



CITY OF FORT BRAGG

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

MEETING DATE: AUGUST 4, 2026

TO: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: SARAH MCCORMICK, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Receive Report Regarding Mobile Vending Unit Ordinance and Provide Recommendation to Planning Commission and City Council

ISSUE:

The Community Development Committee (CDC) requested an update on Food Truck / Mobile Vending Ordinance

BACKGROUND:

On April 15, 2026 the Community Development Committee (CDC) held a special meeting to consider potential amendments to the City's Mobile Vending Ordinance (Att. 1 - April 15 CDC Report). Following discussion, the CDC provided the following direction to staff:

- Provide Signage;
- Explore potential downtown locations for a food truck park; and
- Identify suitable locations throughout the city to accommodate Mobile Vending Units.

On May 4, 2026 the CDC held a regularly scheduled meeting to receive an update on Mobile Vending Ordinance process, as well as information regarding code enforcement activities undertaken to date (Att. 2 – May CDC Report). Based on that discussion, the CDC provided the following additional direction to staff:

- Continue relying on existing General Plan standards to regulate noise;
- Do not expand the types of goods permitted under a Mobile Vending Unit Permit;
- Research the feasibility of permanently closing Laurel Street between N. Franklin Street and the first alley to the east to create a food truck plaza; and
- Present the CDC's recommendation to the Planning Commission for input before forwarding it to the full City Council for consideration.

ANALYSIS:

One of the most important factors in the success of a food truck business is the location. And local mobile vendors prefer operating in downtown locations due to the visibility offered and foot traffic. One concept identified by the CDC is creating a permanent centralized location for a cluster of food trucks to operate from.

Consolidating Mobile Vending Units within a designated area could provide several benefits. A single location creates a destination where visitors can choose from a variety of cuisines. A centralized location would also allow vendors to share amenities such as permanent seating, restroom facilities, lighting, waste receptacles, and potentially live entertainment, helping to establish the area as an active public gathering space.

At the same time, concentrating vendors in one location presents operational challenges that would need to be addressed. These include establishing consistent business hours, managing vehicular circulation, accommodating the loss of on-street parking, and determining responsibility for maintaining shared amenities.

Additionally, most Mobile Vending Units are required to operate in conjunction with a licensed commissary kitchen for daily cleaning, servicing and food storage; thus, requiring each unit to leave and return to the site daily. Participating vendors would likely need to adhere to standardized operating hours and coordinated arrival and departure times in order to maintain pedestrian safety and minimize conflicts between vehicles and visitors.

Laurel Street Mobile Vending Unit Cluster

One area identified by the CDC is the creation of a permanent Mobile Vending Unit area by closing of a portion of Laurel Street. Under this concept, bollards would be installed to close the section of Laurel Street between N. Franklin and the first alley to the east, adjacent to City Hall and Tall Guy Brewing, as shown in Image 1 below.



Image 1: Proposed Laurel Street Closure

Under this proposal, vehicular traffic would be rerouted via N. Franklin Street, with access to the public parking lot and the remaining on-street parking from the one-way alley behind City Hall.

The proposed street closure would remove six (6) parking spaces on the south side of street, one ADA-accessible space, and an additional four to five (4-5) parking spaces on the north side of street. The closure would also require relocation of a Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) bus stop located adjacent to the public parking lot. In addition, rerouting traffic would not be possible every Wednesday due to the weekly Farmers Market, and the increased traffic through the City Hall parking lot would likely have negative impacts.

Additional operational considerations include the loss of passenger pick-up and drop-off immediately in front of the gymnasium. However, improvements to the gymnasium's rear entrance, accessed from the City Hall parking lot, could provide an alternative location for these activities.

