

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **EXTENDING SUSPENSION OF VENDING
LICENSES DUE TO COVID-19**

BACKGROUND:

The City requires licenses for food vendors who operate in regular locations in downtown and Campustown. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, on March 18, 2020, City staff administratively suspended these Vending Licenses. The City Council took subsequent action on August 25 to extend this suspension through December 31 for vendors on City property, except for Vending Licenses issued as part of an approved special event.

The Council's direction on August 25 was for City staff to report back prior to December 31. **Staff is seeking direction from the City Council as to whether to continue to suspension of Vending Licenses (except those approved as part of organized special events).**

During the time in which vending operations on City property have been suspended, several vendors have found alternative locations on private property to set up vending operations. Vending on private property does not require a Vending License from the City. In addition, the Welch Avenue reconstruction project made vending infeasible on that street. The reconstruction project is now complete, and the roadway is open to traffic.

As with other decisions related to COVID-19, the Council must consider the ability of these operations to operate in a hygienic manner, along with the ability to appropriately distance patrons. City staff notes that pre-pandemic, crowds tended to form by vendors as patrons wait for food, particularly in the hours around bar-closing time.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Continue the suspension of Vending Licenses through June 30, 2021, except those approved as part of a special event. Prior to that date, staff will re-evaluate conditions and present an update to the City Council.
2. Resume suspended Vending Licenses and direct staff to accept applications for new licenses effective immediately.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Ongoing vending operations have been suspended since March. City staff is continuing to receive inquiries from prospective vendors, and therefore, clarity from the City Council regarding vending would be helpful. **Staff continues to have concerns about the crowds that form at food vendors and the ability to maintain appropriate patron distancing and hygiene. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby continuing the suspension of Vending Licenses through June 30, 2021, except for those approved by the City Council as part of a special event.**