



NDOT Permits Office  
720 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Nashville, TN 37206

Phone: (615)862-8782  
Email: [NDOTpermits@nashville.gov](mailto:NDOTpermits@nashville.gov)

## Mobile Food Vendor Pilot Program

Mobile Food Unit Vendors prepare and sell food to the public and must therefore obtain multiple permits and pass inspections to operate in Metro Nashville. A mobile food vending unit is a person, corporation, company, or business that sells food and beverages from the roadway using a licensed vehicle capable of movement or from a licensed trailer pulled behind a motor vehicle.

### Program Guidelines

- Obtain necessary inspections and permits required by Metro Government to operate a mobile food truck in Davidson County (Codes, Solid Waste, Fire, Health, County Clerk's Office, etc.).
- Apply for and obtain a Mobile Food Vendor Permit from the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (NDOT) Permit Office. This permit is required to vend inside or outside of the right of way in Davidson County, is non-transferrable, and is required for each mobile food vending unit.
- Post Mobile Food Vendor Permit in the window or display prominently on the vehicle. This permit shall be visible to Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (NDOT) inspectors. Post all other department permits and/or licenses as required by that department.
- A permit allows travel on Metro roads and use of designated signed zones in the public right-of-way in the Downtown Core subject to approval of and compliance with all Metro Government departments' regulations.
- During the pilot program, a \$55 permit fee is required in the Downtown Core for a lane closure at signed Mobile Food Vendor locations in Nashville and Davidson County. **Permits must be renewed every 2 months.**

### Placement and Operation of Mobile Food Vending Units

- Placement of devices related to mobile vending shall not obstruct or impede the pedestrian path of travel or traffic flow. Mobile vending placement must adhere to Federal, State, and Local regulations and policies. Mobile vending from on- street parking spaces, whether marked or unmarked, and in the signed Mobile Food vendor zones in the Downtown Core shall not reduce the clear pedestrian path of travel to less than six feet. This includes all related components of the mobile vending
- Mobile food vending must follow all existing codes and ordinances and shall be prohibited at the following locations:

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- Within 150 feet of a building in which a full-service restaurant or fast-food restaurant is located and operating, as defined in [Section 17.04.040 of the Metropolitan Code](#), unless approval is obtained in writing from the owner of the business.
- Within 20 feet of any structure built of combustible construction and within 10 feet of any structure built of non-combustible construction.
- Within 15 feet of any fire hydrant, fire escape, bus stop, any intersection curb radius return (the point of intersection of the street curb line and the curb radius), any doorway or driveway or other main entrance of any building, and of any emergency or fire exits.
- Within a city block of a school zone during regular school hours.
- Mobile vending is prohibited in improved public alleys.

*All measured distances and distance requirements addressed in these regulations shall be distances measured in a straight line from the nearest edge of the mobile vending unit to the nearest edge of the object from which the mobile vending unit is to be distant.*

- Mobile vending in marked parking spaces shall not exceed the area allowed by the markings.
- Mobile vending must follow rules and regulations regarding utilization of that parking space, including time limits. Mobile Vendors shall be parked with right side of unit facing curb and shall be placed a maximum of 18 inches from curb face or edge of pavement. On one-way streets parking with the left side of vehicle facing curb is permitted in the direction of traffic flow.
- Appropriate purchase of parking time at parking meters outside of the Downtown Core is required.
- Mobile vending shall not impede access to the entrance or driveway of any adjacent building.
- Mobile vending shall not obstruct sight distance for drivers.
- Mobile vending shall not use stakes, rods, or any method of support that is required to be drilled, driven, or otherwise fixed, in asphalt pavement, curbs, sidewalks or buildings.
- The use, marking, or designation of mobile vending spaces in no way grants any mobile vendor a vested right or property interest in any specific space, and the marked spaces may be removed if it is determined to be in the interest of public health, safety and welfare. Spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis and may not be reserved.
- No mobile food truck shall provide or allow any dining area, including but not limited to tables, chairs, booths, bar stools, benches, and standup counters, unless a proposal for such seating arrangement is submitted with the permit application and approved.

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- Mobile vendors shall obey all applicable laws prohibiting excess noise or other nuisance.
- The program is permitting food and beverage sales only.
- Permitted operations will be inspected periodically to ensure program compliance.
- All sites out of the right-of-way require documentation of permission from the property owner with a copy of such permission to be submitted to the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure (NDOT) Permit Office.
- Mobile vendors seeking to vend in a park should contact the [Metro Parks & Recreation Department](#).

## Additional Guidelines for Downtown Core (DTC)

During the pilot phase, the Downtown Mobile Food Program will be modified to incorporate special circumstances unique to the downtown area. Initially vending in the right-of-way will only be permitted in specific zones identified by signage.

All operations within the Downtown Core (DTC) will follow standard procedure to vend food in the county. After obtaining a Mobile Food Vendor Permit from the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure's (NDOT) Permit Office, permitted mobile food vendors will be allowed to vend in the designated zones at posted times only: **10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 3 a.m.**

Zones were selected based on the following criteria:

- Safety of motoring and pedestrian traffic.
- Convenience for and to downtown workers, visitors, and residents.
- Proximity to areas such as parks and streetscape elements.
- Use of existing loading zones and parking areas to reduce parking impacts to vehicular traffic.

Zones identified with signage clearly defining the limits of the space and times of operation are the only legal places to operate during the pilot program.

The following guidelines apply:

- Spaces in the downtown zone will be available to all permitted mobile food trucks on a first come first serve basis with no advance parking or reservations allowed.
- Mobile food trucks are not allowed in mobile food truck zones outside of posted times.
- Vehicle must park in the same direction as traffic.

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- Mobile food trucks participating in the downtown trial program will not fund parking meters during the operating hours of the zone.
- During a special event, permission from the event coordinator is required to vend inside the event footprint; no others will be allowed to set up. A one-block buffer around events will also be enforced for event pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- If an area is closed for an emergency or other permitted activity, no vendors will be allowed to set up. Areas will be monitored for compliance and any violations could result in a permit being suspended or revoked based on adherence to rules and regulation.
- All areas selected for the test phase will be evaluated and could be expanded or removed based upon evaluative information received.

The table below provides a listing of location and sizes of each parking zone. Notification of changes to zones will be posted and permit holders will be notified.

Location	From	To	# of Spaces	Type	Sidewalk Width
2nd Ave North (east side)	James Robertson Pkwy	Gay St	4	Loading	12'
Deaderick (north side)	3rd Ave North	4th Ave North	2	Loading	29'
Capitol Blvd (east side)	Church St	Union St	1	Loading	18'
James Robertson Parkway	4th Ave North	3rd Ave North	6	No Parking	14'
1st Ave North at Ft. Nashboro (east side)	Church St	Broadway	3	Loading	29'
1st Ave South (east side)	Broadway	Demonbreun St	4	Loading	10'
11th Ave S	Laurel St	Pine St	2	Metered	14'
7th Ave S (east & west side)	Charlotte Ave	Union St	1	Metered	20'

## Hours of Operation

No vending operations shall take place in the right-of-way between the hours of 3:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. unless otherwise posted.



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### Waste and Recycling

Mobile vending operators must supply, in a prominent location, trash and recycling containers sufficient in size to collect all waste and recyclables generated by customers and staff of the mobile vending operation. All trash and debris generated by customers and staff shall be collected by the mobile vendor and deposited in their trash or recycle container and removed from the site by the mobile vendor.