

# FAQ - Food Carts & Temporary Outdoor Markets

City of Corvallis - Development Services Division

501 SW Madison Avenue • P.O. Box 1083 • Corvallis, OR 97339-1083

541-766-6929 • [www.corvallisoregon.gov/ds](http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/ds)



## Food Cart / Temporary Outdoor Market Regulations – Frequently Asked Questions



### Q. How are food carts regulated in the City of Corvallis?

- A. Food carts can be permanently placed within established “Mobile Food Unit” (MFU) clusters in the downtown area, or as a “Temporary Outdoor Market” when operating for 45 or less days per year. For both types, the use must be located on private property, with the property owner’s permission, and the property must be zoned to allow the use. Food carts are generally not allowed to operate from public rights-of-way (streets or sidewalks), on public property (parks, etc), or within residential zones. Any use involving food sales requires Benton County Health Department licensing (541-766-6841).

#### Mobile Food Unit:

- Allows establishment of food cart clusters within downtown area (property zoned RF or CB).
- Application includes a site plan depicting square footage of area proposed, circulation, number and location of mobile food units, setbacks, ADA clearances, as well as the size, location, and clearances of any proposed customer seating areas and the number and location of waste receptacles.
- Permit fees include \$200 for the initial site review fee (per site), and a \$100 annual infrastructure impact fee (per unit).
- Permits must be renewed each year. [www.corvallisoregon.gov/mfu-app](http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/mfu-app)
- More information is available in [Chapter 8.13 of the Corvallis Municipal Code](#) (see reverse for summary).

#### Temporary Outdoor Market:

- Permitted outright within CB, RF, LI, GI, II, RTC and MUE zones.
- The use may not persist for more than 45 days per calendar year per property.
- Encroachment into vision clearance and/or required vehicle parking areas is not allowed.
- Permits generally not required. It is recommended to consult with Development Services prior to establishing business to verify zoning. Disclosing location and dates of planned operation is also recommended, in case neighbors or members of the public have concerns.

### Q. Does the “Temporary Outdoor Market” use type allow activities other than food carts?

- A. Other typical “Temporary Outdoor Market” activities include fruit stands, community festivals, and seasonal sales (Christmas trees, etc.) These activities are also generally classified under the “Temporary Outdoor Market” use type, and are thus subject to the same Temporary Outdoor Market provisions as food carts.

### Q. Where are food carts allowed?

- A. Temporary Outdoor Market uses and MFU’s are allowed only on private property in specified zones. You may go to [www.corvallisoregon.gov/propertymap](http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/propertymap) to look up zoning information for individual properties online. To verify that the intended use is allowed in a given zone, or for other zoning-related questions, please contact Development Services at (541) 766-6929 or [development.services@corvallisoregon.gov](mailto:development.services@corvallisoregon.gov).

### Q. Can I operate a food cart at the Corvallis Farmers’ Market?

- A. Please visit [www.locallygrown.org](http://www.locallygrown.org) for information regarding the Corvallis Farmers’ Market. Restaurant / prepared food vendor applications must be reviewed and approved by the Corvallis-Albany Farmers’ Market Board. The mission of the Farmers’ Market is to promote locally grown foods, so opportunities to sell restaurant foods and baked goods are limited.

**Summary of Mobile Food Unit (MFU) Provisions**  
**SEE CORVALLIS MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 8.13 FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- **Mobile Food Units (MFUs)** may be permitted on a year-round basis on private property within the CB (Central Business) and RF (Riverfront) zones. **The property owner is the applicant and permit holder for each MFU site.**
- **Application** for an MFU permit shall be made at the Development Services Division. At a minimum, the application shall include the following:
  - A completed MFU application form.
  - Payment of an administrative site plan review fee of \$200.00. (An additional infrastructure impact fee of \$100.00 per unit is due at the time of permit issuance.)
  - A scaled site plan of the proposed area for the MFU to be located, with dimensions shown to include:
    - Total square foot area of area proposed for mobile food unit use and circulation;
    - Total number and locations of mobile food units on the site;
    - Consistency with all setback and separation requirements as specified in CMC Section 8.13.060;
    - ADA clearances into and throughout affected areas of the property;
    - Size, location, and clearances of customer seating areas, if proposed; and
    - Number and location of waste receptacles.
- **Additional Rules and Criteria**
  - Mobile food units are limited in size to sixteen (16) feet in length and/or 128 square feet. Towing arms, tow hitch and tongue are exempted from this calculation.
  - MFUs that orient the service window toward the public right-of-way shall maintain a minimum 2-ft. setback from the right-of-way. For MFUs that orient the service window away from the public right-of-way, there is no minimum setback requirement.
  - MFUs must maintain a minimum separation of 10 feet between units on a property.
  - 10-ft. minimum separation required between MFUs and permanent common outdoor eating areas. Individual temporary seating areas, such as a table and chairs, may be placed near an MFU, but must maintain a minimum 4-ft. accessible clearance area between the seating area and the MFU, and must be oriented so that the relief valves on any propane tanks associated with MFUs are facing away from the seating area. Tables, chairs or benches used for individual seating areas must be constructed of non-flammable materials.
  - Owner of the subject site shall secure written permission from a business or owner of property within ¼ mile of the subject site, allowing MFU operators and patrons access to restroom facilities. Alternatively, property owner can use a public restroom facility located within 1/4 mile of the subject site.
  - Trash receptacles shall be provided on site, at rate of one receptacle for every two MFUs, or minimum of one per lot. Where common seating proposed, a minimum of one trash receptacle shall be provided in the seating area.
  - Awnings are permitted, but must be attached to the MFU, have a 7-ft. minimum vertical clearance, and be able to be opened or closed. Awnings shall not project into sidewalks or public right-of-way.
  - Decks, patios, and similar structures shall not be located within 10 feet of an MFU. Any structure within a common seating area that requires a building permit shall be subject to applicable sections of OSSC Ch. 11.
  - MFUs that provide their own water, power, and waste disposal, are permitted with no additional utility considerations beyond the permitting process and site plan approval. Units that require a water source, power source, or waste disposal location are permitted only where the Building Official has approved site plans that show safe access and location of the aforementioned provisions. Such provisions are subject to all applicable building permits and SDC requirements.
  - Hours of operation of MFUs shall discontinue by 3:30 a.m., daily.
- **Process**
  - MFU permit applications are generally reviewed within 3 weeks of the application date.
  - Each permit issued shall terminate December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year in which issued.
    - Permits must be renewed annually. \$100.00 / unit infrastructure impact fee due upon renewal.
    - All MFUs shall be licensed by Benton County, and inspected annually by the Corvallis Fire Dept.