



# **VENDING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **CITY OF PITTSBURGH**

### **March 2026**

# Overview

In 2025, a team led by the Departments of City Planning, Permits, Licenses, & Inspections, and Mobility & Infrastructure undertook a detailed analysis and reimagining of vending policy in Pittsburgh. The existing program had grown antiquated, inefficient, and burdensome for entrepreneurs looking to grow in the City. Confusion created frustration for both regulators trying to ensure vending standards were maintained and for applicants interested in vending opportunities.

To build a new program, the City directly addressed the siloes that created many of these challenges. Staff and officials responded to feedback from the small business owners in Pittsburgh's mobile and brick-and-mortar communities. This resulted in a redesigned program intended to support more economic mobility and options for Pittsburgh's entrepreneurs. This is part of larger efforts to create a more equitable Pittsburgh economy and help small businesses thrive alongside the City's larger employers.

Historically, vending on public property has been governed by Chapter 719 of the City Code, Vendors and Peddlers, and vending on private property has been governed by the Zoning Code under the Outdoor Retail Sales & Services use. While the Department of Mobility & Infrastructure and Department of Public Works were consulted in decision making, it usually came too late to prevent delays for vendors, denied applications, and reassigning vendor locations. The permit approval process was arduous and lacked standard criteria for applicants, resulting in inequitable access to vending opportunity.

This program update included numerous City departments, but primarily the following: City Planning; Permits, Licenses & Inspections; Mobility & Infrastructure; Public Works; and Office of Nighttime Economy. The corresponding ordinances for this update are reflected Chapters 911, 912, and 922 of the Zoning Code ([Ordinance 34 of 2025](#)) and Chapter 719 of the Business Licensing Code ([Ordinance 35 of 2025](#)).

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# I. Key Terms

## 1. Acronyms and Abbreviations

- A. **DCP** – the Department of City Planning
- B. **DOMI** – the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure
- C. **DPW** – the Department of Public Works
- D. **PACD** – Public Art and Civic Design Commission
- E. **PLI** – the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections
- F. **ROW** – Right-of-Way
- G. **Location Permit** – Vending Location Priority Permit

## 2. Vending Definitions

- A. **Mobile Vendor** - Any vendor who does not remain at any fixed location. Mobile vendors must remove all vending materials from public property during non-operating hours.
- B. **Parking Lane** - the portion of the right-of-way between curb lines designated for parking as demarcated by pavement markings, curb paint, and/or signage.
- C. **Peddler** - A vendor that operates without a vending vehicle or vending unit. Any person who solicits orders for delivery at a later date shall be deemed a peddler and subject to these provisions.
- D. **Right-of-Way** – For the purposes of these guidelines, the surface and space above and below any real property in which the City has an interest in law or equity, including, but not limited to, any public street, boulevard, road, highway, freeway, lane, alley, court, sidewalk, parkway, swale, river, tunnel, viaduct, bridge, or any other place, area, or real property, other than real property owned in fee by the City.

- E. **Stationary Vendor** - Any vendor who operates from an approved vending unit or vehicle at a permitted fixed location. Stationary vendors may leave units or vehicles secured in the permitted location outside of operating hours.
- F. **Stop Bar** – solid white line painted at intersections and traffic signals indicating where vehicles must stop. See Appendix A for diagram.
- G. **Vendor** - Any person, whether a resident of the City or not who sells or offers goods, services, wares or merchandise from an approved vending unit or vending vehicle or operating as a peddler. When the term "vendor" is used by itself in this Chapter with no other descriptor, it shall be interpreted to include all types of vendors that are regulated in this Chapter. Outdoor retail displays, dining seating, or other extensions of an adjacent storefront in the right-of-way or on private property shall not be considered vending and are not subject to this Chapter.
- H. **Vending Unit** - Any non-motorized vehicle, cart, towable trailer less than four (4) feet wide, table/stand, or other such property used by a vendor, includes bicycle, handcart, pushcart, wagon, or other device or thing whether or not mounted on wheels. These units may be used on appropriate sidewalks and private property.
- I. **Vending Vehicle** - Any motorized vehicle used by a vendor that includes self-contained vending operations. Must be a readily movable motorized vehicle with wheels or a vehicle with wheels capable of being towed by a motorized vehicle. These units may be used on appropriate parallel street parking spaces, approved parking lots, and private property.

### 3. City of Pittsburgh Vending Licenses and Permits

- A. **Vending License** – grants permission to operate as a vendor in the City of Pittsburgh. Required for vending on public and private property with some exemptions described below. Issued by PLI. Annual renewal required.
- B. **Group Vending Site Permit** – permission for multiple vendors to operate in close proximity on a designated portion of the street and/or sidewalk on a site approved in accordance with §175, Public Art & Civic Design Commission. Issued by PLI with review by DOMI. Annual renewal required.

- C. **Record of Zoning Approval** – permission to operate on private property in accordance with relevant use standards. Required in some cases for vending, as outlined below. Issued by DCP. No renewal required.
  
- D. **Vending Location Priority Permit (ROW)** – permission to operate at a specific location in the street or sidewalk on a continuous basis with the privileges granted to such permit holders. Required in some cases, such as vending from the sidewalk in the Central Business District. This permit is issued by PLI and includes a review by DOMI. Annual renewal required.
  
- E. **Vending Location Priority Permit (Parks)**– permission to operate within the boundaries of and on the Right-of-Way surrounding a City of Pittsburgh park on a continuous basis within outlined restrictions. Required for vending in and on the immediate periphery (same side of the street) as a City park. Issued by PLI. Annual renewal required.

## II. Applicability

### 1. Authorization.

- A. **Purpose.** This document expands on the regulations outlined in [Chapter 719, Vendors and Peddlers](#), of the Pittsburgh Code. It provides detailed information on requirements for vending in the City of Pittsburgh and is updated at the recommendation of the License Officer and approval by the Directors of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections; Mobility & Infrastructure; and City Planning. Updates to these Rules & Regulations shall be filed with the City Clerk, posted online, and made available at the OneStopPGH customer service counter. Updates shall be documented in Appendix C of this document.
  
