

# THE CENTER

THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL &  
TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER



## Request for Proposals

### The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center Lobby Operating Space

Issue Date: March 10, 2025

**THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL &  
TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER**  
208 W 13 ST NEW YORK, NY 10011

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F. 212.924.2657  
gaycenter.org

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## Introduction and Background

- A. **The Organization.** Founded in 1983, The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center provides a place to connect and engage, find camaraderie and support, and celebrate the vibrancy and growth of the LGBTQ community. As a community center we host events and meetings for the LGBTQ community while also offering a broad range of services, including health and wellness, outpatient substance use treatment, HIV testing, treatment, and prevention, youth services, arts and cultural events, information and referral services, and more. In addition, The Center is home to an archive of LGBTQ history, with media dating back to as early as the 1920s. As we look toward the future The Center is prioritizing racial equity in our work, and is actively looking at our mission, services and programs, staff, and organizational culture, for opportunities to respond to the long-term, pervasive effects of racism. Additional information is available at [www.gaycenter.org/about](http://www.gaycenter.org/about). **The Center is open seven days a week, 8am to 10pm Mondays through Saturdays, and 8am - 8pm on Sundays.**
- B. **Visitor traffic.** In 2024, over 200,000 people walked through our doors and we hosted over 8,000 unique events. The Center has 10 rooms and 2 auditoriums available to rent, with more than 150 recurring groups calling The Center home, and an additional 300 one-time events hosted last year. Visitor traffic is not evenly distributed, with evenings and weekends being the busiest, in addition to a variety of large-scale one-time events.
- C. **The Setting.** The Center is located at 208 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street in the West Village neighborhood of Manhattan. The space is centrally located in the 1st-floor main lobby, adjacent to an outdoor garden seating area.

## Project Facts

This project fact sheet is intended to give respondents the information necessary to draft a meaningful response. It should influence how a business plan proposal is written and how the space is projected to operate, both functionally and financially.

## The Operating Space

- A. **Background and Vision.** Since our renovation in 2015, the space has operated as a café in partnership with locally-owned coffee brands. With the new vacancy, The Center is excited to explore new possible uses of this space. This could be a new vending opportunity or other service to support our community. The Center's desire is to maintain a space that fosters a sense of community, informal gathering, and social engagement. The operation should be aligned with The Center's mission and contribute to a welcoming environment, reflecting the diverse community we serve.
- B. **Physical Space and Existing Conditions.** See the *Plan Exhibits and Fixtures/Appliances* attachment.

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- C. **Furniture and Equipment.** The Center will provide basic existing furniture (tables, seating) and limited appliances to use, as outlined within the attached *Plan Exhibits and Fixtures/Appliances*. The operator will be responsible for additional equipment acquisition (through purchase or lease arrangements, etc.) as well as the coordination and payment for all maintenance and repairs needed for the duration of the contract.
- D. **Hours and Days of Operation.** The hours of operation are negotiable, but it is expected that they will cover a significant portion of the hours that the Center is open to the public, which are 8am to 10pm, Monday through Saturday and 8am - 8pm on Sundays.
- E. **Clientele.** Clientele will include Center employees, clients, visitors, tourists, neighbors, local residents, and attendees of meetings, programs, and special events.
- F. **Security Policies.** The Center's Information & Referral (I&R) and Community Safety employees are responsible for ensuring a safe and welcoming atmosphere in the Center facility. At all times, security-related concerns and issues throughout the space will be addressed by Center I&R and Community Safety employees.
- G. **Deliveries/Loading.** All deliveries will be made via The Center's main entrance. Before all deliveries, the Center will require the operator to provide a complete list of vendors, names and items to be delivered, and an estimated arrival time. No parking is permitted at the Center's garden gate. Deliveries must be made within The Center's hours of operation.
- H. **Storage.** The size of allotted storage space will be in proportion to the operator's needs. For food vendors, limited dry storage will be made available to the operator apart from the space itself.
- I. **For Food Vendors.**
  - a. **Permit and License Requirements.** The operator will be responsible for compliance with all federal, state, and local food safety laws and regulations, including inspections, permits, fees, and fines.
  - b. **Menu and Prices.** The Center desires a menu of high-quality, assorted beverages, with a limited selection of foods that require only warming, cooling, and finishing (pastries, sandwiches, etc.). The pricing of items is expected to be reasonable and competitive in relation to the setting. The Center desires a high-quality operation, especially concerning cleanliness, freshness, food preparation, staff appearance and behavior, prompt service, and overall café appearance.
  - c. **Additional Catering Opportunities.** The Center provides space for rent by the public to host events such as community forums, weddings, receptions, and parties. If appropriate, the café operator will be suggested as a potential caterer for such events, representing an additional opportunity to increase revenue. Though the operator will not have exclusive rights to catering services at the Center, the referral process and on-site location will provide a competitive edge.

