertain to vending in or near parks and limits on the number of special events at which such vendors may operate per year. Consensus was received by all Council Members to agendize a discussion with additional information from staff regarding food trucks and potential updates to the CCMC.

During the February 23, 2026, City Council Regular Meeting, consensus was received to have the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (PRCS) Commission form an ad hoc subcommittee to work with staff to develop a pilot permit program for food trucks operating near parks. During the March 3, 2026 PRCS Commission Regular Meeting an ad hoc subcommittee was formed consisting of Commissioner Jennifer Chen and Commissioner Thomas Whitaker to work with staff on the development of the pilot program. Staff met with the ad hoc subcommittee on April 10, 2026.

DISCUSSION

To inform the development of a food truck vending program, staff conducted a review of regulations in neighboring Westside cities, including West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, and El Segundo. The review focused on operational time limits, park access, and permitting structures. While all jurisdictions adhere to Los Angeles County health standards and require similar documentation (e.g., business licenses, health permits, and insurance), their approaches to managing public space, protecting brick-and-mortar businesses, and activating parks vary.

Key observations include:

- **West Hollywood** utilizes a time-limited street vending model designed to balance vendor access with impacts on surrounding uses. Regulations include a 60-minute per block limit, a four-hour return restriction, and a 200-foot buffer from restaurants. Park access generally requires a special event permit.
- **Beverly Hills** employs a highly curated, event-based model that prioritizes control and business compatibility. Food truck operations in parks are generally limited to City-sponsored events and are subject to vendor selection criteria
- **Santa Monica** emphasizes environmental and geographic restrictions, including limitations near the Santa Monica Pier and Palisades Park, as well as strict requirements related to disposable food ware and sustainability.
- **El Segundo** permits food trucks in parks primarily in conjunction with Recreation Department-approved events. Operations are governed by zoning, parking, and event permitting requirements.

Across these jurisdictions, food truck operations in parks typically require special authorization, are subject to location and time restrictions, and must comply with local zoning and parking regulations.

Based on this analysis, staff evaluated Culver City's park system to identify feasible locations, operating parameters, and an appropriate approval process. The proposed pilot program framework is outlined in the presentation, attachment 1.

Application/Permit Fee

Staff is proposing to utilize the same fee as is required for an application for a sidewalk vending permit, $150.00.

Eligible Food Truck Locations

Food truck vendors may apply for permits to operate at the following parks:

- Carlson Park
- Culver West Alexander Park
- El Marino Park
- Lindberg Park
- Tellefson Park
- Veterans Memorial Park

All vendors must operate only within locations approved by the PRCS Department (see Attachment 2 for maps of designated areas).

Operating Times and Restrictions

- Food trucks are only allowed to operate:
  - Monday - Friday from 3:00pm-7:00pm
  - Saturday - Sunday from 11:00am - 7:00pm
- No permits will be issued on City closed holidays
- No more than Two (2) food trucks at any given park at the same time
- Food trucks are only allowed to be at one (1) park per week
- Food trucks can't exceed four (4) parks in one month
- Food Trucks can't exceed four (4) vending engagements per month
- Permits are issued for 4-hour increments
- Vehicle may not exceed 16 to 26 ft long. This is the average size of a food truck.
- Approved permit times and locations will be reserved for the food truck
- The permit will be subject to cancellation after two (2) no-show occurrences
- Approved days and operating hours will be determined at the discretion of PRCS staff, based on park usage and availability
- Park access is restricted, no food truck will be allowed to set up chairs, tables, tents, etc. on park grounds, unless:
  - A field permit is obtained prior to the vending occurrence
  - Depending on the planned activity, a special event permit may be required

Requirements Documents for the Permit Process

- Culver City Business License
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Permit
  - Health Inspection Certificate
  - Posted Letter Grade
- Valid California Department of Tax and Fee Administrations Seller's Permit (CDTFA)
- Signed Terms and Conditions Acknowledgment Form
- Certificate of Insurance
  - $1,000,000 per occurrence
  - $2,000,000 aggregate
  - City named additionally insured

- According to Culver City Municipal Code § 13.03.005 and city park regulations, consuming alcohol or possessing open alcoholic beverages in public parks, playgrounds, streets, and sidewalks is prohibited. Even if a food truck has an alcohol license, vendors will not be allowed to sell alcohol in Culver City parks.

Application Details

- Applications will be accepted annually from April 1 through April 30.
- Permits will be valid for a one-year period (July through June) following the application cycle.
- Applicants must request preferred park locations and dates during the application window; assignments will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Late applications will not be accepted.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- If a requested time or location is unavailable and there is availability at other locations, staff will work with the vendor on alternate locations and times.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There will be additional revenues from the food truck permit application fees with the amount dependent on number of applications. Staff will also need to dedicate time for one of the Parks and Facilities Coordinators to review the applications and serve as a liaison for the vendors.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026-04-16 - ATT 1 PRCS Food Truck Permit Program Presentation
2. 2026-04-16 - ATT 2 Feasible Park Vending Locations

MOTION(S)

That the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission:

1. Receive and File a Report on the Potential Food Truck Permit Program to Regulate the Operations of Food Trucks Near Parks; and

2. Provide recommendations to the Staff as deemed appropriate.

powered by Legistar™