- B. **License Officer Authority.** Chapter 719 grants the License Officer authority to lead the vending program’s administration. The Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections and the License Officer shall be responsible for coordinating the program and delegating tasks when there is ambiguity in responsibility. City of Pittsburgh Departments shall have authority over their corresponding programs as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: City of Pittsburgh Vending Program Responsibilities**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Permits, Licenses, & Inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administer Vending License, Vending Location Priority Permit, and Group Vending Site Permit</li> <li>• Ensure vendors are licensed and in compliance with license requirements</li> <li>• Enforce the Zoning Code, when applicable</li> <li>• Respond to 311 complaints regarding alleged violations</li> </ul>
Mobility & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the Vending Location Priority Permit in public ROW</li> <li>• Review locations in Restricted Vending Zones</li> <li>• Review the Group Vending Site Permit in public ROW</li> </ul>
City Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Development Review when applicable</li> <li>• Review the Vending Location Priority Permit in public ROW</li> <li>• Administer Adopt-A-Lot program</li> </ul>
Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on allowable vending locations in parks</li> <li>• Ensure vending in parks occurs safely and in compliance with operating standards</li> </ul>
Fire Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance on and enforce fire safety standards</li> <li>• Conduct inspections on vending units with heating elements</li> </ul>
Police Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support enforcement and protect public safety</li> </ul>

**2. Conflicts.**

- A. **Most Restrictive Applies.** These provisions apply in addition to all relevant City Code and regulations applicable to all licenses and permits, including the PLI Rules and Regulations pursuant to the Pittsburgh City Code, Title VII Business Licensing, hereafter referred to as “Business Licensing Rules and Regulations.” Where a conflict occurs between a general requirement and a specific requirement of these Rules and Regulations, the specific requirement shall apply. Where, in any specific case, a conflict occurs between requirements of these Rules and Regulations or between the requirements of these Rules and Regulations and any referenced codes and standards, the most restrictive requirement shall apply.
- B. **Vendor Responsibility.** This document is not a substitute for applicable law, including the City of Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances. Vendors are responsible for compliance with all applicable legal requirements, whether or not addressed in these Rules and Regulations. Vendors subject to these Rules and Regulations are solely responsible for ensuring that they, and if applicable, all their partners, employees, etc. read, understand, and comply with these Rules and Regulations, the Code, and other applicable laws.

- C. **Severability.** These provisions shall not be deemed to nullify any provisions of local, state, or federal law. If any part or provision of this document is held to be illegal or void, this shall not have the effect of making void or illegal any of the other parts or provisions.

### **3. Non-Discrimination.**

The Directors and License Officer shall not permit any rules, policy, or action, express or implied, which discriminates on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or any other classification identified in the Pittsburgh Anti-Discrimination Ordinances.

### **4. Reasonable Accommodations.**

Anyone subject to these Rules and Regulations or corresponding Code may request a reasonable accommodation to modify how PLI provides Program services due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact the ADA Coordinator at [ada@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:ada@pittsburghpa.gov) or 412-301-7041.

### **5. Appeals.**

The Pittsburgh City Code establishes the right of any person aggrieved by any action of the License Officer to appeal such action. Anyone subject to the Vending Rules & Regulations has this right to appeal as described in Section V of the Business Licensing Rules & Regulations.

## **III. Vending License Required**

Vendors in the City of Pittsburgh must obtain a Vending License to operate in the public ROW, in City of Pittsburgh parks, or on private property. However, a license is not required if one of the following Exemptions is met:

### **1. Strip District.**

A Vending License is not required to operate in the area bounded by Fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) Street, Twenty-Fourth (24<sup>th</sup>) Street, Liberty Avenue, and Waterfront Place and Railroad Street. All other laws apply, and a free and clear passage no less than four (4) feet wide must be maintained at all times. Vending units and associated materials may not be located within twenty (20) feet of an intersection, as measured from the stop bar. Exceptions may be made for items less than forty-two (42) inches tall. Vendors in this portion of the Strip District must seek written permission from the adjacent building and/or property owner to use a specific/predetermined area for vending. The building and/or property owner may charge a fee for vending on their property.

## 2. Otherwise Permitted Events.

Community groups, business associations and similar organizations may vend on the public right-of-way during the hours and within the perimeters of a permitted special event with the approval of the City. Vendors participating in a Special Event as defined per [Section 470.02](#), City of Pittsburgh farmers market, or event otherwise permitted by the City do not require a Vending License to operate unless the timing and/or footprint extend beyond the permitted events.

## 3. Vending from tents and tables

Vending from a tent or table does not require a license if limited to private property, such as during a private farmers market. In the public right-of-way, in parks, and on Adopt-A-Lot sites, such vendors are required to obtain a license if operating outside of a permitted special event.

## 4. Application Requirements

Vendors must meet all conditions required of Business License holders in the City of Pittsburgh as outlined in the **Business Licensing Rules and Regulations**. In addition, vendors must provide the following information:

- A. **Business Scope.** A description of the nature of the business and goods to be bought, sold or rented.
- B. **Operating Standards Affirmation.** The vendor shall affirm they will perform regulated activities per the operating standards of Chapter 719 and these Rules and Regulations.
- C. **Health Department Permits.** Documentation of Allegheny County Health Department permits, unless the vendor's goods, services, wares, or merchandise are exempt.
- D. **Tax Compliance.** Certification from the Department of Finance that the applicant either is not delinquent on any taxes under Title 1 or is in compliance with current payment agreements. A Tax Compliance Letter shall be valid for one (1) year from its date of issuance, unless otherwise determined, at the discretion of the Department of Finance.
- E. **Operating Hours.** The duration and hours of operation for which the right to do business is requested.
- F. **Unit or Vehicle.** A description, including its dimensions, current pictures of any vending unit or vehicle used, and its license plate number, if applicable.

