

# Trucks: 'No one wants to take away business from anyone else'

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Cannon Beach and Seaside share similar fears that the small towns have restaurant markets that are already spread too thin, with 44 food establishments in Cannon Beach and 75 in Seaside.

"I would suggest to this body that the restaurant pool in the city is stretched pretty far," Doug Wiese, of Dooger's Seafood, said at a July work session. "Every person that stops in there and eats is one more meal that does not get taken sitting down in one of our restaurants."

The relationship between food trucks and brick-and-mortar restaurants doesn't have to be adversarial, said David Reid, the executive director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce.

"I think the food trucks came in and filled a void that existed: the quick lunch meal," Reid said. "Initially, it didn't feel like it was taking from competitors — it was filling an additional need."

Seaside City Councilor Seth Morrissey feels this pat-



Alec Evans chops vegetables in her food truck in Astoria prior to opening for business in August. She has since moved her operation out of state.

Colin Murphy/The Daily Astorian

tern could be the case in Seaside, too. Morrissey plans to introduce a new ordinance that would allow food carts to operate only on private property and require owners to connect to city water,

power and sanitary systems, as well as require permanent restrooms.

Requiring food cart pods to provide infrastructure is a way to make sure the owners are invested in the commu-

nity, in contrast to temporary carts looking to just profit during the summer, he said.

Morrissey recognizes the concerns about competition, but sees food cart pods benefiting residents, who often

can't find a spot at a restaurant in the summer anyway. Because most are owner-operated, he feels food carts wouldn't exacerbate the region's employee shortage.

"Competition is a good thing. It provides better, diverse options," Morrissey said. "I don't see the pie as limited."

## 'We're not Portland'

Morrissey's plan has been met with mixed reviews by the City Council, but for the most part, he feels the community is supportive. The pushback is more intense among the older generation of restaurant owners, who started their businesses within a different economic and cultural context.

"Investments are huge for brick and mortar," Morrissey said. "Food carts have low barrier to entry. It gives local people a chance to try an offering and see if it's right," he said. "The younger generation is looking to do our own thing."

In Cannon Beach, there is some consensus that food carts could be allowed for special events or circumstances with the right permits and standards. For

many business owners, though, the core of the issue comes down to image.

"We're not Portland," said Shelley Crane, owner of The Oil & Vinegar Bar. "We never want to be Portland."

During a Tuesday work session on the topic, the Cannon Beach City Council decided to look into clarifying language in their event ordinances that could permit food trucks, but appeared to steer clear of considering food trucks for regular operation.

"I don't know that it's worth it since only a small number want to see it happen," City Councilor George Vetter said.

But for Selberg, the food truck discussion should center more around Cannon Beach's future business owners.

"No one wants to take away business from anyone else. But this makes opening a business more accessible for young people. Maybe it will encourage younger families to come and stay in Cannon Beach," Selberg said. "There is a way to make this all work. I encourage everyone to be open-minded."

# County: Project could provide 76 local jobs with an average wage of \$75,000

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"We knew going into it that developing that site was going to be really difficult," Clatsop County Manager Cameron Moore said. "If people haven't developed a large piece of property —

particularly one that's got wetland, which is the worst thing you ever want to find on a piece of property other than, like, toxic waste or something — it just slows things down dramatically."

Located at the corner of Ensign Lane and 19th

Street, the project could provide 76 local jobs with an average wage of \$75,000.

After initially struggling for years to find buyers for the 162 acres in the business park other than Fort George Brew-

ery, the county has agreed to sell nearly 140 acres this year. Updating the business park's master plan will be another hurdle for development of the data center.

"If we had the ability to move forward with the update to the North Coast

Business Park master plan immediately, I would feel very confident about that," Cox said. "You know, I didn't get to have that conversation tonight, but we're going to be continuing that conversation."

After initially paying

\$25,000 in escrow, Cox gave the county an additional \$10,000 last week.

"I think, you know, Mark's confident, and if Mark's confident, I feel comfortable, you know, that he'll get to that point," Moore said.

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