



**STAFF REPORT**  
**12/11/2024**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members  
**FROM:** Gabriel Perez, Development Services Director  
**SUBJECT:** Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program

- Introduce Ordinance No. 1218 Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program (ZOA No. 24-03) City Parks and parcels in downtown zones (DT-PV and TR-PV Zones)
- Introduce Ordinance No. 1219 Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program (ZOA No. 24-03) for active date farms

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce Ordinance No. 1218 and Ordinance No. 1219 for first reading, by title only, to adopt ordinances to implement a Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program for the operation of mobile food trucks in qualifying City parks, parcels in downtown zones (DT-PV and TR-PV Zones) and active date farms.

**BACKGROUND:**

On March 13, 2024 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1209 establishing sidewalk vending regulations in compliance with SB 946. The requirements of the Riverside County Environmental Health have been challenging for sidewalk vendors to obtain a County health permit and the City currently does not allow mobile food trucks without a special event permit. The City recently sponsored the Coachella Container Park on Grapefruit Boulevard, which is a private enterprise and a City approved location for sidewalk vendors and food trucks. The Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot program would allow a limited number of mobile food trucks subject to incorporating healthy menu items as encouraged in the City of Coachella General Plan Community Health and Wellness Element. The program will further enhance economic opportunities by creating unique and healthy culinary experiences in the Coachella Downtown and at existing date farms.

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed ordinance at a study session November 6, 2024 and provided feedback that includes:

- Allow food trucks in City parks earlier than 5 p.m. when sports activities are occurring.
- Allow for live music associated with food trucks in eligible Downtown zone properties.
- Flexibility with alcohol service at date farm food trucks. The ordinance presented at the study session only permitted alcohol service with scheduled farm to table experiences.

- Consider allowing phased parking improvements at date farm food trucks.

On November 20, 2024, the Planning Commission recommended to the City Council adoption of the program with modifications that include:

- Allowing food trucks at the Avenue 53 soccer park near Armtec
- Allow a maximum of 3 food trucks at date farms
- Standard accessible restrooms may be permitted instead of executive restrooms
- Allow outdoor open grilling or asadero style grilling at date farms.

Since the Planning Commission meeting planning staff consulted with the Public Works Director and it is recommended that the food truck program not include the Avenue 53 soccer park since it is not a City park managed by the City of Coachella or have the availability of restrooms.

### **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:**

The Coachella Healthy Food Truck Pilot Program would allow mobile food trucks as a 4-year pilot program with annual permit renewals, subject to menu and operational requirements in City parks, in the Downtown (DT-PV) and Downtown Transition (TR-PV) Zone, and on active date farms. The City is working with the Riverside University Health System (RUHS) Nutrition and Health Promotion Branch and Coachella Blue Zones initiative in order to develop criteria for a healthy food truck. The program would require the mobile food trucks meet nutritional standards set forth in the Blue Zones Food guidelines and Blue Zones Restaurant Pledge with an emphasis on nutritional guidelines such as eating seasonal fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, and nuts; using plant-based oils; reducing sugar and dairy and increasing plant-based options. It also includes guidelines and recommendations on optimizing the food environment and eating experience and promoting health options. The efforts would complement the Coachella Blue Zones initiative with the aim of improving health outcomes by including simple guidelines for how the world's longest-lived people ate for most of their lives.

The Coachella Healthy Food Truck program requirements are outlined below:

#### **City Parks**

- 2 food trucks maximum stationed around Dateland Park, Bagdouma Park, and Rancho Las Flores Park
- 1 food truck maximum at De Oro Park, Sierra Vista Park
- 1 food truck at City of Coachella Civic Center and Corporate Yard
- Operating Hours – 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekends.
- Administrative approval

**Downtown (DT-PV) and Downtown Transition (TR-PV) Zoned parcels located around Coachella Veterans' Memorial Park.** These parcels are largely occupied with existing single-family homes and allow the property owner the flexibility to operate a retail and food service businesses. There are 19 eligible parcels.

- 1 food truck per lot or more than 1 food truck on lots or sites larger than 11,500 sq. ft.
- Operate entirely on the property in the front yard and on-site consumption with tables and chairs would be permitted
- Operating Hours – 5 p.m. to 12 a.m.

- Administrative approval

**Date Farms**

- 3 food trucks maximum per lot with a minimum 1-acre size that must be an active date farm with a minimum of 30 date palm trees
- Requires a minimum of 1 signature food offering with date ingredients or offer of the direct sale of date fruits
- On-site parking required
- Requires activity areas such as cornhole and horseshoes
- Allows accessory retail pop-up businesses
- Operating Hours – 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- On-Sale Alcohol service permitted with approval of a Conditional Use Permit.
- Planning Commission approval is required as a non-hearing item

**ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1) A) Introduce Ordinance No. 1218 (ZOA No. 24-03), for first reading, by title only, to establish a Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program for the operation of mobile food trucks in qualifying City parks, parcels in downtown zones (DT-PV and TR-PV Zones). Not including “Avenue 53 soccer park.”  
 B) Introduce Ordinance No. 1219 (ZOA No. 24-03), for first reading, by title only, to establish a Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program for the operation of mobile food trucks at active date farms.
- 2) A) Introduce Ordinance No. 1218 (ZOA No. 24-03), for first reading, by title only, to establish a Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program for the operation of mobile food trucks in qualifying City parks, parcels in downtown zones (DT-PV and TR-PV Zones).  
 B) Introduce Ordinance No. 1219 (ZOA No. 24-03), for first reading, by title only, to establish a Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program for the operation of mobile food trucks at active date farms.
- 3) Deny the proposed ordinances.
- 4) Continue this item and provide staff with direction.

**RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):**

Staff recommends Alternative #1. The pilot program is a limited term and would accomplish the following:

- Serve as an intermediary path for sidewalk vendors to brick and mortar businesses
- Provide healthy food options to Coachella residents in compliance with the Coachella Health and Wellness Element

- Encourage more visitors to the Coachella Downtown in a unique setting that enables property owners to curate a culinary experience
- Establish a visitor experience in Coachella date gardens, Coachella Date Trail/Coachella Ruta de Datil, with mobile food truck businesses traditionally not permitted in an agricultural setting

Staff will present a resolution for the adoption of a fee to support the administration of the pilot program at the next City Council meeting.

Attachments:

1. Ordinance No. 1218 ZOA No. 24-03 Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program - City Parks and Downtown and Downtown Transition Zones
2. Ordinance No. 1219 ZOA No. 24-03 Coachella Healthy Food Truck Permit Pilot Program - Healthy Food Truck Permit Ordinance – Date Farms
3. Blue Zones Healthy Dish Guidelines
4. Blue Zones Restaurant Pledge