- G. **Additional Requirements.** Documentation confirming compliance with any other county, state, federal, or otherwise applicable regulations, registrations, and certifications for general business operations, Rules and Regulations as well as specific requirements for the product or service sold or distributed, or other requirements, as established by the License Officer.
  
- H. **General Liability insurance.** All license holders must comply with insurance requirements outlined in the Licensing Rules & Regulations. Peddlers are exempt from insurance requirements.
  
- I. **Workers Compensation Insurance.** Applicants must hold valid and current workers' compensation if they have any employees, as outlined in the Licensing Rules & Regulations.

## IV. Operating Standards for License Holders

In addition to maintaining the aforementioned minimum requirements, all licensed vendors must conform to the following provisions:

### 1. Abandonment.

If a unit is determined to have been abandoned according to City Code, DOMI, and/or PLI policy, it is in violation of these Rules and Regulations and can be removed.

### 2. Accessibility.

At all times, including with customers queuing or waiting, at least 4 feet of sidewalk space is kept clear. For sidewalks over 10 feet in width, at least half of the sidewalk must be kept clear. At no time may a vending unit obstruct a fire hydrant, ADA curb ramp, curb cut, or transit stop.

### 3. Appearance and Maintenance.

While operating in the City, the equipment, safety standards, visual appearance, and basic maintenance of the vending unit are required for compliance with license terms. This includes:

- A. **Exterior Maintenance.** Maintaining an exterior free of rust, excessive dirt, peeling paint, or other visible deterioration.
- B. **Vehicle Code.** Complying with the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code ([Title 75](#)), if applicable.
  - i. Maintaining active and valid registration, a current state inspection on file, and tires in a safe and serviceable condition.
  - ii. Being capable of mobility for commissary services, maintenance, and at the request of the License Officer or other City representative.
- C. **Health and Safety.** Complying with all health and safety standards.
  - i. Current and valid permits from the [Allegheny County Health Department](#), if applicable.
  - ii. Maintaining proper sanitation and waste disposal.
  - iii. If using heating elements, maintaining compliance with applicable Fire Bureau regulations and fire safety codes. Starting January 1, 2027, a City of Pittsburgh fire permit is required prior to obtaining a new or renewed Vending License.

- iv. No vendor using a heating element may operate within 10 feet of another structure or vendor, even if using a Group Vending Site permit.

#### **4. Containment.**

Vendors shall only be permitted to sell goods that can be contained on, in or under their vending unit or vehicle. No vendor shall set up, maintain or permit the use of any tables, crates, cartons, racks, devices or thing of any kind to increase the selling or display capacity of their vending unit or vehicle. Vendors must ensure no tripping hazards, such as cables and cords in pedestrian or customer paths, are present. If requested by the License Officer or a designee, vendors must provide any necessary barriers, cones, or signs establishing the vending perimeter or notifying oncoming traffic.

#### **5. Fumes & Emissions.**

Vending units and vehicles shall comply with all applicable Allegheny County Health Department regulations regarding smoke and odor control, and all food safety rules and regulations.

#### **6. Generators.**

No generators shall be operated on the exterior of a vending unit or vehicle, unless they are permanently mounted on the unit or vehicle.

#### **7. Good standing.**

The License Officer considers compliance with the requirements of this section as necessary for vendors to remain in good standing.

#### **8. Loud Noises.**

**Private Property.** Vendors operating on private property on a permanent basis are subject to the noise standards outlined [Section 917.02](#) of the City's Zoning Code. This includes not exceeding 65 dB(A) or 3 above background sound level, whichever is greater, between 7:00 am and 10:00 pm, and not exceeding 60 dB(A) or 3 above background sound level, whichever is greater, between 10:00pm and 7:00 am. If the impacted area is used for Industrial & Manufacturing activity, this limit is 75 dB(A) or 3 above background sound level, whichever is greater.

**Noise Ordinance.** All vendors must abide by [§ 601.4, the City of Pittsburgh Noise Ordinance](#). This includes provisions for:

- i. Unamplified noises between premises where the sound is audible in a residential property or residential zoning district.
  - a. Between 7am and 10pm, this cannot be over 65 dB(A) or 3 above background level, whichever is greater.
  - b. Between 10pm and 7am, this cannot be over 55 dB(A) or 3 above background level, whichever is greater.
  - c. This cannot be clearly audible from 75 feet away.
- ii. Amplified noises between premises where the sound is audible in a residential property or residential zoning district
  - a. At all times, this cannot be over 75 dB(A) or 3 above background level, whichever is greater
  - b. This cannot be clearly audible from 75 feet away.
- iii. Amplified Noise from Vehicles or Devices
  - a. This cannot be clearly audible from 75 feet away

**Amplified Sound.** No vendor, peddler, nor any person on his or her behalf, shall blow a horn, or use any device, except a ring of a bell, including any loud speaking radio or sound amplifying system upon any of the streets, alleys, parks or other public places of the City or upon any private premises in the City where sound of sufficient volume is emitted or produced therefrom to be capable of being plainly heard upon the streets, avenues, alleys, parks or other public places, for the purpose of attracting attention to any goods, wares or merchandise which the licensee proposes to sell.

## 9. Mobility.

The vending unit or vehicle, including all its contents, shall be capable of movement at all times. Vendors must comply with any request from a city official or a city designee to move the vending unit or vehicle for safety or operations. Vendors must provide and maintain access to City and utility infrastructure, including, but not limited to utility poles, gas valves, manhole covers, wastewater systems, and fire hydrants. The City reserves the right to require temporary or permanent removal of any structure(s) inhibiting access to these facilities.

## 10. Permitted Operating Hours.

On private property, vendors may operate at any hours as long as all regulations are followed. In the street and sidewalk, vendors, including peddlers, may not operate between 12:00am and 6:00am in nonresidential areas or between 8:00pm and 8:00am in residential areas, unless otherwise permitted by the License Officer or through another special event or permission. In

parks, vendors must comply with the operating hours of the park or hours specified for individual park vending locations, whichever is more limited.