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- d. **Pest Control.** If providing food service, the operator will be responsible for pest control management in the area; coordination with the Center's existing pest control vendor will be required.

## **Branding, Signage & Promotion**

- A. **Brand.** The operator's brand and name will be independent of the Center and provided by the operator.
- B. **Signage.** Limited exterior (façade) signage may be permitted in existing vitrine displays on a periodic basis. Exterior sidewalk sandwich board signage may be permitted upon review and approval from The Center. The Center will work with the operator to produce interior promotional and branding elements that are consistent with the Center's physical space and brand.
- C. **Center Website.** The operator will have a dedicated page on the Center's website to include menus, photos, hours of operations, etc., as relevant. This page will be maintained by the Center's Communications & Marketing team with direction from the operator.

## **Financial Arrangements**

The Center anticipates an initial two-year agreement with the operator selected. Under an anticipated operating agreement, the Center will be responsible for HVAC, security, and general building maintenance. The operator will be responsible for staffing the operation, all supplies, and maintaining and cleaning the operating space (including contracted pest control).

Bidders are expected to submit a reasonably detailed business plan with financial projections so The Center can be confident in the financial viability of the proposal. Financial projections should include a fair and reasonable monthly rent based on the appraised value of the operation in accordance with the guidelines set forth above. Keep in mind that the Center's goal is to ensure the operation is successful and that it enhances the experience of all Center visitors and constituents. To that end, the Center is prepared to negotiate an economically feasible agreement for both the operator and the Center to ensure the operation's success.

The Center is interested in an operator who will offer a 10% discount to employees of The Center, as relevant. We also are interested in an operator who is willing to prioritize hiring staff from The Center community. We would be open to exploring a training program in partnership with our programming.

*For Food Vendors: A catering business plan and/or catering service financial projection is not required, but if included, it should be outlined separately and apart from café plans and projections.*

## **The Proposal: Timeline and Required Submission Materials**

On-site building walk-through and Q&A appointments can be scheduled by contacting Michael Greehan, Director of Visitor Services, at [mgreehan@gaycenter.org](mailto:mgreehan@gaycenter.org). Specific requests for additional information may be submitted in writing to Michael. Please note that telephone inquiries are not permitted.

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Please submit proposals to Michael Greehan, Director of Visitor Services, at [mgreehan@gaycenter.org](mailto:mgreehan@gaycenter.org).  
**The deadline for submission is Monday, April 14, 2025.**

Submissions should include:

## A. Background and Qualifications

- General background of your company, ownership structure, and legal name.
- Copies of your core team members' resumes or CVs.
- Describe prior experience operating similar spaces.
- Provide name and address of prior and/or existing operations.
- Provide 3 business references.
- If requested, you may be asked to provide financial information about your company. The information is not required with the proposal, but may be requested if your company is selected to negotiate with the Center.

## B. Proposed Operations

- Describe the proposed concept for the vendor.
- Proposed days and hours of operation **or** describe what process you would follow to determine hours of operation.
- Describe management and staffing structure.
- Describe equipment acquisition (purchase, transfer, lease, etc.).
- If serving food/beverages, provide a draft menu and pricing structure for beverages and food.
- Confirm you will accommodate the requested employee 10% discount described above, if applicable.
- Describe your audience and how your operations will serve The Center's community.

## C. Branding and Promotion

- Provide the operation's name and describe the proposed brand identity.
- Describe the promotional activities you will undertake to drive traffic to the space.

## Criteria for Selection

We're looking for the following in a partner for this project:

- A successful history of operations, preferably in a community setting.
- We're looking for a partner who understands and is connected to the LGBTQ+ community and the community members The Center serves.
- Financial stability and knowledge of the appropriate health, food services and other appropriate laws and regulations, as applicable.
- Priority to applicants that attest to The Center that they are majority owned by people of color, women, and transgender and gender-expansive people. Certification as a Minority and Women Owned Business in New York State may be submitted, but is not required.
- A demonstrated commitment to race and gender equity and that your team includes a diverse range of lived experiences.

