

## **Request for Proposals Café Operation at the Main Library**



**Release Date: 09/01/25**

**Notice of Intent Date: 09/15/25**

**Due Date: 10/03/25**

The Dayton Metro Library (DML) seeks proposals from experienced vendors to operate a coffee café at the Main Library, located at 215 E. Third Street in Downtown Dayton. The Library is looking for a vendor to provide high quality, freshly made coffee products, bottled beverages, light meals and snacks for Library patrons and staff. Dayton Metro Library will give the serious consideration to vendors who demonstrate the strongest capability and alignment with DML values. Dayton Metro Library is an equal opportunity organization and will not allow discrimination based upon age, ethnicity, ancestry, gender, national origin, disability, race, size, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or any other status prohibited by applicable law.

### **Overview**

The new Main Library was reconstructed and expanded to become a downtown destination and community gathering place. Based on current head count of patrons entering our doors, DML expects roughly 1,000 visitors per day. Hours of operation:

Monday: 10 AM to 7 PM

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday: 9:30 AM to 6 PM

Thursday: 11 AM to 8:00 PM

Sunday hours, starting in September: 1 PM to 5 PM

DML is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve. In the event DML opens on Sundays, it would be closed on Sundays preceding a holiday and on Easter. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the library will be closed the following Monday. The Main Library will also be closed on Staff Day, which varies from year to year.

The café is located in an approximate 366 square foot area in an optimal, highly visible location directly off the primary (front) entrance near the corner of Third Street and Patterson Boulevard. The space is visible from Third Street and has an entry off the front door vestibule, enabling the café to operate independently of Library hours.

The café has been designed to meet Health Department standards for serving beverages (excluding alcohol), baked goods, and pre-cooked/package foods that can be warmed by microwave, crockpot, and/or ventless oven (such as Turbochef).

DML has installed: a service counter and cabinetry; prep counter; single, double and triple sinks as required by code; disposal; and grease trap. Customer tables and chairs will also be provided, and café sold products can be consumed throughout the library.

The vendor must provide all equipment including refrigeration. There is a storage area of approximately 100 square feet adjacent to the café dedicated for use by the vendor. Staffing and pricing are solely the responsibility of the vendor, but will be considered during the selection process.

### **Minimum Requirements**

In order to be considered for the contract described in this Request for Proposals (RFP) the person or group making the proposal shall have two or more years of continuous experience in ownership, management or operation of a specialty coffee facility (café, coffee shop, or cart), restaurant, or other equivalent food service experience and demonstrate financial ability to sustain the business.

### **Scope of Service**

The actual terms of the contract entered into shall be negotiated between the Dayton Metro Library Board of Trustees and the vendor whose proposal is selected. However, the provisions that follow are to be incorporated into any contract.

The scope of the required services consists of operating a specialty coffee café located in a Dayton Metro Library facility. Specific hours of operation are negotiable depending on the needs of the Library and when it is cost-effective for the establishment to operate.

The vendor whose proposal is accepted will be expected to provide all necessary café equipment and supplies, agree to indemnify and defend any and all claims arising out of the concessionaire's activity within the Library, have knowledge of and comply with all health regulations and will be responsible for obtaining any permits and/or licenses necessary for operation of the café. The contract will also contain a term that the DML is not responsible for damage, loss or theft of property belonging to the concessionaire.

The applicant's proposal must include a proposed contract term in increments of one year with or without options for renewal; the contract term will be a consideration when making the selection.

The concessionaire will be expected to have public liability insurance and provide proof thereof to the DML prior to the start of any operations. It is anticipated that the concessionaire will be

responsible for obtaining a liability policy with a minimum of \$1,000,000 coverage. If employees are hired, proof of workers compensation insurance will also be required.

The café is an important visual element of the overall design and appearance of the new Library. All equipment, furnishings, signage, and menu boards must blend with the decor and are subject to Library approval. The café will adhere to all DML policies and will promote DML projects and programs as appropriate. Architects drawing of the cafe' space are included with this RFP. Other blueprint drawings, including lighting, electrical and tech systems, are available upon request.

The concessionaire will be responsible for keeping the café neat, clean and in good repair. The concessionaire will also be responsible for regularly bussing the area and immediately cleaning up spills or messes and for deep cleaning as needed.

The concessionaire is responsible for ensuring that trash receptacles do not become overfilled during public hours and for emptying trash nightly. The concessionaire will not leave boxes, cartons, barrels or other similar items view of public areas.

Deliveries will be carried or hand-trucked into the café area at times that will minimize disruption to Library patrons. DML will not accept café deliveries or assume responsibility for any products left in the Library delivery area.

The concessionaire is expected to:

- Comply with any and all applicable laws, codes and regulations relating to food service operation.
- Maintain a high standard of cleanliness in the café.
- Maintain a standard of personal grooming expected in a professional business environment.
- Adhere to all Library security procedures.

The vendor and the Dayton Metro Library will enter into a lease agreement that will address but is not limited to the following items:

- Terms of lease, including \$400 monthly rent
- Library regulations and standards regarding operations

## **Proposal Requirements**

In responding to the Request for Proposal, please address the following:

1. Indicate why you wish to operate a coffee café at the Main Library.
2. Describe how you will operate and manage the café. Please be specific.
3. Describe your experience with operating a café, restaurant, or similar business.
4. How do your financial assets allow you to undertake this project? Provide the following:
  - a. Financial Plan indicating the source of funding to be used for working capital.

- b. Balance sheet and income statements for the past two fiscal years prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), reflecting current financial condition.
  - c. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three credit references, including at least one banking reference.
- 5. Describe your retail concept along with the pricing strategy and suggested hours of operation. Include a sample menu with prices.
- 6. Describe the equipment you will be supplying.
- 7. Describe how you will promote and publicize the café.
- 8. Specify the proposed length of the contract and include a Business Plan that covers the years of operation.
- 9. Please note if your business is minority or women owned. Please also note if your business has a Montgomery County business address.

### **Selection Process**

The proposals will be reviewed by a committee made up of Dayton Metro Library staff and may include a community/industry advisor(s). The committee, after reviewing the proposals, will make a recommendation to the full Library Board, who will then either approve or deny the recommendation.

If a proposal is approved, the DML will provide prompt written notice to the chosen applicant of its selection by the Library Board. The chosen applicant and the Library will negotiate an agreement to be drafted by the Library's attorney for the parties' review and signature.

If the negotiations between applicant and the DML are unsuccessful and/or if no agreement is reached within forty-five (45) days of the written notice provided to the chosen applicant of its selection by the Library Board, the committee may at its option select another proposal for recommendation to the full Library Board, and the Library Board may approve or deny the recommendation.

Evaluation criteria will be based on the applicant's experience in food service generally and coffee shops specifically, as well as the past performance and qualifications of any site manager/supervisor, if different than the concessionaire. Additional criteria will include scope of operation (single or multi site), financial viability, concept, menu, and the contract term.

Dayton Metro Library reserves the right to reject all proposals, to award the concession agreement to the proposal that is in the best interests of the Library as determined by the Library Board, and to negotiate with any person submitting a proposal.

**Submission Process**

If you intend to participate in the RFP process, please let us know by **September 15, 2025**. The actual RFP proposals may be submitted in hard copy or digital format, but must be received no later than **October 3, 2025 at 5 PM**. Letters of intent and RFP Proposals should be addressed to:

Rachel A. Gut  
Deputy Executive Director  
Dayton Metro Library  
215 E. Third Street  
Dayton, Ohio 45402

If you have any questions, please call Rachel Gut at (937) 496-8858.