### **11. Posted Permit.**

Vendors must prominently display copies of all PLI approved permits and licenses, including the Vendor License and Vending Location Priority Permit as applicable.

### **12. Signage.**

No vendor may place signage on the street or sidewalk. On private property, signs must comply with the City of Pittsburgh Zoning Code.

### **13. Size.**

The vending unit or vehicle shall meet all size requirements, including limitations to operations on public sidewalks and streets, described in Section V, Location Rules for All Vendors. If the vending vehicle occupies more than one (1) metered spot at a time they must pay for all spaces used.

- A. **Unit Placement.** Some hauled trailers are best suited for operations on the sidewalk, while others are best suited for the parking lane. Generally, trailers exceeding four feet in width should not be placed on the sidewalk, and trailers less than four feet in width should not be placed in the parking lane. No unit designed for employees to serve customers from the exterior of the unit shall be placed in the parking lane.
  - i. DOMI may issue exemptions to size requirement and determine appropriate unit placement in cases of ambiguity.

### **14. Trash.**

- A. **Garbage Removal.** No vendor shall be permitted to dispose of any debris or waste products generated from the operation of their business into City owned and maintained trash receptacles. All vendors shall be accompanied by a metal or rigid plastic trash container(s) with a thirty-gallon combined minimum capacity if the vendor is selling a product that generates trash, and must be:
  - i. Attached to the vending unit or vehicle during operating hours and removed from public access during non-operating hours.

- ii. Clearly marked and maintained; the vendor shall pick up, remove, and dispose of all trash or refuse, including maintaining a perimeter of at least twenty-five (25) feet surrounding the vending unit or vehicle, and any outdoor seating.
- B. **Grease and Gray Water Disposal.** Grease and gray water must be stored in tanks and properly disposed of offsite. Vendors must follow all Allegheny County Health Department grease regulations.

## V. Locations Rules for All Vendors

### 1. Zoning requirements.

Vending must occur in an authorized Zoning district or adjacent to authorized uses. Zoning staff can provide appropriate guidance. The Zoning Map can be found [here](#), and the Zoning Use Table (Section 911.02 can be found [here](#)). Authorized districts include:

- A. **Nonresidential districts.** Any nonresidential zoning district (See Chapters [904](#) and [905](#))
- B. **Residential districts.** Residentially zoned (see [Chapter 903](#)) areas, if vending in front of one of the following uses:
  - i. Agriculture
  - ii. Community Center (Limited)
  - iii. Parks and Recreation (Limited)
  - iv. Religious Assembly
  - v. School, Elementary or Secondary
- C. **Additional Districts.** In Zoning districts not included in Article II, Base Zoning District, allowable uses depend on the standards specific to each district.

### 2. Traffic safety, accessibility, and curb management standards.

- A. **Unit Placement.** Only motorized trucks and hauled trailers wider than four (4) feet may be used in the parking lane, and these units are not allowed on the sidewalk. Pushcarts, kiosks, stands, tents, and tables must use sidewalks or private property and may not be used in the parking lane. Wider trailers may be allowed on the sidewalk with approval by DOMI.
- B. **Clear Path.** Vending operations must leave an ADA accessible clear path (currently at least four feet wide) on the adjacent sidewalk at all times, including when customers

queue. Sidewalks over ten (10) feet in width shall leave at least one-half of the sidewalk clear of obstructions.

- C. **Service Window.** No service window may open facing vehicle traffic. Vendors on both public and private property must ensure that customers do not queue, order, wait, or sit in the street or any vehicle path.
- D. **Spacing.** Vendors must operate at least 50 feet from any other vendor. Location Permit holders get priority for locations. The 50-foot spacing requirement does not apply for Group Sites, the Central Business District, Parks, and private property. In such cases, units with heating elements must be 10 feet from all other vendors or structures at all times.
- E. **Intersections and Crosswalks.** Vending operations must be at least 20 feet from an intersection or crosswalk as measured from the stop bar. Materials under 42" high may be permitted in this zone on the sidewalk at the approval of DOMI.
- F. **Staging Materials.** Vendors may not stage materials on the sidewalk, beyond what is necessary for queue control and ensuring clear space.
- G. **Obstructions.** Vendors may not obstruct a building entrance, bike lane, electric vehicle charger or other EVSE, fire hydrant, bus stop, accessible parking spaces, loading zone, outdoor dining, or any other structure.
  - i. Vending must not pose a safety risk due to any nearby activity, such as construction, as determined by DOMI.
- H. **Speed Limit.** Vending is only allowed located on streets and their adjacent sidewalks with a speed limit of 25mph or less.
- I. **Stormwater and utilities.** Vendors may not locate on or within 1 foot of catch basins or storm drains. Vendors may not obstruct any utility vents, vaults, or grates

### 3. Nearby storefronts.

- A. **Competition.** Vendors cannot locate within 150 feet of the primary entrance of a brick-and-mortar business or stationary vendor (Location Permit holder) if the new vendor's primary product is similar to and directly competes with the primary product of the brick-and-mortar or original stationary vendor's primary product. Where there is

ambiguity, the License Officer shall make a determination on whether this provision is applicable. This provision is waived if any of the following is met:

- i. The vendor obtains permission from the competitive business.
- ii. A stationary vendor holds a Location Permit in a given location before the opening of a non-vendor business selling an item like or similar to the primary items sold by the vendor. The vendor shall be permitted to continue operations.
- iii. Breweries, bars, and other establishments authorized to serve alcoholic beverages in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania host vendors who may sell competitive products immediately adjacent to their establishments.
- iv. Vending operations occur outside the operating hours of the competitive business or businesses.
- v. Vending operations occur on private property.

B. **Outdoor Dining.** Mobile vendors may not locate in the licensed area of an Outdoor Dining or Outdoor Retail license. Stationary vendors may be relocated to accommodate a new license for Outdoor Dining and Retail.

