



Report
Staff Report
 The Corporation of the City of Brampton
4/23/2025

Date: 2025-03-26

Subject: **Future State Options for Food Trucks in the City of Brampton (RM 11/2025)**

Contact: David Vanderberg, Manager, Development Services
 Allyson Sander, Strategic Leader, Project Management

Report number: Legislative Services-2025-301

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from David Vanderberg, Manager, Development Services and Allyson Sander, Strategic Leader, Legislative Services, to the Committee of Council Meeting of April 23, 2025, re: **Future State Options for Food Trucks in the City of Brampton (RM 11/2025)**, be received;
2. That Council approve staff's recommendation on the areas within the City of Brampton where Class C Refreshment Vehicles will be permitted to operate, i.e.: permitting them in Commercial and Industrial Zones, except within MTSA's and subject to minimum separation distances from brick-and-mortar restaurant establishments and other refreshment vehicles;
3. That Council direct staff to report back to City Council with amending by-laws, as necessary, to implement Recommendation 2;
4. That Council direct staff to report back to City Council with the necessary amending by-laws to repeal the Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area's (BIA) authority to authorize refreshment vehicles within its boundaries, in accordance with the motion passed at the BIA Board Meeting on March 27, 2025;
5. That Council approve the adoption of a 30-day transition period for licensed food trucks that become non-compliant as a result of any by-law amendments.

OVERVIEW:

- On January 22, 2025, staff were directed to conduct a review of the Mobile Licensing By-law as it pertains to food trucks city-wide, including an examination of the Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area's authority to permit food trucks downtown, and to report back thereon.
- In response to stakeholder concerns about competition, noise, waste, and hygiene, several amendments to the Mobile Licensing By-law are proposed to enhance public safety, community standards, and zoning compliance and will be presented at a future Committee of Council meeting.

- This report presents several options for food truck operations city-wide for Council's consideration, however, staff recommend maintaining permissions in Commercial and Industrial Zones, however, excluding MTSA's, and strengthening minimum separation distance requirements. This recommendation aims to balance the interests of both mobile and established businesses and encourage investment and job creation.
- Further, on April 9, 2025, City Council received a letter from the Downtown Brampton BIA requesting that its authority to authorize food trucks within its boundaries be revoked, in accordance with the Board motion passed on March 27, 2025.
- There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report. Mobile licensing and penalty revenues may change depending on whether the direction provided by Council results in changes to refreshment vehicle volumes or new penalties being introduced.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Brampton is experiencing a growing interest in mobile food services. Food trucks, or Class C Refreshment Vehicles are vehicles that have a mobile kitchen and prepare food for public consumption. These mobile vendors offer diverse culinary options and contribute to the City's vibrancy while fostering small business growth and entrepreneurship. On February 19, 2025, staff presented a [report](#) on the current regulatory framework for food trucks in response to a directive to review the Mobile Licensing By-law, the authority of the Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area (BIA), and the current state of administration of the by-law ([RM 11/2025](#)).

Prompting this review were concerns raised among stakeholders about noise, waste, safety, hygiene and conflicts with brick-and-mortar restaurants. Given the evolving dynamics and the need to balance economic growth with community interests, staff reviewed the regulations to ensure policies are adequate in addressing the interests of all stakeholders.

Opportunities for Input

Staff developed a new Mobile Licensing By-law, which will be presented at a future Committee of Council meeting and will include amendments to provisions to Class C Refreshment Vehicles to enhance public safety, community standards, and zoning compliance. However, there is an additional need to identify where these food trucks will be permitted across the City to ensure the regulatory framework is well-balanced to support the local economy while maintaining Brampton's reputation as a business-friendly and forward-thinking municipality.

City Council has the opportunity to provide feedback and direction on the proposed future-state options included in this report, which will help shape updates to the regulatory framework for food truck operations in the City. Council direction will facilitate any required amendments to the current Zoning By-law and required integration into the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law draft.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Challenges in the Current State

The current standards for Class C Refreshment Vehicles were originally designed to regulate hot dog carts. These carts are intended to be towed to a location, remain for a limited duration, and be removed at the end of each day. Since 2020, however, the popularity of the mobile food vending industry has transitioned from hot dog carts to a diverse range of food trucks and trailers. As the Mobile Licensing By-law did not specifically address these types of vehicles, staff applied the regulations intended for hot dog carts. However, the application of regulations intended for hot dog carts has led to many issues, including:

Absence of limits on the number of food trucks

- The current By-law does not contain minimum separation distances. Often food trucks will cluster together, creating unintended food districts and rendering the areas between vendors unusable for parking which causes space management issues.