Other Clustering Ideas for Committee Consideration

1. 400 Block N. Franklin Street - EAST

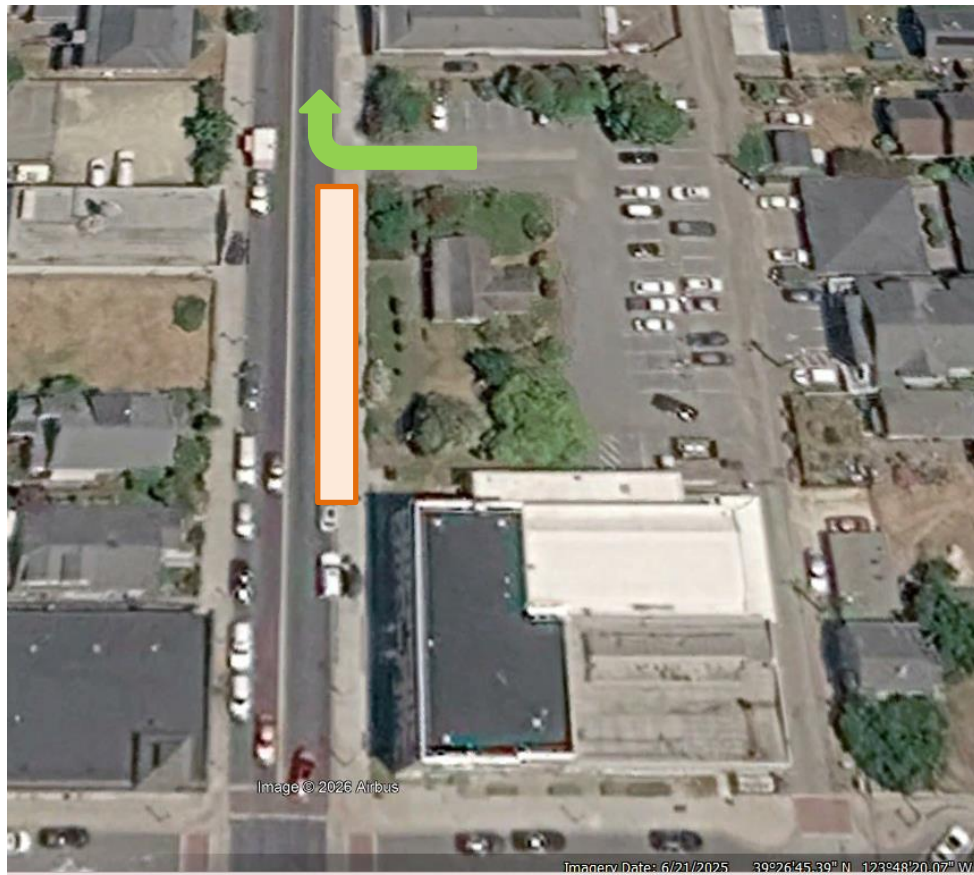


Image 2: N Franklin Street - EAST

Clustering Mobile Vending Units along the east side of the 400 block of N. Franklin would provide a centralized downtown area adjacent to the City Hall parklet. This location offers

good visibility and proximity to public seating; however, visibility for vehicles exiting the adjacent public parking lot would be reduced. To improve traffic safety, vehicles exiting the lot may need to be restricted to right turn only through the appropriate signage.