C. **Intake Vents.** Food vendors may not locate within 10 feet of intake vents

#### **4. Major Public Destination Facilities.**

Vendors may not locate directly adjacent to, on the property of, or within a 100-foot radius of any entrance to a Major Public Destination Facility as defined in §919.01.C of the Code, unless otherwise allowed by the property owner or the License Officer. Previously operating stationary vendors within this radius may continue operations. These facilities include, but are not necessarily limited to: **Acrisure Stadium, PNC Park, PPG Paints Arena, David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Peterson Events Center, and UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse**

#### **5. Mount Washington.**

Vending of any kind is prohibited in the parking lane and on sidewalks in the Mount Washington neighborhood in the area bound by Grandview Ave, Wyoming St, Virginia Ave, and Shaler St.

#### **6. Central Business District, Parks, and Restricted Vending Zones.**

Vendors seeking to use locations in parks, the Central Business District, or any other Restricted Vending Zone must use selected locations as described in Section X, Restricted Vending Zones.

# VI. Additional Vending Location Considerations

## 1. Vending from the Parking Lane.

- A. **Parallel Parking Only.** Any street parking spot used must be a legal, parallel parking spot. Vending from angled or perpendicular street parking is prohibited. Parking spaces adjacent to a parking protected bike lane may not be used for vending.
- B. **Reservations.** If the parking space is in a paid parking area and the applicant wishes to reserve the spot in advance, the applicant must receive approval from the Pittsburgh Parking Authority to temporarily close the paid parking (see [here](#)). If the applicant seeks to utilize a paid parking zone and does not have prior approval from the parking authority, the applicant must pay the meter for the time used in the space.
- C. **Using Multiple Parking Spots.** Vendors with units longer than twenty-two (22) feet must work with the Pittsburgh Parking Authority to ensure appropriate payment for all parking spots used.
- D. **Rush-hour Restrictions.** Vendors must obey all rush-hour parking restrictions, even if holding a Vending Location Priority Permit.
- E. **State-owned Roads.** State-owned roads are not eligible for vending in the parking lane without prior approval from PennDOT. A map of street ownership is available [here](#).

## 2. Vending on the Sidewalk.

- A. **State-Owned Roads.** Mobile vendors may use sidewalks adjacent to state-owned roads if they meet all other criteria.
- B. **Clear Path by Building.** Sidewalk vendors must use the portion of the sidewalk along the curb, keeping the required clear path between the adjacent building and the vending unit, unless otherwise approved by DOMI.

### 3. Peddlers.

Peddlers may move freely in residential areas but shall not remain more than fifteen (15) minutes in one (1) location. Upon the expiration of the fifteen (15) minutes, the peddler must begin moving to a location at least two hundred fifty (250) feet from the first location.

## VII. Vending Location Priority Permit

### 1. Vending Location Priority Permit Applicability

Vendors using the same location frequently can apply for a Vending Location Priority Permit from PLI, which includes permission to leave vending materials overnight, first priority for site use, and protection from competitive mobile businesses setting up within a 150-foot radius. The allowable locations for this permit shall align with allowable locations for mobile vending.

Vendors in Restricted Vending Zones must utilize pre-approved locations. Location Permits are valid for one year and must be renewed annually.

- A. **Vending Location Priority Permit Required.** A Location Permit is required to use approved parks vending locations or to use sidewalk vending locations in the Central Business District.
- B. **Holding Multiple Permits.** An applicant may hold up to five Location Permits at a time. Exemptions to this limit may be granted by the License Officer.
- C. **Additional Responsibilities for Location Permit Holders.** In addition to following all regulations applicable to license holders, Location Permit holders must:
  - i. Clean and power wash the sidewalk on a periodic basis, if requested.
  - ii. If leaving a vending unit unattended, respond promptly to requests to remove materials from the Right-of-Way to allow snow plowing and/or other maintenance activities, if needed.

### 2. Application Requirements:

To obtain the Location Permit, the applicant must provide the following:

- A. **Applicant.** Applicant and Business name and mailing address
- B. **Site Plan.** Applicants will be required to submit a site plan with dimensions indicating the location of the installation and placement of materials. Architectural or engineering

drawings are encouraged but not required. Hand drawings are acceptable when drawn to scale and meeting all other site plan requirements listed below:

- i. Site plans should be scaled to show surroundings located within thirty (30) feet of the outer edge of the proposed use:
- ii. Scale of drawing;
  - a. Minimum scale of  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$
- iii. Dimensions of the Vending Unit
- iv. Street names and widths
- v. Location of any transit stops within 30' of the Vending Unit
- vi. Location of any furnishings such as utility poles (light/power/traffic signal), fire hydrants, parking meters, street signs, street trees, bike racks, etc.
- vii. Distance to the nearest intersection, as measured from the stop bar
- viii. If vending is to be on the sidewalk, site plan must demonstrate required clear space in Section V.2.B, Clear Path.

### 3. Holding a Permit to Host Vendors

A. **Host Responsibility.** A business or organization that partners with licensed vendors may hold a Location Permit or Permits for a rotating set of vendors. Permit holders will be responsible for ensuring the proper use of the site, particularly keeping operations within the allowed footprint of the permit.

B. **Host Plan.** The applicant must submit a clear plan for the use of the permit(s), including an overview of the planned operations, specific location(s) requested, and days/times planned for use by licensed vendors. The plan shall be reviewed and approved or denied by the License Officer.

### 4. Previously Operating Stationary Vendors

Permitted vending locations approved prior to the adoption of the 2025 ordinance shall remain available to their current license and permit holders, unless one of the following occurs, per [Section 719.10.e](#):

- i. *The condition or use of the right-of-way has changed;*
- ii. *The permitted or licensed activity negatively impacts public safety or the operations of the right-of-way; or*
- iii. *The use of the right-of-way is required for the public good.*

If the license holder does not renew their license or Location Permit, and therefore vacates the location, authorization for use of any such location shall be subject to current approval rules and regulations.