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## Reservations of Rights by the Center

The issuance of this RFP does not constitute an agreement by the Center that any contract for operations will be entered into. The Center reserves the right at any time to:

- A. Waive or correct any defect or informality in any response, submittal, or submittal procedure;
- B. Reject any or all submissions;
- C. Reissue a Request for Proposals;
- D. To make a selection based on whatever criteria the Center deems appropriate, including directly on the proposed elements outlined within submissions, and/or to negotiate further with one or more of the respondents;
- E. Procure any materials, equipment, or services specified in this RFP by any other means; or
- F. Determine that no project will be pursued.

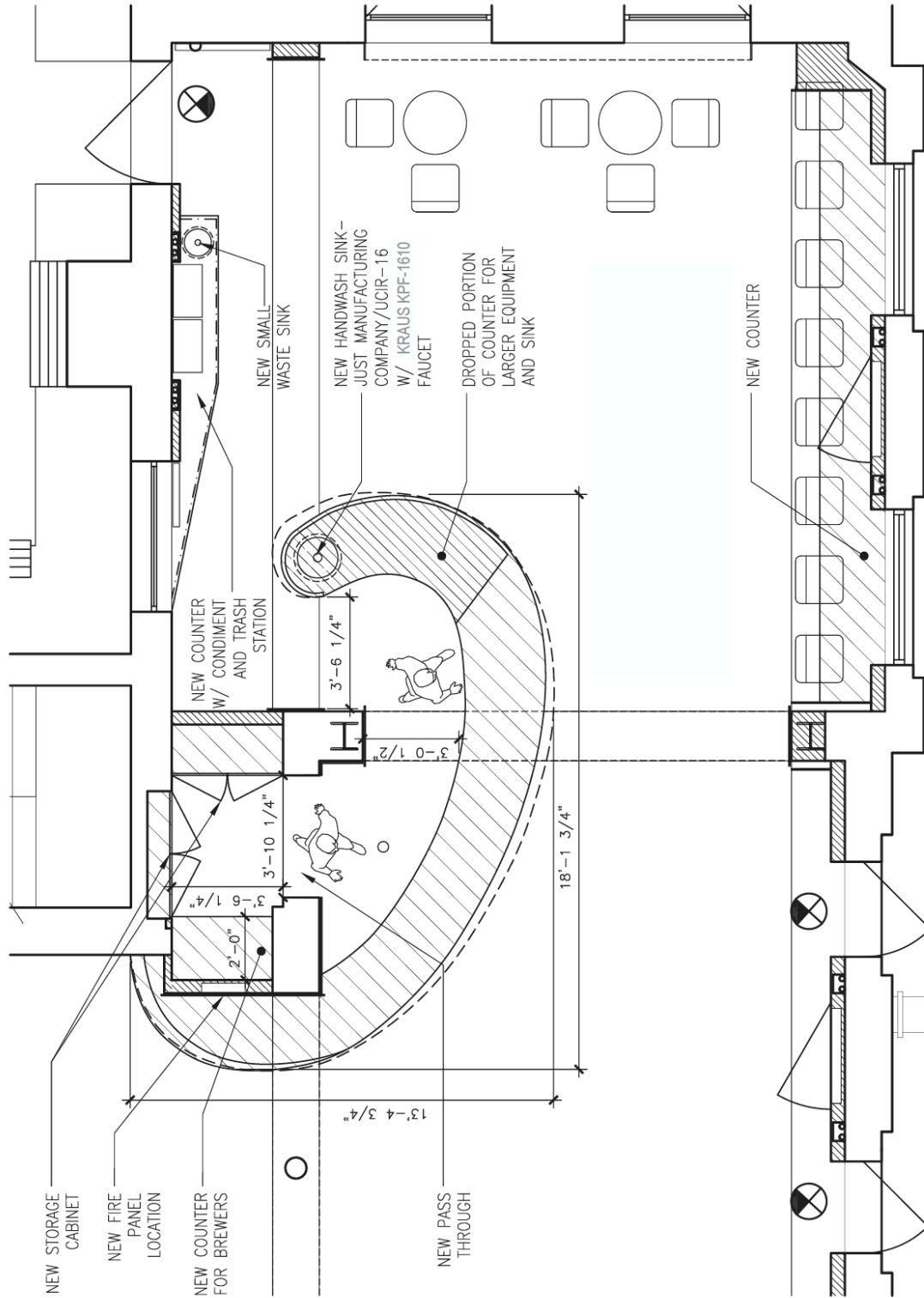
**\*\*END OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL\*\***

