
Revised On-Street Mobile Food Truck Policy No. C09-039

Recommendation

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommend to City Council:

1. That the proposed amendments to Policy C09-039, On-Street Mobile Food Truck Policy, as outlined in this report, be approved; and
2. That the proposed extension to the mobile food trucks operating adjacent to neighbourhood parks pilot program, as outlined in this report, be approved.

Topic and Purpose

This report brings forward proposed amendments to existing Policy C09-039, On-Street Mobile Food Truck Policy (Food Truck Policy), and provides an update on the 2018 pilot program to permit mobile food trucks and trailers to operate adjacent to neighbourhood parks in residential areas.

Report Highlights

1. Amendments to the Food Truck Policy are proposed that will require all mobile food truck and trailer vendors operating at special events and festivals be licensed, to ensure that these vehicles meet public health and safety standards.
2. An extension of the pilot program for an additional season will provide an opportunity for newly licensed vendors to operate adjacent to neighbourhood parking in residential areas.

Strategic Goal

This report supports the City of Saskatoon's (City) Strategic Goal of Economic Diversity and Prosperity by supporting entrepreneurship in non-traditional business models, such as mobile food truck and trailer vendors. This helps to create a business-friendly environment and reinforce the City Centre as a cultural and entertainment district.

Background

At its May 7, 2018 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services Committee received an information report from the Administration providing an update on the 2017 pilot program to permit mobile food trucks and trailers to operate adjacent to neighbourhood parks in residential areas. The pilot program was extended for an additional season in 2018 to better assess the program, with changes to streamline the application process, waive fees associated with on-street parking, and to allow vending in proximity to schools with the permission of the school, in order to make the pilot program more economically viable for vendors.

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The report also identified the need to address health and safety-related concerns of unlicensed mobile food trucks and trailers that operate solely at special events and festivals.

The report indicated that the Administration would be reporting back in early 2019 with proposed amendments to the Food Truck Policy requiring all mobile food trucks and trailers operating in Saskatoon to be licensed to address safety-related concerns that have since been identified.

Report

Food Truck Policy Overview

The current Food Truck Policy provides a regulatory framework specifying how on-street food trucks are to operate within the city. Licensing requirements are in place to enhance overall image, economic vitality and promote street life in commercial areas through the provision of food vending on streets, while ensuring public welfare, fair competition and nuisance prevention. The licensing process requires annual documentation indicating the food truck or trailer has undergone various government inspections to ensure their equipment meets safety standards.

Currently, mobile vendors who choose to only operate at special events and festivals are not required to hold a Food Truck License. At the time the Food Truck Policy was established, vehicles vending at special events and festivals were not included in the licensing requirement, as periodic health and safety inspections of the food trucks would be conducted onsite at the time of the event. Further, such vendors were often based outside of Saskatoon, and operated at only a few events in the City per year.

The Administration estimates in 2018, 13 unlicensed mobile vendors operated only at special events and festivals. In contrast, in 2018, there were 15 licensed food vendors; 7 licensed to operate on-street and 8 licensed to operate off-street. These licensed vendors may also have operated at special events.

Health and Safety-Related Concerns for Unlicensed Mobile Food Trucks and Trailers

All mobile food trucks and trailers utilizing natural gas or propane fuel are bound by the Province of Saskatchewan's *Gas Inspection Act, 1993*. Most food trucks and trailers utilize such systems. An annual inspection conducted by SaskPower ensures safe operation of systems and compliance with current applicable national codes in the interest of public safety. In 2017, the Food Truck Policy was amended to reflect this provincial regulation by including a requirement that proof of an annual gas inspection be provided as a condition of licensing.

SaskPower has advised the Administration that compliance with the requirement to obtain a provincial gas safety inspection, if utilizing propane or natural gas, was low among unlicensed food trucks in 2018.

The Food Truck Policy also requires proof of an annual fire inspection, as a condition of licensing. Saskatoon Fire (Fire) has advised that compliance with this requirement was low among unlicensed food trucks and trailers in 2018. It is possible that food trucks

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and trailers based out of another town or city, were inspected by their local fire department.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (Health) advised that in order to ensure that a health inspection is conducted on all food trucks and trailers, they are in support of the City licensing all food trucks and trailers.

Proposed Amendment will require all Mobile Food Trucks and Trailers to be Licensed

The Administration is recommending that all mobile food trucks and trailers operating in Saskatoon be licensed under the Food Truck Policy in order to provide the assurance that all vehicles have appropriate inspections to ensure health and safety considerations are met. The Administration is not recommending any new regulations, but is proposing amendments to the Food Truck Policy to specify that the scope of existing regulations apply to all mobile food trucks and trailers operating in the city, including those operating within special events and festivals.

