

Street Vending

DISCUSSION WITH HOUSING, SAFETY & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
JUNE 2, 2025

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Recap of May 5, 2025 Committee Meeting

1. Policy referral
2. Existing street vending ordinances
3. Anecdotal community feedback
4. Benchmarking results
5. Committee discussion and feedback on policy

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Existing Street Vending Ordinances

Ordinances

- ▶ Street vending is governed by **Chapter VI** of the City's Code of Ordinances
 - Article XIII – Peddlers
 - Article X – Tryon Street Mall Vendors
- ▶ This Chapter (most recently updated in mid-1980s) governs geographic-related requirements, allowed hours of operation, and licensing, etc.
- ▶ Violations of these ordinances can result in varying levels of fines, ranging from \$10-\$50

Geographic Summary

- ▶ **City wide:** street vending is legal without a permit in all areas outside the Congested Business District
- ▶ **Congested Business District:** street vending is illegal, except for Tryon Street Mall Vendors
- ▶ **Tryon Street Mall:** street vending is legal, but requires a permit (program is administered by Charlotte Center City Partners); footprint is from Brooklyn Village Ave to Eighth Street and the "100 blocks" of East/West Trade Street

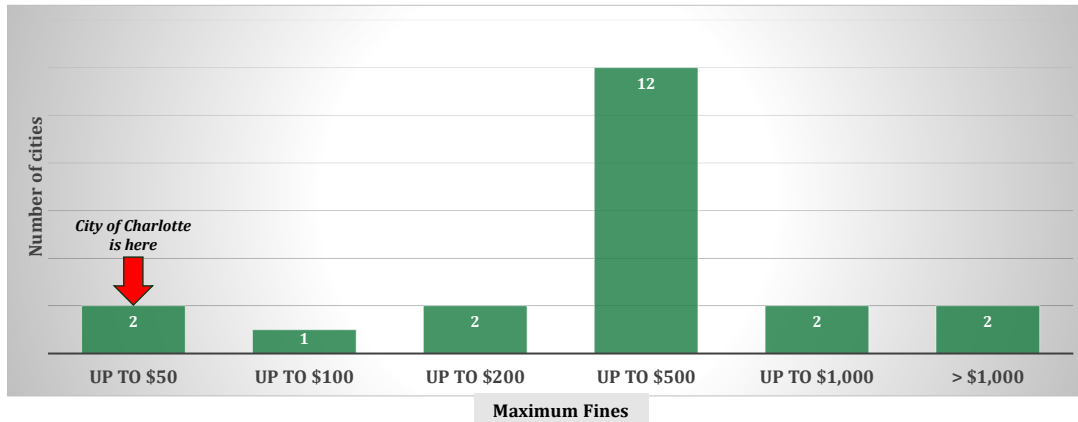
Congested Business District (CBD)



CBD Overview

- ▶ The CBD is established in the ordinance (Article XIII)
- ▶ The most recent expansion to the CBD was in 2016
- ▶ The ordinance grants the City Manager authority to amend the CBD (either expand or reduce)
- ▶ The ordinance does not establish criteria to inform CBD expansion/reduction decisions
- ▶ The Tryon Street Mall Vendor program is governed by a separate ordinance (Article X), enabling permitted vendors to legally operate in assigned locations

National Benchmarking of Maximum Fines



- ▶ 21 cities (including Charlotte) reflected in the chart above
- ▶ 19 cities have higher maximum fines than Charlotte, with \$500 being the most common maximum fine threshold for the benchmark group

Summary of May 22nd Public Input Session

Public Input Session Description

- ▶ 35 participants, including small businesses, residents, and street vendors (primarily from Uptown, South End, and NoDa)
- ▶ Two-hour session, with table discussions and report-outs

Key Observations

▶ Tryon Street Vendor Program

- Permitted vendors expressed concerns with illegal vending, including:
 - Lack of strong, consistent enforcement
 - Adverse business impacts and loss of family-friendly environment
 - Potential public health and safety issues

Frequent ordinance violations, with limited enforcement tools

▶ Congested Business District

- Specific areas – such as Spectrum Center – experience persistent illegal vending

▶ NoDa

- Brick-and-mortar small businesses expressed a range of concerns, including:
 - Personal safety
 - Adverse business impacts and loss of family-friendly environment
 - Sidewalk and street obstructions
 - Lack of oversight (e.g., health & sanitation concerns related to food and drink sales)
- Street vendors stated they attract people to the area and are part of NoDa's culture; also assert that many seek to successfully co-exist

Longstanding, deep-seated tensions between brick-and-mortar businesses and street vendors

Street Vendors: Policy Considerations

1. **Congested Business District (CBD) and Tyron Street Mall Vendor Program:** should higher fines be introduced to address illegal street vending occurring on Tryon Street or in the CBD?
2. **Areas where street vending is allowed:** are policy actions warranted in Noda, such as expansion of CBD in certain cases OR establishment of a small pilot program for a city-run street vending program?
3. **Local support for street vending community:** what ideas does the community have to support on private property?

Policy Referral: Next Steps

- ▶ Share policy recommendations with HSC Committee
- ▶ HSC Committee action/vote
- ▶ City Council Action Review
- ▶ Request for Council Action (Policy Item)
- ▶ Implementation