

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours and 15 minutes

3 Questions

Question 1

Suggested reading and writing time—55 minutes

It is suggested that you spend 15 minutes reading the question, analyzing and evaluating the sources, and 40 minutes writing your response.

Note: You may begin writing your response before the reading period is over.

(This question counts as one-third of the total essay section score.)

Mobile food service establishments, such as food trucks and food carts, have become increasingly trendy in recent years, offering customers appealing and often innovative dining options out of vehicles that can easily be located near workplaces and leisure activities. These businesses have sometimes been held back from expanding because of local regulations that restrict their activities and require operators to obtain licenses and certifications. Proponents of these regulations say that laws are needed to ensure that the meals offered by mobile food services are safe and that these businesses do not have an unfair advantage over traditional restaurants.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source. Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on what are the most important factors for cities to consider when regulating mobile food service establishments.

- Source A (Baker article)
- Source B (New Orleans permit guide)
- Source C (U.S. Census Bureau graph)
- Source D (Meehan article)
- Source E (Neseman cartoon)
- Source F (Weber book)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Source A

Baker, Linda. “Food Trucks ‘Are No Longer a Novelty,’ but They Are Adapting.”
New York Times, 5 Feb. 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/02/05/business/food-truck-expansion-entrepreneurship.html.

The following is excerpted from a newspaper article about the food truck industry.

Enticing hungry customers and luring celebrity backers, food trucks have been quickly expanding nationwide for the last decade. But in pioneering cities like Austin, Tex., and Portland, Ore., the industry is feeling growing pains as fickle customers move on and regulators clamp down.

So entrepreneurs are finding new locations to park their mobile restaurants.

Last October, a development team created a new dining concept in an up-and-coming neighborhood of Charleston, S.C. Called the Container Bar, it features a bar constructed from a shipping container with space for four food trucks that rotate daily.

“Charleston has a reputation of being a culinary mecca, but it is unique in that there are no spaces for food trucks to congregate,” said Brad Creger, one of three Container Bar owners. The others are Mike Veeck, president of the Charleston RiverDogs, a minor league baseball team, and the actor Bill Murray.

“One need go no further than Austin or Portland to see how food trucks have evolved into the culinary culture,” Mr. Creger said. “Charleston is a little behind in that regard, but we’re catching up very quickly.”

Portland may be the aspirational model for many cities in the early stages of building a food cart¹ scene. But being a pioneer has its own challenges. A surge in new construction over the past couple of years has forced the closing of several food cart pods on former parking lots. Concern about the closings came to a head last fall with the news that the city’s flagship food cart venue, the Alder Street pod, would be shuttered this summer to make way for the city’s first five-star hotel.

“One hundred and thirty food carts are under threat to vanish,” said Daniel Huerta, owner of the Portland food truck Churros Locos. “We are losing the culinary fabric that Portland is.”

Street food vendors have been in big cities for decades. But a newer breed of entrepreneurs surfaced around 10 years ago as a scrappy response to the recession — it is far easier to secure start-up capital for a cart than a restaurant. Since then, it has morphed into a nationwide urban development and culinary business phenomenon. Revenue from food carts reached \$2.7 billion in 2017, according to a U.S. Chamber of Commerce study.

But as the industry matures, challenges are emerging. In some areas, owners are building mini empires, adding second or third trucks as well as brick-and-mortar restaurants. But elsewhere, regulatory and market pressures are creating a tough operating environment for vendors. Oversaturation and changing culinary tastes are also concerns.

¹ Food trucks and food carts are subject to similar regulations; in this article, they are referred to interchangeably.

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Source B

“Mobile Food Truck Permit and License.” *City of New Orleans One Stop Permits & Licenses*, City of New Orleans, n.d., nola.gov/nola/media/One-Stop-Shop/Revenue/Food-Truck-Permit-Guide.pdf.

The following is excerpted from an informational guide published on the City of New Orleans website.