Improper storage of food trucks and trailers

- Food trucks are stored in areas where brick-and-mortar tenants are prohibited from storing goods or vehicles, creating inconsistency and potential safety concerns.

Conflicts with brick-and-mortar businesses

- Nearby restaurants have expressed concerns regarding the negative impact mobile food trucks have on their business operations, including unpermitted use of their facilities and unfair competition.

Inconsistent waste management standards

- Food truck operators are not held to the same standards as brick-and-mortar restaurants regarding garbage storage, leading to the accumulation of garbage and debris at food truck sites, and creating undesirable conditions.

Challenges with the approval process

- While property owners benefit from additional rent income generated by food trucks, the responsibility for obtaining site-specific zoning approval often falls on the vendor, with limited assistance from the property owner. This has led to difficulties for vendors who often pay rent while awaiting approval and have to submit incomplete applications, leading to processing delays. This also has the effect of discouraging the intended mobility of food trucks but approving vendor licenses based on a single location.

Addressing Challenges – Proposed Enhancements to Mobile Licensing

To address the challenges identified in the current regulatory framework for Class C refreshment vehicle vendors, staff reviewed amendments to the Mobile Licensing By-law to propose new measures aimed at improving compliance, mitigating negative impacts on surrounding businesses and ensuring public safety and cleanliness. The proposed enhancements which will be presented at a future meeting are as follows:

Distance and Location Restrictions

- Restrictions will be maintained to prohibit food trucks from operating within 50 metres of any Fixed Food Premise.
- A minimum separation distance of 50 metres between food trucks will also be implemented to limit the number of trucks operating from any site, preventing clustering and site management issues.

Improved Waste Management and Cleanliness Standards

- Each food truck will be required to provide a designated garbage receptacle that is emptied and stored nightly to maintain cleanliness.
- Operators will be responsible for ensuring the surrounding area remains clean throughout the business day and for removing all waste at the end of each day.

Enhanced Compliance Measures for Property Owners and Vendors

- Staff are enhancing the requirements for written permission from property owners to include confirmation that the designated area complies with all applicable municipal by-laws, including zoning provisions, and that authorized access to washroom facilities is available for both patrons and staff. This written permission must be submitted for each location where the vendor intends to operate during the term of their licence.
- Although vendors are responsible for operating in accordance with the Zoning By-law, any non-compliance related to site-specific standards will be addressed with the property owner, who bears responsibility for ensuring the site meets all applicable regulations. This approach is intended to reduce the regulatory burden on vendors.
- Staff are also exploring customer-centric solutions to provide a pre-approval process for property owners who wish to host food truck operations on their sites, to ensure alignment with the Zoning By-law and applicable site-specific conditions.

Unaddressed Challenges

The proposed amendments address many regulatory and operational concerns but lacks provisions for strategically integrating Class C refreshment vehicles into Brampton's urban landscape. The biggest gaps are the lack of designated zones and restrictions on key corridors intended for higher order uses.

PROPOSED FUTURE STATE OPTIONS

To guide the future of food truck operations in Brampton, several options for Class C refreshment vehicles may be permitted are presented for Council's consideration. Council may explore elements from other options to create a comprehensive strategy that supports economic development, ensures public safety and addresses community concerns.

Option 1: Commercial and Industrial Zones (Current State)

Permitting food trucks exclusively within Commercial and Industrial Zones offers targeted food options for workers in these areas while minimizing potential conflicts with residential neighbourhoods. However, this strategy must rely on additional standards to consider the size of food trucks and trailers to mitigate parking and site use challenges.

Option 2: Industrial Zones Only

Restricting food truck operations to Industrial Zones ensures that these mobile food trucks serve specific communities without competing directly with traditional restaurants located on Commercial or Retail properties. However, such a restriction may limit food truck operations to weekdays, catering primarily to workers in low-foot-traffic areas, and could lead to increased competition among food truck operators due to clustering in limited zones.