## **VIII. Relocation during Special Events**

To accommodate permitted Special Events per City Code [Section 470.02](#), vendors are required to accommodate requests to relocate. Special Event organizers may allow Location Permit holders to continue using permitted locations. During permitted events, the License Officer may, but is not required to, work with impacted vendors to identify alternative locations and to provide permission to use these locations on a temporary basis as if they were the permitted location. Vendors may also use authorized vending locations outside of the permitted event, in accordance with their Vending License. Vendors may reach out for assistance with finding alternative locations during special events. Additionally, vendors, whether holding Location Permits or not, may not locate within the boundaries of special events, unless authorized by the event organizer.

## **IX. Group Vending Sites**

Group sites allocate a portion of the Right-of-Way for vending activity where some particulars of this ordinance and program rules and regulations, such as spacing requirements, may be waived. Applications for group sites shall be approved in accordance with [Chapter 175, Public Art & Civic Design Commission](#).

Group Vending Sites allow multiple vendors to co-locate in the right-of-way, waiving the requirement to leave 50 feet between vendors. Vendors using heating elements must locate at least 10 feet apart from each other for fire safety. The criteria for DOMI's review of Group Vending Sites will include the standard review criteria outlined above.

DOMI will also consider the surrounding traffic conditions, parking supply and demand, and overall curb availability in determining a location's suitability. DOMI will provide a letter supporting or recommending against the use of the site in the PACD application process.

## **X. Restricted Vending Zones**

In areas of high demand and limited curb and sidewalk space availability, DOMI may restrict vending to pre-approved locations. Selection of these locations shall take into account the following:

- i. Existing or previous use of the location for vending;
- ii. Traffic safety considerations, including crash history and speed;
- iii. Parking and loading demand and availability; and
- iv. Conflicts with other current or proposed curbside uses, such as bike lanes, outdoor dining, and transit stops;

Establishment of a Restricted Vending Zone may be requested by a community group or council member representing the area, or at DOMI's discretion. Creation of a new Restricted Vending Zone and sites within it shall follow the process for establishment of a Group Site. Once established, the Restricted Vending Zone shall be added as an Appendix to this document.

### **1. Vending in the Central Business District**

Due to the dynamic and high demand nature of curb space in the Central Business District, vending locations on the street and sidewalk in the Central Business District, as defined by the [City of Pittsburgh](#), must be approved in accordance with [Chapter 175, Public Art & Civic Design Commission](#). To nominate a new location, applicants should follow the Group Vending Sites process. A current list of approved vending locations in the Central Business District shall be available online. Example criteria for locations include previous use by vendors, community input, and curbside demand analysis. Sidewalk vendors must obtain a Vending Location Priority Permit to operate in the Central Business District. Vendors using the parking lane must reserve locations for specific dates and times through the Pittsburgh Parking Authority.

### **2. Vending in Parks**

To vend within the boundaries of and on the Right-of-Way surrounding City Parks, vendors will need to obtain a Vending Location Priority Permit from PLI. In the Right-of-Way, this applies only to the same side of the street as the park. A current list of approved vending locations in parks shall be available online. To nominate a new location, applicants should follow the Group Vending Sites process. Example criteria for locations include previous use by vendors, community input, traffic safety and accessibility, adjacency to complementary uses such as pools and fields, existing foot traffic to parks, and environmental conditions.

### **3. Public Art and Civic Design Commission Process**

The Public Art and Civic Design Commission processes is outlined here: [PACD Commission Application | EngagePgh/](#). If you wish to nominate a new location in the Central Business District, in a park, or for a group of vendors, please email [vending@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:vending@pittsburghpa.gov).

Applicants may simultaneously submit a permit application before the PACD process begins to ensure that if the location is approved, they will receive priority. Priority for new sites is based on timing of applications received, including the receipt of applications before the nomination to PACD. The PACD process will be managed by the Department of City Planning and will be limited to review of a specific location, not whether specific applicants can use the location.

Development Activities Meetings will be required for all locations in the Central Business District. Group vending sites and nominations for vending in parks will require a Development Activities Meeting if located in an area with a Registered Community Organization. Learn more here:

[Registered Community Organizations - Pittsburgh, PA](#)

## **XI. Vending on Private Property**

### **1. Record of Zoning Approval**

Vendors or the property owner or tenant hosting vendors may need to obtain Zoning Approvals. Per Section [922.02.02.A.1](#), a Record of Zoning Approval is **not** required for vending or Outdoor Retail Sales & Services as an Accessory Use if no sales are made to the general public or if all of the following are met:

- i. The Use is not located in a Residential Zoning District or located such that Residential Compatibility Standards apply and;*
- ii. No permanent structures, site features, or vehicles related to the use remain when Outdoor Retail Sales and Service Use is not occurring and;*
- iii. If a Primary Use, there is another Primary Use on the Zoning Lot.*

### **2. Hosting Vendors on Private Property**

If the site has a Record of Zoning Approval, individual vendors do not need to undergo separate Zoning review. For the purposes of Zoning, the approval to carry out vending activity is tied to the property, not an individual vendor. If a property owner has approval for the Outdoor Retail Sales & Services use or hosts vendors only in a manner that does not require a formal zoning review, there is no requirement to host the same vendor at all times. The property owner may host any vendor that is licensed (when applicable) and fits appropriately into the designated space.

If use standards and rules of the license are not followed, both the vendor and property owner may be held responsible. No vendor may use private property, or any space outside the public Right-of-Way, without written permission of the property owner. Vendors do not need to follow

the 50-foot spacing requirement on private property, but units with heating elements must not operate within 10 feet of other vending units or other structures.

### 3. Application Requirements

If Zoning approval is deemed to be required, the applicant will need to follow the standard [Development Review](#) process. The Department of City Planning needs adequate documentation to determine that the activity will meet zoning requirements. This includes:

- A. **Applicant.** Applicant and Business name and mailing address.
- B. **Site Plan.** Site Plan illustrating the proposed vending location.
- C. **Description.** Written narrative of the proposed use.
- D. **Use Criteria.** Written response to the use criteria in 911.04.A.91 (for primary uses) or 912.06 (for accessory uses).