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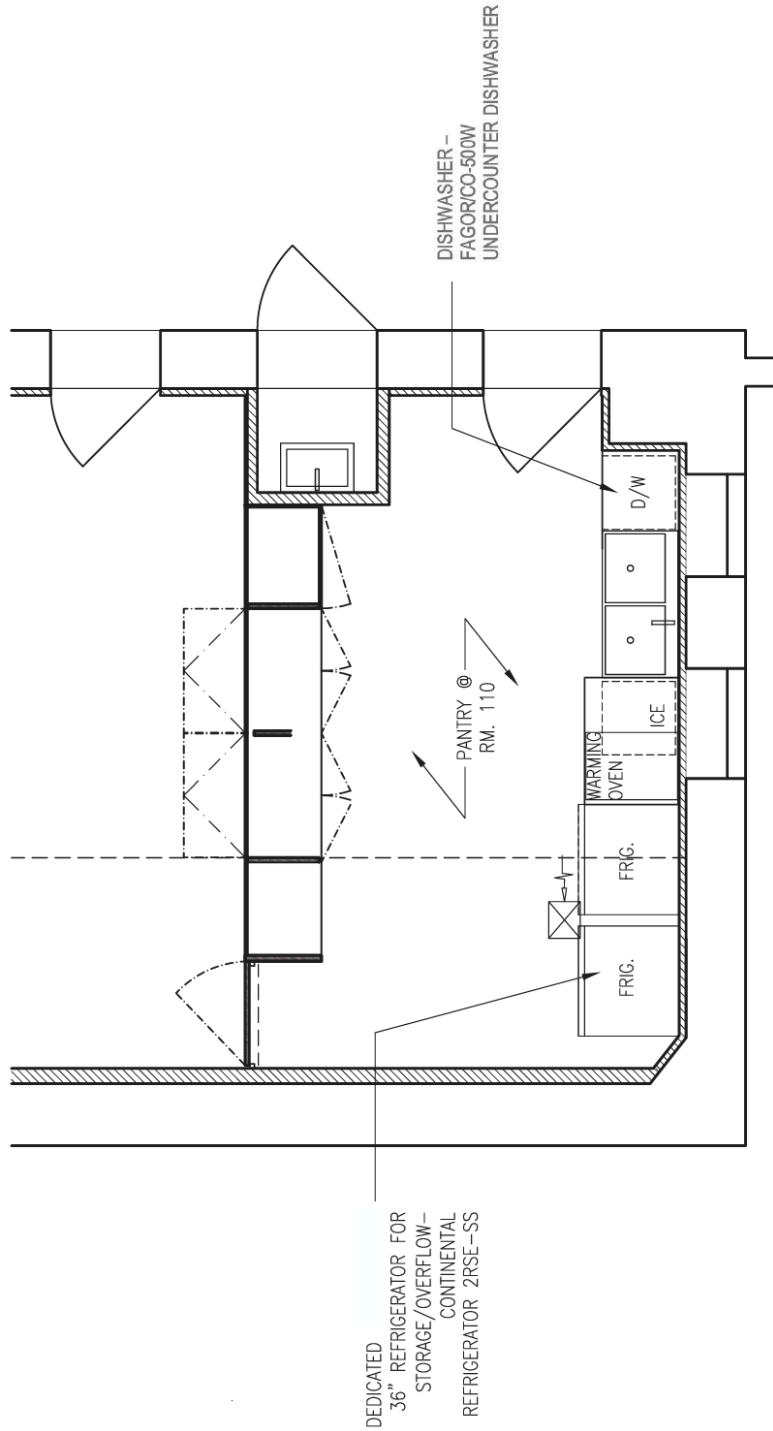
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Cafe Plan Exhibit @ 1/4" = 1'-0"



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Pantry Plan Exhibit @ 1/4" = 1'-0"



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PL-1



Mfr/Model:

Just Manufacturing  
Company/UCIR - 16

Size:

18 1/4" w  
18 1/4" d  
8" h

PL-3



Mfr/Model:

Turbo Air/TTK-MUR-28L  
Undercounter Refrigerator

Size:

30" w  
27 1/2" d  
32" h

PL-2



Mfr/Model:

Kraus/ KPF-1610

Size:

4 1/2" w  
10 3/4" d  
18 3/4" h

PL-4



Mfr/Model:

Continental/UC32  
Undercounter Refrigerator

Size:

32 3/16" w  
30 9/16" d  
27 1/2" h

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Fixtures/Appliances provided by The Center - Cafe

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AP-4

Mfr/Model:

Fagor/CO-500W  
Undercounter Dishwasher

Size:

23 5/8" w  
25" d  
32 3/4" h

AP-6 (2 Refrigerators)



Mfr/Model:

Continental Refrigerator/  
2RSE-SS

Size:

36 1/4" w  
36 1/2" d  
82 1/4" h

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THE CENTER

Fixtures/Appliances provided by The Center - Pantry