

November 13, 2012

My name is Uyen Nguyen and my husband is Andy Nguyen. We own a local Vietnamese food truck. We actually own two trucks. One operates in VA and the other in DC. We're considering bringing our second truck into the city to expand our presence in the city. We started selling in DC in September and soon after updated our prices to reflect the 10% sales tax. We're happy to do our part as a small business and contribute back to the local Government.

Unfortunately, a few weeks after operating in DC we were informed of the new proposed regulations for Food Trucks. As a small business owner, we're extremely nervous knowing that the way of doing business as we have been accustomed with is going to change drastically. We're supplying a demand for more diverse lunch options for people in the city who do not have long for lunch. According to our customers we have given them a chance to sample Vietnamese cuisine for the first time.

The proposed regulations restricting us from selling on streets where there is 10ft of unobstructed sidewalk space from the planter box will eliminate the majority of areas we have developed our business. We're aware the city would like to establish MRV locations in these popular lunch spots. However, the proposed regulation did not guarantee a certain amount of spots and we anticipate more MRV permit holders than there are MRV locations.

As a small business with very little operation capital, we're hesitant to buy a permit for a spot that may not be available. If we have a permit and are unable to find a MRV location, we would have to pay to park in another spot for the day. This would make us pay twice and just double the price to operate for the day. It would be ok, if this was a rare occasion, but the fee would add up. We cannot afford to purchase something that will not ensure a spot to do business.

Our future plans are to grow business in the District well enough and have an established base so we can open a brick and mortar restaurant in the District. Our food truck is providing us the opportunity to reach a population of people we would otherwise be unable to do. We plan on taking the income generated by the business and re-investing it back into the District and our business by expanding to a brick and mortar restaurant. The economy isn't strong enough where lenders are looking to invest in un-established small businesses. The money we need to open a restaurant will solely come from income the business can generate on its own.

Please allow us the chance to see what we can accomplish as a business.

Thank you.

Uyen and Andy Nguyen
Lemongrass Truck