2. 400 Block N. Franklin Street – WEST

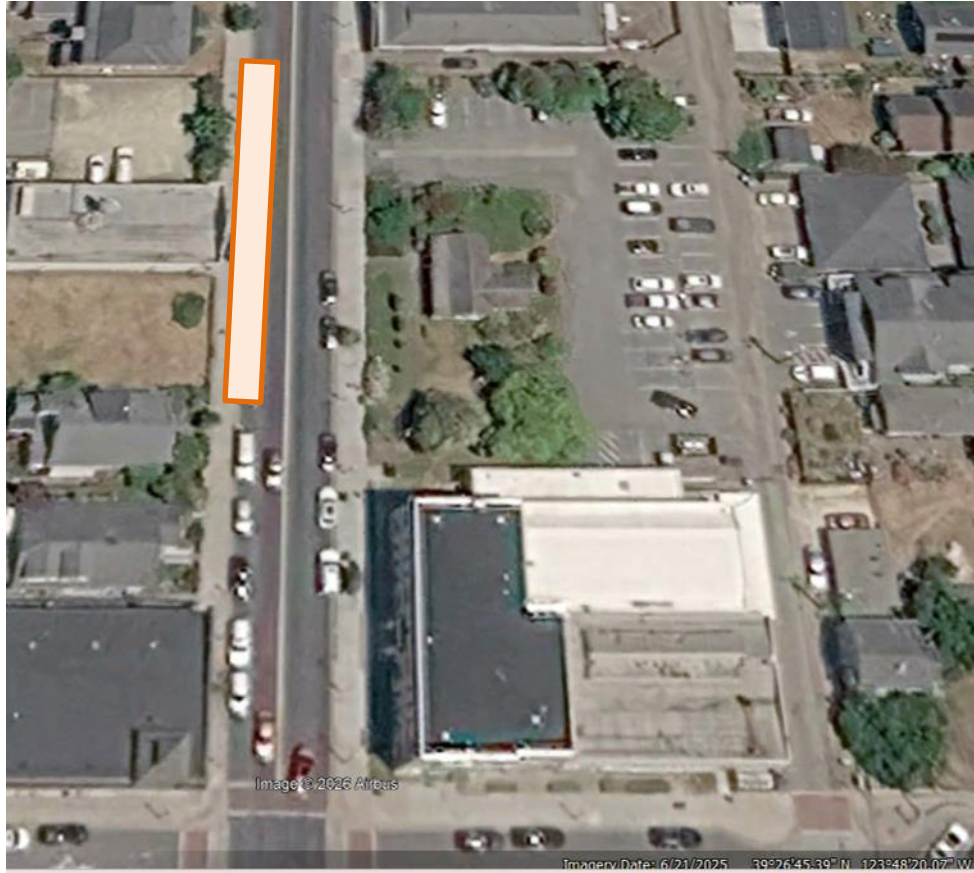


Image 3 – N. Franklin Street – WEST

Another option is to locate Mobile Vending Units along the west side of the 400 block of N. Franklin Street, adjacent to the vacant lot and the AT&T building. While this location minimizes impacts to existing businesses, it provides less open space for customers and is farther away from exiting public picnic tables and public gathering areas.

3. Laurel Street Public Parking Lot

Utilizing Laurel Street Public Parking Lot as a designated Mobile Vending Unit cluster would provide another centrally located option.

Under this scenario, the two electric charging stations would remain available, and the removed parking spaces could be converted into a pedestrian access corridor. The City could also provide electrical service, eliminating the need for vendors to operate generators. Implementation of this option would require the removal of approximately

fifteen (15) parking spaces, while preserving the two electric vehicle charging stations and eight (8) parking spaces.



Image 4 – Laurel Street Public Parking Lot

4. Community First Parking Lot

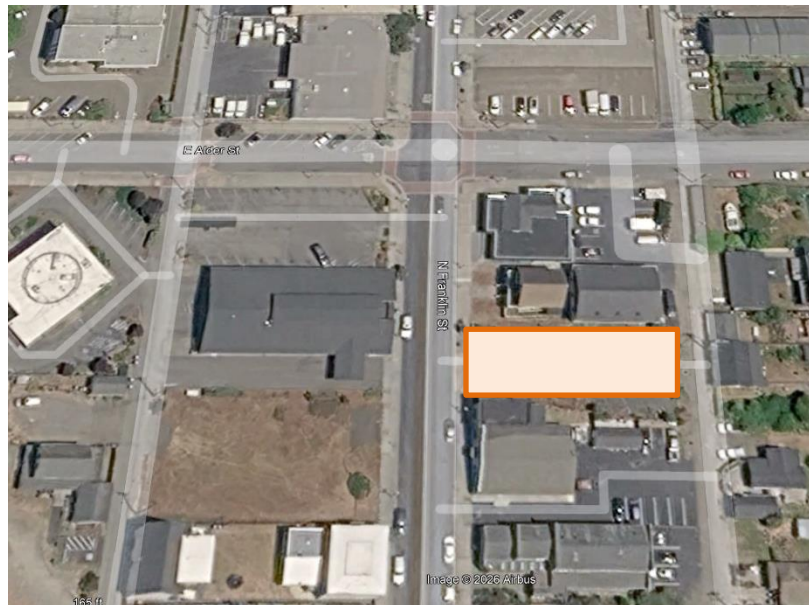


Image 5 – Community First Parking Lot

The private parking lot owned by Community First Credit Union could also serve as a location for a Mobile Vending Hub, and the parking lot is equipped with electric outlets,

