



Understanding the Changes to Business Licensing

To help understand why changes were made to the City's previous business licensing ordinance, we must first look at how the previous ordinance worked:

- **The previous ordinance required licensing of “businesses which create unique health, safety and/or welfare considerations.”**
 - Although business licensing had been a longstanding practice within the Community, licensing in a uniform manner was extremely difficult as the ordinance did not provide an objective means of establishing which businesses pose a “unique health, safety and/or welfare consideration.”
- **An initial license application was received with a payment of \$35 and would encompass different inspections to verify code compliance by City Staff. Once received, some licenses would need to be renewed with a subsequent fee of \$35 whereas other licenses were indefinite.**
 - Once again, our previous ordinance was very vague in terms of what was an “indefinite license” versus what had to be renewed.
- **Transient vendors, particularly mobile food vendors, were licensed on a very limited basis**
 - The previous ordinance did not provide the tools required to manage the risks and impact that modern mobile vending poses to our Community. Additionally, regulations regarding transient vendors were in a different section of the City's code causing confusion about which provisions applied (i.e. whether the general business regulations applied to all business licenses including transient vendors.)

In response to growing concerns, the City amended its ordinance to help improve customer service and manage risks throughout the Community:

- **The new ordinance provides a uniform and more objective tiered system based on potential risk to the community.**
 - The tiered approach provides the City with a way of licensing businesses in a uniform manner based on building size and use, number of employees/patrons, and hazards including production methods and the presence of hazardous materials to help prevent loss of life, facilities, employment opportunities, and limit environmental impact. It is a proactive approach toward helping build strong businesses that represent the standards set forth by the Community and correlates to “use groups” already in use by the Fire Department and under the building code.
- **The new fee structure has yet to be established and is open to public input during the April 3rd Council meeting.**
 - First and foremost, the fee structure is not intended to generate revenue for the City. It is intended to recover some of the administrative costs of the licensing process, like safety inspections.
- **Transient vendors fall under a completely updated portion of the ordinance under the same chapter of the City Code as general business licenses.**
 - The City established a clear set of provisions to welcome and permit mobile vendors to the Community while simultaneously protecting the public health, safety and welfare. The permit fees associated with mobile vending further recognizes the City's authority to allow the use of public property by vendors who do not otherwise support the construction and maintenance of those facilities like traditional “brick and mortar” establishments.