FACTS AND REGULATIONS FOR PERMITTED MOBILE FOOD TRUCKS

- **Food Truck permits and licenses expire on December 31st** and renewals are required by January 31.
- **As of January 1, 2014**, there is a **limit of 100 mobile Food Truck Permits per calendar year**. No permit shall be issued until the City receives and approves a completed application.
- There is **no proximity restriction from restaurants** for food trucks.
- Licenses and permits must be displayed and affixed to the front windshield in the lower corner on the passenger side.
- Vendors must obey all applicable parking, traffic and vehicle safety laws, regulations, and restrictions. **This includes the feeding of parking meters.**
- Trucks **can remain in one location no longer than 4 hours.**
- Trucks may only sell food; no other goods, wares, or other items may be sold.
- **Mobile food trucks may not operate:**
 - Within 20 feet of any intersection;
 - Within 20 feet of any stop sign, flashing beacon, yield sign, or other traffic control signal located on the side of a roadway;
 - Within 3 feet of any public or private driveway, wheelchair ramp or bicycle ramp;
 - In any manner that impedes an exit or entrance of an operating building.
- **No vendor may sell alcoholic beverages**, controlled substances, or any other illegal item.
- **No furniture**, or any other objects can be placed in the street, sidewalk, or any right-of-way, except a trash receptacle.
- **All vendors must provide a trash receptacle** within three feet of the front or back of the truck on a public street.
- **All vendors must keep a 50 foot radius around the truck clean** during operation and upon ceasing operation.

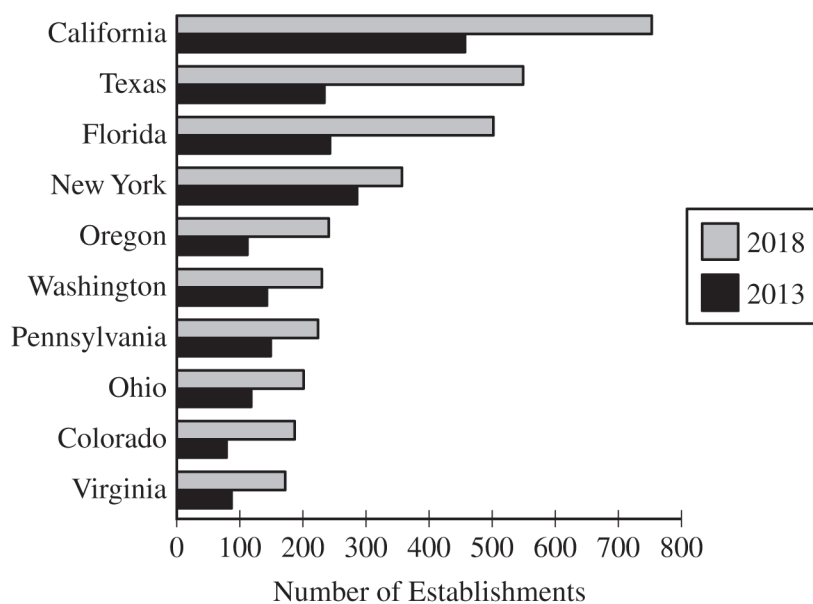
- **No horns, amplification systems, or other sound-producing devices or music systems** which can be heard outside of the truck may be used.
- **No third party advertising** may be displayed on any mobile food truck.

Source C

Hait, Andrew W. “Fast-Growing Food Truck Industry Can Operate Amid COVID-19 Social Distancing Rules, No Indoor Seating Orders.” *United States Census Bureau*, 2 Sept. 2020, www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/09/food-trucks-one-way-to-eat-out-during-pandemic.html.

The following is adapted from a graph published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Number of Mobile Food Services Establishments



Source D

Meehan, Sarah. “Challenges to Food-Truck Restrictions Cropping Up beyond Baltimore.”
Baltimore Sun, 26 May 2016, www.baltimoresun.com/food-drink/bs-fo-food-truck-300-foot-rule-20160526-story.html.

The following is excerpted from a newspaper article about food truck regulation in Baltimore.

The turf battle brewing in Baltimore involving the city’s food trucks is one that is playing out across the country as mobile vendors fight to park where they want, when they want.

Food truck owners Nikki McGowan and Joey Vanoni teamed up this month with a national legal advocacy group to sue the city of Baltimore, contending that a rule that prohibits mobile vendors from operating within 300 feet of businesses that sell similar products is an unconstitutional, protectionist measure.