which would reduce noise impacts. The bank's preference is for the City to lease the parking lot; however this would require staff support to manage and maintain, which is currently at capacity. If the Committee is interested in pursuing this opportunity, staff could facilitate a meeting between bank management and mobile vendors.

Disbursement Strategies for Committee Consideration

Scattering vendors to unique standalone downtown locations is the City's current approach. These locations can be on private property or within the public right of way. Current regulations allow mobile vending units on private property anywhere within the Central Business District, and at three specific locations within the public right of way: N. Franklin Street, Redwood Avenue, and Alder Street.

Committee may want to consider the following options:

1. **Limit Hours Allowed in a Single Location within the Central Business District.**
Mobile Vending Units prefer the downtown area due to the high pedestrian traffic. Restricting the hours allowed for a single business in a single location may have a twofold benefit: 1) decrease the burden experienced by neighboring businesses; while 2) increasing opportunities for all mobile vending businesses to prosper from ideal locations.
2. **Expand or Modify Permitted Locations within the Central Business District.**
Image 5 identifies several potential locations that could accommodate a single mobile vending unit. These locations were selected because they are generally located adjacent to vacant lots, parking lots, or other areas that would minimize impacts on existing storefront businesses.

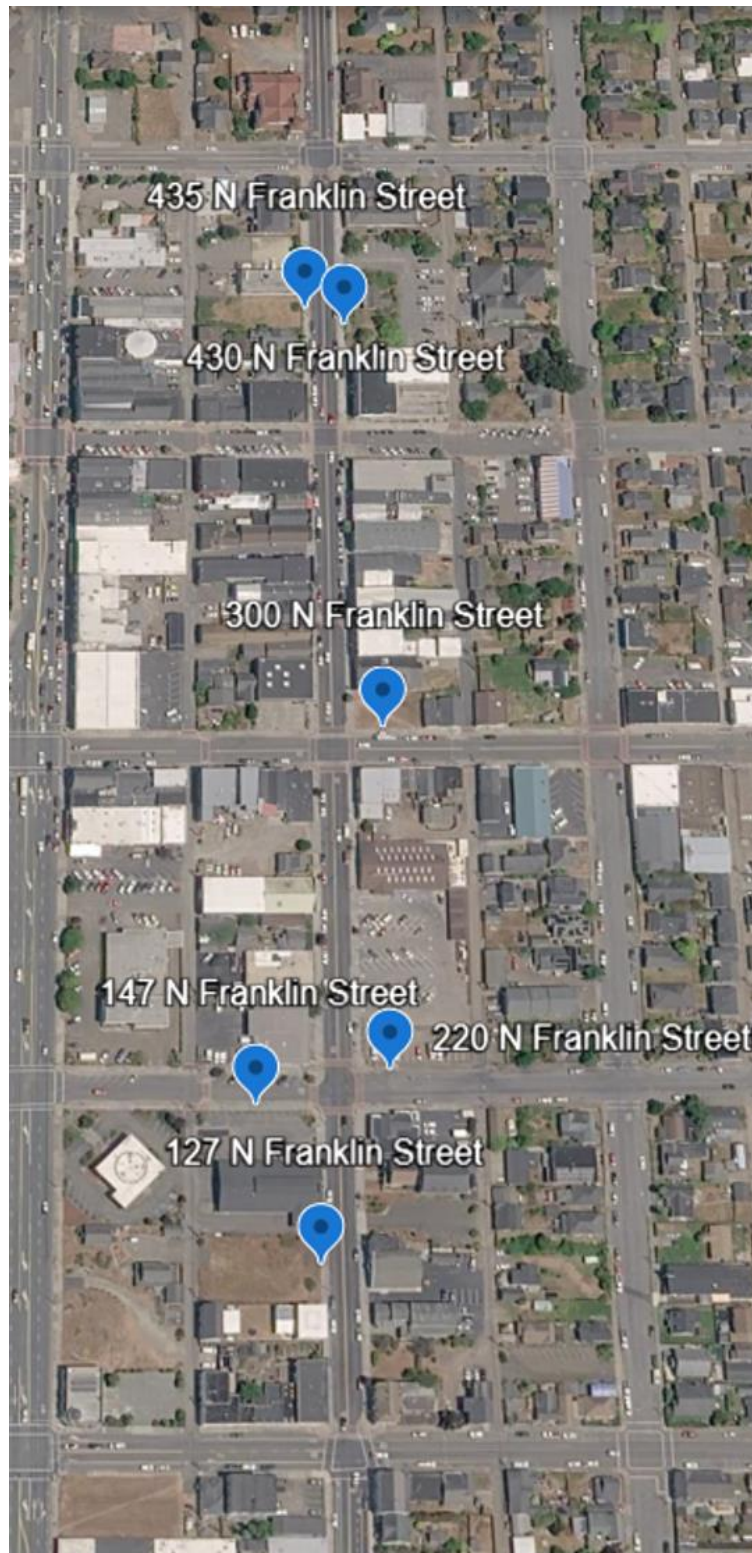


Image 5: Potential Downtown Locations for Single Vender

3. **Encourage Private Property Partnerships.** The Committee may also consider encouraging partnerships between individual Mobile Vending Units and private

property owners. These public-private partnerships would allow vendors to operate on private sites while property owners provide the designated space and, where available, access to utilities or costumer amenities. This approach can increase location flexibility while reducing demand for limited public right-of-way space. The City could advertise this opportunity to property owners and develop a list of interested property owners.