DCP will need to verify that there is available space on site to accommodate customers, that there is a plan for trash and recycling disposal, and that all other applicable standards are met (such as Residential Compatibility).

### 4. Accessory Use vs Primary Use

DCP also must determine whether the proposals meets the requirements of a primary or accessory use. [Per Section 912.01](#), An accessory use or structure must:

- A. *Be subordinate to and serve the primary use or structure;*
- B. *Be subordinate in area, extent and purpose to the primary use or structure served;*
- C. *Contribute to the comfort, convenience or necessity of occupants of the primary use or structure served; and*
- D. *Be located on the same zoning lot and in the same zoning district as the primary use*

### 5. Permitted Zoning Districts

As a primary use, Outdoor Retail Sales & Services is allowed by-right in the following Zoning Districts: NDO, LNC, NDI, UNC, HC, GI, UI, UC-MU, UC-E, R-MU, EMI, GT (all subdistricts), RIV-MU, RIV-NS, RIV-GI, RIV-IMU, per [Section 911.02](#).

As an accessory use, Outdoor Retail Sales & Services is allowed by-right in nonresidential districts ([Section 912.03](#)) and by-right in residential districts on the same lot as Agriculture,

Community Center (Limited), Parks and Recreation (Limited), Religious Assembly, or School, Elementary or Secondary uses ([Section 912.02](#)).

For zoning districts not included in the Use Table, a Zoning staff member can help interpret allowed uses. Questions may be sent to [zoning@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:zoning@pittsburghpa.gov).

The Zoning Administrator may also approve an accessory Outdoor Retail Sales & Services Use in residential districts beyond the listed scenarios, if deemed compatible and appropriate. Decisions by the Zoning Administrator are subject to appeal to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

## 6. Use Standards

All vending on private property, **whether requiring a Zoning Permit or not**, must meet the following use standards, per [Section 911.04.91](#) and [Section 912.06](#):

- A. *The applicant shall obtain a license pursuant to Chapter 719, Vendors and Peddlers, if applicable, however the license is not required prior to issuance any required zoning approval;*
- B. *The applicant shall provide and have available sufficient on-site space to accommodate a standing area for customers purchasing or attempting to purchase goods and service without encroaching on the public right-of-way or adjacent property; and*
- C. *The applicant shall provide sufficient trash receptacles for wrappers, containers and other disposable products associated with the sale of goods and service.*

As stated above, no service window may open facing vehicle traffic. Vendors on both public and private property must ensure that customers do not queue, order, wait, or sit in the street or any vehicle path.

## 7. Competition and Operating Hours

On private property, the 150-foot competition restriction does not apply, and vendors may operate at any hours as long as all regulations are followed.

## 8. Adopt-A-Lot

Vendors using a City-owned vacant lot will need to comply with licensing and zoning regulations. Details on this program will be outlined in the Vacant Lot Toolkit.

## **XII. Inspections**

### **1. Inspection Authority and Applicability**

Inspections are performed upon the conditional issuance of a permit. Vending Location Priority Permit and Group Vending operations are subject to inspection by the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections (PLI) to ensure compliance with all permit requirements. Upon successful inspection, a final permit will be issued.

### **2. Permit Verification**

Inspectors shall verify that the vendor holds a valid Vending Location Priority Permit issued for the specific approved location. All required permits must be current and properly displayed.

### **3. Location and Footprint Compliance**

Inspectors shall confirm that vending activity occurs only within the approved location and permitted footprint.

### **4. Operator Identification**

Inspectors shall verify the identity of the operator and confirm association with the permitted license holder.

### **5. Determination and Issuance**

If vendor meets all compliance standards for operating as a licensed and permitted vendor, the inspection shall be documented and closed. A final permit for operating at the desired location will be issued and active for 365 days. If a compliance deficiency is identified, PLI may require immediate cessation of unauthorized activity when warranted, suspend the license or permit, and establish a compliance deadline.

### **6. Follow-Up and Escalation**

PLI may conduct follow-up inspections to verify compliance. Continued non-compliance may result in suspension or revocation of licenses or permits, denial of renewal, requests for the vendor to remove materials and/or cease operations, and/or fines issued in Magisterial Court, as authorized under Chapter 719 of the City of Pittsburgh Code and the Business Licensing Rules and Regulations.

## **XIII. Enforcement**

### **1. Enforcement Authority and Applicability**

Enforcement occurs in response a complaint. The inspector shall review compliance in accordance with the prescribed checklist. Items such as unit size, placement, and configuration,

trash and waste management requirements, fire safety standards, noise and emissions regulations, and other applicable operating requirements shall be included in the investigation.

## 2. Complaint Intake

Complaints regarding vending activity may be received through 311, internal City referrals, or partner agencies. All complaints shall be logged by the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections (PLI) and assigned for review.

## 3. Casefile Creation

PLI shall create a casefile for each complaint, documenting the alleged location, type of vending activity, and enforcement priority. The casefile shall serve as the official record for all enforcement actions.

## 7. Investigation

- A. Administrative Review.** An inspector shall review available records to identify the vendor or operator, verify licenses and permits, confirm authorized locations and hours of operation, and review prior violations, if applicable.
  
- B. Field Investigation.** An inspector shall conduct a site visit to document vending activity, including location, time of operation, posted licenses or permits, and observable compliance conditions.

## 5. Supervisor Review and Police Coordination

If a vendor's identity cannot be established or public safety concerns arise, PLI may work with the Bureau of Police to obtain identification and maintain public order.

## 6. Determination and Enforcement Action

If no violation is found, the casefile shall be closed. If a violation is identified, the inspector shall issue a citation and provide guidance on required corrective actions. Vendors may be required to immediately cease unauthorized activity and shall be provided a reasonable timeframe to achieve compliance.