Parking restrictions on food trucks have affected entrepreneurs as close as Baltimore County and as far away as San Antonio, where a law similar to Baltimore’s buffer rule was repealed last year after a challenge from the same group at work in the Baltimore case, the Institute for Justice. Closer to home, Baltimore County doesn’t allow food trucks to park within 200 feet of restaurants. And the Annapolis city council is considering a bill that would expand the areas where food trucks can park but prohibit them from setting up within 100 feet of an established restaurant.

“From a national level, you’re seeing a major amount of push-back toward inefficient and inconsistent issues that are holding back this industry from growing as fast as it could,” said Andrew Alvarez, an industry analyst with the international market research firm IBISWorld.

Baltimore’s buffer law was enacted as part of a swath of measures to regulate the burgeoning local food truck industry. And some restaurant owners support the rule that prohibits food trucks from pulling up in front of their businesses. Brian McComas, president of the Federal Hill Hospitality Association and owner of Ryleigh’s Oyster, said it’s not about the competition.

“I actually support food trucks from the perspective of the culinary experience and the food scene of Baltimore City,” he said.

Rather, he said, it comes down to the commitment that brick-and-mortar restaurants make to the neighborhoods in which they are rooted, and the price they pay to do business there.

“I don’t see anything constitutional about parking your food truck or mobile restaurant within those distances of restaurants that are there 365 days a year, paying taxes, utilities, et cetera,” he said. “We’ve decided to be there every day of the year. We pay taxes, and unless they can tell us otherwise how that would work, why would we even want them taking a parking space?”

That’s especially true in areas like Federal Hill, where bars and restaurants are concentrated and parking comes at a premium.

Matt Geller, founder of the National Food Truck Association, said much of the controversy surrounding food truck regulation stems from the fact that the industry is relatively young. The U.S. food truck industry is worth \$857 million, according to a September 2015 report by IBISWorld, with annual growth of 9.3 percent.

“This is such a new industry, so people have these weird things they believe to be fair or unfair,” said Geller, who is also CEO of the Southern California Mobile Food Vendors Association. “People don’t know how to regulate it yet.”

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Source E

Neseman, Dale. "Full Service." *Advertiser-News South*, Strauss News, 3 Feb. 2020,
www.advertisernewssouth.com/opinion/cartoons/cartoon-full-service-LK840836.

The following is an editorial cartoon that appeared in an online local newspaper.



"Full Service" by Dale Neseman, from *Advertiser-News South*. © 2020, Strauss News. Used by permission.

Source F

Weber, David. *The Food Truck Handbook: Start, Grow, and Succeed in the Mobile Food Business*. Wiley, 2012.

The following is excerpted from a book on how to start a food truck business.

The Future of Food Trucks

Food trucks are far from hitting their peak. The market is still developing, and there are many opportunities for new operators who want to open trucks to sell food that they are passionate about. Technomic, a food industry consulting firm, reported in July 2011 that 91 percent of customers polled believe that food trucks are not a passing fad, but rather a trend with “staying power.” Growth in food trucks is driven by two major forces: the growth of a mobile food culture in new municipalities across the United States and the improved access to food that the trucks offer in these markets as well as established markets. Customers appreciate the value and quality of mobile food and will continue to embrace the industry so long as operators deliver clean, tasty, and interesting products at a fair price.

Food trucks are great for cities. They get customers out on the street and create a sense of community. As local municipalities learn the value of what food trucks have to offer in terms of tax revenues, job growth, tourism, activating public space, and fostering entrepreneurship, local regulations will improve. One of the most compelling aspects of food trucks is their ability to act as an incubator for entrepreneurs to start a viable, cash flow–positive business that they can grow into a brick-and-mortar establishment to become a more stable part of the community.

In addition to opportunities for food truck entrepreneurs, there is also a wide variety of opportunities in supporting industries that will develop as the food truck market matures. Food truck operators are looking for better trucks, more eco-friendly power supplies, quieter generators, small-run food manufacturers, more customizable insurance resources, more robust financing tools, marketing partners, and information technology resources.

It is an exciting time for mobile food in America. The industry is big and growing fast. I look forward to seeing what you will bring to the streets.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.