4. **Encourage Service in Areas with Limited Food and Beverage Options.** The Committee may wish to explore opportunities to encourage Mobile Vending Units to operate in areas with limited access to food and beverage services. Examples may include areas near the hospital and courthouse. The City could offer incentives for vendors serving qualifying areas, such as reduced permitting fees or expanded operating hours.

Staff seeks direction from Committee members on the following:

- Mobile Vending Unit Cluster, Sole Vendor locations, or a mix?
- Private Property, Public Right-of-Way, or a mix?
 - If allowed in public right-of-way, shall downtown locations be modified?
- Are you interested in offering incentives to Mobile Vending Units interested in operating in qualifying areas?

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The discussion and direction provided by the Committee is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act because the discussion and direction of the Committee will have no direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (Pub. Res. Code § 21065).

STRATEGIC PLAN/COUNCIL PRIORITIES/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Goal 1: Invigorate Economic Opportunity and Community Vibrancy

Program: Revitalize Fort Bragg consistent with the character of the community by supporting existing businesses and attracting a variety of local business ownership, supporting buyer empowerment, and creating employment opportunities to encourage spending within our local economy.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Mobile Vending Units have been topic of discussion at Monthly Business Roundtable Meetings that take place the first Wednesday of the month at 10am in Town Hall, located at 363 N Main Street.
- A steering committee assisted with the development of survey questions that the City promoted through Press Release, website, social media channels, flyers, and hand walked to downtown businesses.

- The public is invited to attend this meeting of the Community Development Committee, as well as any past and/or future meeting held by committee, Planning Commission, and/or City Council.

ALTERNATIVES:

Provide further direction.

Take no action.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. April CDC Report
2. May CDC Report

NOTIFICATIONS:

1. Fort Bragg Planning Commission
2. The following "Notify Me" e-subscriber lists: Fort Bragg Downtown Businesses; Economic Development Planning
3. The following Mobile Vending Units: Los Primos; La Taqueria Oaxaqueña; El Torito