## 7. Interagency Coordination

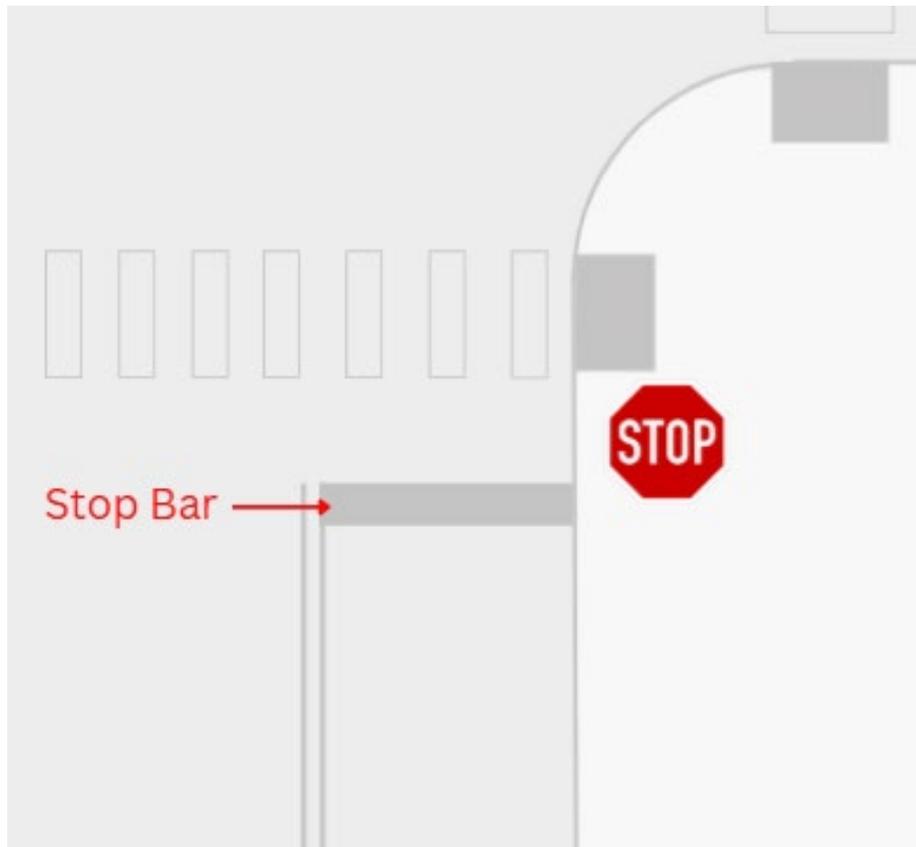
PLI may notify appropriate partner agencies when violations fall within their jurisdiction, including public health, fire safety, parks, nighttime economy, special events, or other relevant authorities.

## **8. Follow-Up and Escalation**

PLI shall conduct follow-up investigations to confirm compliance. Continued non-compliance may result in escalation, including additional citations, administrative penalties suspension or revocation of licenses or permits, denial of renewal, requests for the vendor to remove materials and/or cease operations, and/or court-ordered fines, as authorized under Chapter 719 of the City of Pittsburgh Code and the Business Licensing Rules and Regulations

## Appendix A: Stop Bar

*Image 1: The Stop Bar is the solid white line painted at intersections and traffic signals indicating where vehicles must stop.*



# Appendix B: Sample Site Plans

**Image 2: Sample site plan for a Stationary Vendor or Vending Location Priority Permit Holder in the Parking Lane**



**Image 3: Sample site plan for a Stationary Vendor or Vending Location Priority Permit Holder on the sidewalk**



# Appendix C: Resources and Versions

## 1. Codes and Standards

For more information, please see the following codes and standards (this list is not intended to be comprehensive):

- The [Business Licensing Code](#) as adopted by the City.
- The [Business Licensing Rules and Regulations](#) as adopted by PLI.
- The [Zoning Code](#) as adopted by the City.
- The [Right-of-Way Procedures Manual](#) as adopted by the City
- The [Parks and Playgrounds Code](#) as adopted by the City
- The City of Pittsburgh of Noise Ordinance, [Section 601.4](#)
- [Chapter 719, Vendors and Peddlers](#), as adopted by the City
- [Ordinance 34](#) of 2025
- [Ordinance 35](#) of 2025
- The Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, [Title 75](#)
- The regulations of the [Allegheny County Health Department](#)
- The regulations of the [Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board](#)
  - Note: The Vending License cannot be used for the sale of alcohol. For regulations around alcohol during Special Events, please reach out to the [Pittsburgh Office of Film and Event Management](#).
  - For more information on what permits are available, please reach out to the [Pittsburgh Office of Nighttime Economy](#).

## 2. Resources

- To register your business for tax compliance with the City of Pittsburgh, please follow the process outlined by the [Department of Finance](#).
- To reserve a metered parking spot with the Pittsburgh Parking Authority, please complete an [Out-of-Service / Removal Meter Application](#).
- For more information on obtaining fire permits, please email [fireinfo@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:fireinfo@pittsburghpa.gov)
- For more resources on the City of Pittsburgh vending rules, visit our Vending webpage.
- For more general business information, visit our [Small Business Resources](#) page.
- Any questions about the vending program can be sent to [vending@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:vending@pittsburghpa.gov) or [pliappotech@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:pliappotech@pittsburghpa.gov).
- For information on Special Events permits, please reach out to the [Office of Film & Event Management](#).
- OneStopPGH offers services in person and online. OneStopPGH in-person and remote customer service hours are Monday - Friday from 9 am to 3 pm at 412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

- Remote customer service is available via:
  - Live Text Chat in the OneStopPGH portal
  - Phone at 412-255-2175
  - Email at [pliapptech@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:pliapptech@pittsburghpa.gov)
- Visit our [OneStopPGH information](#) page for more details on customer service and applications.
- Anyone may request a reasonable accommodation to modify how the City of Pittsburgh provides Program services due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact the ADA Coordinator at [ada@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:ada@pittsburghpa.gov) or 412-301-7041.

### **3. Version History**

A version history of this document shall be recorded here.