



CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA
Planning Staff Report
for
Mobile Food Vending Ordinance

TYPE OF CASE: Land Development Code Amendment

STAFF REVIEWER: Patty Kulak

DATE: November 14, 2025

APPLICANT: City of LaBelle City Commission

AGENT: City of LaBelle City Commission

REQUEST: Amend the City of LaBelle Land Development Code to amend the standards for mobile food vending

LOCATION: City-wide

PROPERTY SIZE: N/A

REVISIONS SINCE LPA:

The revised draft ordinance incorporates feedback from the City Commission and staff to clarify the permitting process and strengthen enforceability. The term “Conditional Accessory Use Authorization (CAUA)” was introduced to formally define the new administrative approval process for food trucks, replacing the previous Special Exception requirement. The ordinance now specifies eligible zoning districts, detailed submittal requirements, and clearer review and enforcement procedures under Chapter 162, Florida Statutes. Additional edits clarify that no separate municipal license is required for state-licensed mobile food dispensing vehicles, limit the number of food trucks to one per site, and reinforce location, spacing, and operational standards such as hours of operation, signage, trash removal, and prohibition of alcohol or amplified music. Collectively, these revisions simplify the process for applicants while maintaining oversight and consistency with the City’s land development regulations.

STAFF NARRATIVE:

The City of LaBelle City Commission requested that Staff prepare an ordinance providing amendments to the standards for mobile food vending, more commonly known as food trucks. The current regulations require a Special Exception to establish a food truck use on a property, unless the use is otherwise allowed by a Planned Unit Development zoning district.

A Special Exception requires a minimum application fee of \$1,500 and creates uncertainty for Applicants due to the public hearing process.

Food trucks continue to be a highly demanded use in the City and creates opportunities for restaurateurs to start a food-based business without the upfront capital costs of establishing a “brick and mortar” restaurant. Food trucks also provide the public with diversity of food options.

The amendment as proposed is intended to provide a predictable permitting process that would allow for mobile food vending on non-residentially zoned properties throughout the City, while establishing meaningful regulations to ensure the food trucks do not detract from the local character, public viewsheds and functionality of the subject property as well as abutting rights-of-ways.

The following are the key changes proposed via this amendment:

- Move mobile food vending standards from Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances to the Supplementary Regulations Section in Chapter 4 of Land Development Code, as the standards directly relate to land development.
- Establishes an administrative permitting process to allow mobile food vendors to locate on a specified subject site. The process includes required materials to evaluate the appropriateness of the request including site plan, hours of operation, insurance coverage, application fee (to be established by the City Commission) and demonstration that the required agency permits have been obtained, such as health department authorization.
- Establishes limitations on allowable locations based upon the official Zoning Map, access and circulation, adequate parking, and distance separation from other food trucks to avoid proliferation of the use, particularly along the SR 80 and SR 29 corridors, where the highest demand to locate food trucks exists.
- Prohibits food trucks on residentially-zoned property and the Downtown Business District, except Barron Park, where food trucks can operate in accordance with the approved/vested Special Exception approval. Additionally, leniency for food trucks at clubhouses within residential communities has been included. This is allowed in numerous master-planned communities in Southwest Florida, such as Babcock Ranch, and can contribute to community-building and “sense of place”.
- Establishes numerous operating standards to ensure the mobile food vending is functional, attractive and well-maintained. Standards address setbacks, on-site refuse/waste disposal, signage, hours of operation, and prohibition on alcohol consumption, outdoor seating areas and amplified music to avoid competition with “brick and mortar” restaurants, address compatibility, and preclude the need for additional longer-term parking.
- Establishes review criteria and process for addressing violations of these standards.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the proposed ordinance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code and recommends **APPROVAL**.

SUGGESTED MOTION(S)

APPROVAL:

I make a motion to recommend approval of the proposed Mobile Food Vending Ordinance.

APPROVAL WITH MODIFICATION(S):

I make a motion to recommend approval of the proposed Mobile Food Vending Ordinance with the following changes:

- 1)

DENIAL:

I make a motion to recommend denial of the proposed Mobile Food Vending Ordinance.

The request does not meet the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.

- 1)