



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

March 29, 2013

To: Eric Monday, EVPFA
Tim Tracy, Interim Provost

From: Penny Cox, Chair *Penny D Cox*
Dining Project Revitalization Committee and Dining RFI Taskforce

Subject: Recommendations

I am writing on behalf of the Dining Project Revitalization Committee and the Dining RFI Taskforce to recommend that the University move forward with soliciting formal Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from potential business partners for Dining Services. This recommendation comes to you from the 17-committee members with student, faculty and staff representation. This team gathered thoughtful input from the campus and broader community.

We know that achieving transformational modernization of dining at the University to complement and support the aggressive timeline for expansion of student housing is vital. We not only talked with our campus and community constituents but also issued a Request for Information RFI# UK-1238-13 in February to obtain responses from the internal UK Dining Services and from external market vendors in response to the Envision Strategies dining report. We had a total of five respondents. Our committee heard presentations from all respondents on March 25.

We ask that if our recommendation is accepted, the RFP include the following criteria:

- 1) A commitment to ensure that current full-time UK dining employees will have employment opportunities either with the university or with the selected business partner. A commitment to continue employing student workers in our dining operations also should be part of the contractual requirement.
- 2) A mandatory commitment to sustainability by purchasing local food produce and our partnership with the Kentucky Proud Program.

Committee members received passionate input about Kentucky Proud and other sustainability issues. Fidelity to our land-grant mission through a commitment to sustainability and local purchasing is critical.

- 3) A commitment to affordability, expanded options, healthier food choices and responsiveness to the many constituencies that comprise the university.

UK has strong relationships, for example, with many existing food franchises. Those need to be strengthened and expanded. At the same time, we must have a dining services operation that can adapt to changes in tastes and technology, which provide students and others more information about choices, health, nutrition, wellness options, and the latest trends.

- 4) A significant capital investment to improve and expand dining venues in conjunction with the rapid transformation of on-campus housing from 5,100 to 8-9,000 and the associated student enrollment growth. This investment should not include any project-specific debt.

In conjunction with the capital investment, the vendors must provide an implementation schedule that has a delivery timeline to provide these critical new and temporary dining facilities as K-Lair, Blazer Café, and Commons are demolished.

- 5) Continued support and sponsorship for campus activities and engagement.

We also recommend that open forum meetings with dining employees, interested students, faculty, staff and those in the community who have thoughtfully given voice to a range of concerns be scheduled over the next several weeks. We are available to promote and participate in those conversations as appropriate.

Please do not hesitate to call me, or other members of the evaluation committee, if you have any questions or require clarification on our recommendations. More information about the project is available at: www.uky.edu/diningrevitalization.

cc: Dining Project Revitalization Committee
Dining RFI Taskforce