Option 3: Designated Food Truck Zones

Establishing designated Food Truck Zones within industrial areas and business parks provides convenient dining options for workers without encroaching on traditional restaurant spaces. This approach can reduce public complaints and simplify enforcement due to clear operational boundaries. However, it may restrict food trucks to specific areas, limiting their exposure to diverse customer bases. Moreover, clustering vendors together could intensify competition among food truck operators.

Option 4: Special Events Licence Only

Relying on the Special Events Licence system allows City staff to determine appropriate locations and times for food truck operations, enabling the creation of food truck districts during events and enhancing community engagement. However, it requires food truck operators to frequently renew licences, potentially imposing administrative burdens and straining City resources.

Option 5: All Non-Residential Zones

This is the most permissive option and would permit more food trucks to operate in the City, however greater restrictions may be required so as to ensure they are not located in less desirable areas such as mixed-use lands and key corridors intended for higher order uses.

Additional Consideration: Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs)

Consideration for prohibiting food trucks within MTSA corridors aligns with the City's Official Plan and urban design objectives, ensuring these high-density, pedestrian-focused areas remain well-integrated with transit infrastructure and support a cohesive public realm that is functional and efficient. Key considerations for this include:

- *Preservation of Urban Design and Streetscape Aesthetics:* Food trucks in MTSAs may undermine the high-quality urban design standards envisioned for these areas, disrupting the streetscape and detracting from the intended built form.
- *Support for Mixed-Use Development and Economic Stability:* MTSAs are critical mobility nodes strategically planned to encourage permanent, transit-supportive commercial and retail spaces and food trucks may undermine long-term goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While staff are seeking direction on implementing any of the above options, staff recommend Council consider continuing to permit food trucks in Commercial and Industrial Zones, except within MTSAs, subject to minimum separation distances from brick-and-mortar restaurant establishments (unless otherwise approved through a special event licence). This can help ensure food truck viability, encourage investment, and enhance job creation and economic stimulation, while also protecting the interests of brick-and-mortar establishments.

Downtown Brampton Business Improvement Area

Further, on April 9, 2025, City Council [received a letter](#) from the Downtown Brampton BIA requesting that its authority to permit food trucks within its boundaries be revoked, in accordance with the BIA Board motion passed on March 27, 2025. The new Mobile Licensing By-law will apply to this area in the same manner as it does throughout the rest of the city and will not preclude anyone from making an application for a special event refreshment vehicle license issued under the Mobile Licensing By-law. Staff are reviewing this process to ensure that the appropriate stakeholders are consulted when approving Special Event Licenses for Refreshment Vehicles moving forward. The Downtown Brampton BIA was engaged during the development of these recommendations.

Enforcement and Transition of Current Licenses

It is recommended that all existing licenses that do not comply with the new regulations remain valid for a 30-day transition period before becoming null and void. During this time, staff will work closely with affected vendors and operators to update their license locations to compliant areas, helping to ensure a smooth transition and minimizing business disruptions. Food trucks that remain in non-compliance may be subject to progressive enforcement action, starting with orders to comply. Staff will work with Communications to ensure the public is informed about any changes.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications: There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report. Mobile licensing and/or penalty revenues may increase or decrease depending on whether direction provided by Council results in changes to refreshment vehicle volumes or new penalties being introduced.

Communications Implications: A comprehensive communications strategy will be developed in collaboration with Strategic Communications to effectively inform residents and stakeholders about the report's recommendations.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:

This report supports Brampton's priorities by promoting public health, safety and sustainability while fostering entrepreneurship and urban vibrancy through cohesive food truck operations in key areas.

CONCLUSION:

By evaluating these options, Brampton can develop a balanced approach to food truck regulation that fosters entrepreneurship while maintaining good urban design. Staff will monitor these changes, once enacted, to ensure they are adequate and propose amendments, as necessary.

Authored by:

Allyson Sander, Strategic Leader, Project Management, Legislative Services

Authored by:

David Vanderberg, Manager, Development Services

Reviewed by:

Robert Higgs, Director, Enforcement and By-law Services

Reviewed by:

Allan Parsons, Director, Development Services

Approved by:

Laura Johnston, Commissioner, Legislative Services

Approved by:

Steve Ganesh, Commissioner, Planning, Building and Growth Management

Approved by:

Marlon Kallideen, Chief Administration Officer

Attachments:

- **Attachment 1** – Major Transit Station Area Map