

powered by feet first



# feet first policy

taking a stance to advance walkability

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## Street Food Vendors

### Policy

#### where we stand

Advocacy is a major component of the work Feet First does. These policy papers, prepared by our Policy Committee, convey Feet First's position on key issues of interest to increase safe and easy ways for people to choose to go by foot.



### background

Street-food vendors add vibrancy to the walking streetscape. They are very popular throughout the world; about 2.5 billion people purchase food from street vendors every day. The City of Portland alone has over 600 food carts along their streets. The Seattle City Council recently changed their code to allow street-food vendors to offer a wider variety of fare. The previous version of the code limited sale to popcorn, hot dogs, and espresso.

### why it matters to walking

If done wrong, street-food vending can interfere with pedestrian accessibility, particularly for wheelchair users. Of particular concern are certain accoutrements that go along with food carts such as trash bins, coolers, and signage that might block sidewalks.

### Mission

#### who we are - what we do

Feet First promotes walkable communities and envisions people walking every day for their health, transportation, environment, community, and pleasure.



**feet first**  
promoting walkable communities



# Street Food Vendors

## feet first position

Feet First generally supports the council's recent changes to allow more street-food vendors. However, it is important to be mindful that street-food vending can interfere with walking accessibility, particularly for wheelchair users. Of particular concern are certain accoutrements that go along with food carts such as trash bins, coolers, and signage that might block sidewalks.

Chapter 4 of the Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual requires a minimum of six feet of unobstructed, linear sidewalk space that is free of street furniture, street trees, planters, and other vertical elements. A wider pedestrian passage may be required in some cases as consistent with the Land Use Code. These regulations must be vigorously enforced to ensure that free pedestrian passage is maintained.

Feet First also concurs with the Seattle Commission for People with Disabilities recommendation that food carts should be required to have a lowered counter or food window at least 36 inches wide, and 36 inches from the finish floor, thereby ensuring accessibility for wheelchair users.

## resources

### **Seattle Street-Food Vending Checklist:**

[http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/economicDevelopment/Street\\_Food\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/economicDevelopment/Street_Food_Checklist.pdf)

### **Seattle Department of Transportation Street Use Vending Permits:**

[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse\\_vend.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_vend.htm)

### **Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual:**

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual/manual/>

### **Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities:**

<http://www.seattle.gov/commission-for-people-with-disabilities>

Photo courtesy of Jeanine Anderson

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