

Amendments to Definitions for Restaurants & Food Delivery Service

Zoning Committee Meeting
October 13, 2026

Jill Hunger, AICP, CPHD



Background

Restaurants

- On June 10, 2023, as part of the [Commercial Market Resiliency Initiative \(CMRI\)](#), the County Board approved amendments to the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO) that simplified and consolidated restaurant-related use standards and definitions.
- These amendments consolidated multiple restaurant classifications into a single restaurant definition.

Food delivery service

- Eliminated the use permit requirement for food delivery services and established food delivery as an accessory use to food establishments.
- The food delivery service definition was updated and reflected the expansive means of transportation used to deliver food.



Proposed changes | restaurant

Restaurant

- Simplify the definition and remove unnecessary limitations on restaurant operations and service ware.

Restaurant. An establishment whose principal business is the preparation and sale of food and/or beverages ~~using non-disposable plates, containers and non-disposable eating utensils~~, to customers in a ready-to-consume state, ~~and whose principal method of operation includes one or both of the following characteristics:~~

- ~~(1) Customers, normally provided with an individual menu, are served their foods and beverages by a restaurant employee at the same table or counter at which food and beverages are consumed; and/or~~
- ~~(2) A cafeteria-type operation where food and beverages generally are provided at a counter consumed at a table within the restaurant building.~~



Proposed changes | food delivery service

Food delivery service

- Replace the list of transportation modes with the phrase “a variety of modes of transportation” to provide flexibility and accommodate evolving delivery technologies.

Food delivery service. A service provided by a food establishment, as specified in §12.2.5.B, that delivers orders of prepared food and beverages to off-site locations for customers via **a variety of modes of transportation** ~~automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device, electric power-assisted bicycle, motorized skateboard or scooter, moped.~~



Engagement & schedule

Date	Action
May 19, 2026	County Board Initiating Resolution for Definition of “Restaurant”
September 19, 2026	County Board Initiating Resolution for Definition of “Food Delivery Service”
October 5 – 9, 2026	Email distribution to interested parties (BIDs, Partnerships, Chamber, etc.)
October 13, 2026	ZOCO Meeting
October 14, 2026	CREDA Meeting
October 17, 2026	County Board Request to Advertise
December 1, 2026	Planning Commission final consideration
December 12, 2026	County Board final consideration



Questions?

