

To: City of Bandon
From: Mary Giddens
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I am very much in favor of allowing food carts or a food cart pod in Bandon. My reasons:

For tourists: Bandon is supported by tourism and we simply need more restaurants and more choices for the number of tourists we are getting. On any given day, some of our restaurants are closed for any number of reasons. In summer there are often long lines in Old Town for the restaurants clustered there. Wait times of 1 1/2 hours when one has a hungry child are simply not acceptable. Tourists and tourist dollars are lost when they have to drive to Coos Bay to find something to eat. They will think about not staying here or not coming back.

Food carts can be seasonal - here when the tourist trade is heavy and gone when things are less busy. It would appear that having a successful year-round restaurant in Bandon is not easy. Instead of thinking about it as competition for our restaurants, think of it as taking up the slack during busy times so that tourists are happy and keep coming back. Again, keeping the tourist and tourist dollars in Bandon. In a way, it isn't really 'fair' or good business practice to try to 'protect' our handful of local restaurants in this way. Food carts address a need that local restaurants are not meeting.

Food cart eating is informal and flexible. Eating outside with kids, especially overly hungry kids, is often a better choice than trying to eat in a restaurant. A food cart pod with picnic tables and restrooms can be an attractive alternative for parents.

For local residents: Bandon is growing, as you have made very clear. More building permits issued, more new construction. Again, we simply need more restaurants and more restaurant choices in Bandon. Many locals residents cannot afford to eat out in Bandon where dinners run \$25 to \$40+ and a burger might be \$20. And the local residents are not going to wait 1 1/2 hours to get dinner. As Bandon is anti "fast food" and since there is nevertheless a need for same, a cart might be an alternative to get a quick and hopefully reasonably priced meal.

Food carts are a great business model that allows aspiring restauranteurs a way to start without huge start-up costs. A food cart might be a stepping stone to a new bricks and mortar restaurant. (Those empty holes on 2nd Street do need to be filled.)

Ethnic and cultural diversity: Wouldn't we love to be able to have Thai, or Japanese, or Vietnamese food without driving to Coos Bay or further. Food cart pods allow choice in a fun and easy way. A pod with picnic tables allows everyone in a group to choose something different and yet eat together. It allows eating in courses - maybe starting at one cart with one and moving on to another.

Expanding the "business district". Carts are colorful and fun and attract people. A food cart pod, located within easy walking distance of 1st Street but not on 1st Street would spread out the parking, encourage people to walk and see more of the little shops and hidden delights that Bandon offers.

Having said that, however, wouldn't the Port's big blue building be a perfect place for a semi-permanent pod? A few food choices, a few picnic tables, out of the wind and with restrooms available. This has been a successful model in places with 'weather'.

Yes, there will be things that need to be addressed. Obviously, carts will have to be licensed and pay fees. Trash and sanitation will need to be dealt with, but as your own survey showed food carts are popular and they are popular for a reason. They have been successful in countless places because they fulfill a need. Having visited Bandon for many, many years and having lived here on and off since 2001, I have always referred to Bandon as the "city that says 'no'". I hope you will say 'yes' to this.