

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

May 1, 2015

His Worship Mayor John Tory and
Toronto City Councillors
City Hall - 100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Sent Via Email: clerk@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor Tory and Toronto City Councillors:

RE: City of Toronto Council Meeting – May 5-6 2015
Agenda Item LS3.1 Chapter 740, Street Vending - One Year Review

We expressed support for the original Staff Report to the Licencing and Standards Committee on April 21st, however we have serious concerns with the proposed amendment made to the Staff Report by the Committee, as it reduces the distance between a food truck and an operating restaurant from 50 to 30 linear meters. Of even greater concern, is learning that some City Councillors would rather see a further reduced distance or no distance whatsoever, allowing food trucks to park for up to 5 hours, in any available parking spaces.

It is not unexpected to know that the food truck operators would like to be able drive into and operate in the most viable commercial districts of the city, which have already been well established by the existing bricks & mortar retailers/restauranteurs; many have been further improved and enhanced by the establishment of a BIA. As our City Government you must consider what is fair for all business owners.

Unlike many other cities, Toronto is not suffering from a 'food drought'. This city offers a wealth of food choices, at varied price points, from many different cultures. Hard working people and families have established, or are trying to establish themselves, in food operations in bricks and mortar locations, not only adding vibrancy and vitality to our neighbourhoods, but they are adding to our local economy and to the City of Toronto Tax base!

Food trucks competing with existing restaurants should be a serious concern, but so should the trucks themselves and their impact on other small retailers, who are not related to the food industry or are located outside the 50 or 30 meter proximity of a restaurant. When a retailer decides to open a business, one of the most significant priorities in their decision is location. They have to consider the street frontage and visibility of the space, along with market area and proximity to public transit and parking.

Please envision a retailer with a frontage of 15' and then picture a 25' box of steel on wheels, the size of a motorhome parked directly in front of that retailer. The truck will be able to park there for up to 5 hours a day, completely blocking visibility of the retailer from the street, emitting noise the entire time from its generator, along with fumes from exhaust and ventilation. How is this fair to a rent and tax paying retailer, who has no option to move? As long as the food truck can find parking, they can return to the same spot, on a daily basis.

We encourage Toronto City Council to recognize the investments and efforts of the 'bricks & mortar' retail and restaurant businesses and to find a balance that is fair to them. Please support only the recommendations made by the Municipal Licensing and Standards staff in their original report and do not support or further amend the amendment to the distance restriction made by the Licensing and Standards Committee.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ron Palmer, BES, MCIP, RPP
PPUD Committee Chair
Bloor-Yorkville BIA