In addition to addressing health and safety considerations, a universal licensing requirement ensures an equitable application of the regulations for all food truck and trailer vendors.

Pilot Program Allowing Food Truck and Trailer Operation Adjacent to Parks to Continue Through 2019

The second season of the pilot program, to allow mobile food trucks and trailers to operate adjacent to neighbourhood parks, was in 2018. In an effort to encourage participation in the program, the pilot was expanded in 2018 to allow any food trucks or trailers with a Food Truck License to participate. Prior to this, only on-street food trucks who held a Food Truck License and paid the on-street parking fees were permitted to participate in the pilot.

Review of the 2018 season determined that two food trucks participated in the pilot program. Discussion with the Saskatoon Food Truck Association and food truck and trailer operators indicated that low participation in the program may be attributed to the fact that there are generally a lower number of potential customers in residential parks in comparison to commercial or industrial vending locations. Some operators reported that certain days and events were profitable and encouraged the Administration to continue the program, even if the majority of the time, it is not economically viable for food trucks and trailers to operate adjacent to parks.

Despite low participation in 2018, the Administration is recommending the continuation of the pilot program for the 2019 season. Should approval be received to implement the proposed policy changes to require all mobile food trucks and trailers operating in the city be licensed, there may be additional licensed food truck and trailer operators who would be eligible to operate adjacent to parks should they choose to do so.

Options to the Recommendation

City Council may choose not to amend to the Food Truck Policy to expand the policy to require all food trucks and trailers operating in the city to be licensed. The implications

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of this are that food trucks and trailers that operate exclusively at festivals and special events will continue to be unlicensed, and cannot be verified to have complied with SaskPower, Fire, and Health inspection requirements.

City Council may choose not to extend the pilot project allowing for vending adjacent to residential for another season. The implications of this are that the pilot project will not be renewed, and food trucks and trailers will not be able to vend adjacent to parks.

Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement

The Administration consulted Health, SaskPower, Fire, the Business Improvement Districts, special event coordinators, mobile food truck and trailer operators, and the Saskatoon Food Truck Association, to discuss the proposed changes.

The Administration received supportive feedback from Health, SaskPower, Fire, Sutherland Business Improvement District, DTN YXE, Broadway Business Improvement District, several special event coordinators, and the Saskatoon Food Truck Association. Representatives from SaskPower, Fire, and Health have indicated strong support for this change, as it will minimize the risk that food trucks are operating at events without adequate health and safety considerations in place. While these agencies do continue to undertake onsite inspections on an irregular basis they do not have the ability to conduct inspections at all the events that now occur.

In addition, the Administration held a meeting on March 20, 2019, with the Saskatoon Food Truck Association and all mobile food truck and trailer operators. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed policy amendments and to gain feedback on the pilot program.

The feedback, from those not in support of the proposed amendments, was submitted by individual, unlicensed food truck operators who have previously operated at festivals and events.

Communication Plan

The updated Food Truck Policy and related documentation will be provided on the City's website. Updated information will be made available to the Business Improvement Districts, prospective vendors, the Saskatoon Food Truck Association, and other interested parties.

All food truck and trailer vendors will be advised of the extension of the pilot program, allowing for vending adjacent to parks, and will be provided a with a copy of the 2019 Pilot Program Guidelines. The City's website will be updated to include the 2019 guidelines.

Policy Implications

If the proposed amendments in this report are approved, the Administration will make the applicable revisions to the Food Truck Policy, as outlined. All licensed vendors will be required to maintain a location log that tracks the date, time, location, and duration that a mobile food truck or trailer is operating at any on-street or off street location. The location log must be submitted to the Administration at the end of the season.

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Financial Implications

The Business License Program is not subsidized by the mil rate. All expenditures are funded through the generation of fees. Fees in excess of expenses are held in a stabilization reserve.

The proposed policy amendments will result in all food trucks and trailers operating in Saskatoon being licensed under the Food Truck Policy. Data suggests that 13 food trucks and trailers operated solely at special events and festivals in 2018; should all 13 continue to operate under the proposed license requirements, an additional \$6,500 in fee revenue will be generated.

There are no financial implications to continue the pilot program, or with allowing food trucks and trailers licensed only to vend at off street locations, to participate in vending adjacent to parks. The purpose of the on-street food truck fee is to recover parking meter fees. As the pilot program only includes non-metered on-street parking spaces, there is no forgone parking revenue.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations at this time.

Public Notice

Public notice, pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Attachment

1. Proposed Amendments to On-Street Mobile Food Truck Policy No. C09-039

Report Approval

Written by: Chantel Riou, Planner, Community Standards
Reviewed by: Jo-Anne Richter, Acting Director of Community Standards
Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services Department

SP/2019/CS/PDCD/Revised On-Street Mobile Food Truck Policy No. C09-039/jw