

San Diego airport looking for local retailers and restaurants to fill Terminal 1. Are you one of them?

The airport is hosting info sessions this summer to show local businesses how to get involved.

By Natallie Rocha

San Diego International Airport is reaching out to local businesses that are interested in being a part of the historic \$3.4 billion makeover of Terminal 1. The airport is hosting information sessions throughout the summer to show local businesses the different opportunities to get involved in the revamped concessions space.

Deanna Zachrisson, director of revenue generation and partnership development at San Diego International Airport, said the current configuration in Terminal 1 supports 17,000 square feet. But after the reconstruction it will accommodate about 70,000 square feet of retail and dining space.

The original layout was built in the 1960s, and the last time the airport overhauled concessions options was in 2011, she said.

Zachrisson said they want to include anything a traveler could want or need from a gourmet coffee to a sit-down restaurant to a place to just grab a bag of chips and magazine while waiting to depart. She added that the guiding light for the airport is building an environment that reflects San Diego.

“The changes that were made nearly 10 years ago now ... were very successful and you could see that in the spending of the passengers that came,” she said. “So it really gives us a good indicator of the direction that the users of the airport are looking for us to head and we follow that direction. A mixture of the local with the national but strong ... local brands that are reflective of the community.”

The airport is looking to fill 24 food and beverage slots as well as 10 retail locations. The space will have a mix of local vendors and national name brands.

Zachrisson said there are three options for local businesses that are interested in being a part of the airport. She also noted that there is no one-size-fits-all option and it depends on what the business owner seeks to gain from the opportunity.

The first is to become a direct lessee, which means a business takes “all the risk and reward” of building out a space and independently operating their enterprise in the airport, she said.

The second option is becoming part of a joint venture with an airport concessions company. She said, this way you can share in the risk of operating the business while also learning about working in an airport from an experienced company.

Lastly, there is the option to license out your business name and brand to a concessionaire company that will operate the business day to day in the airport. She said that for a business with a distinctive, local brand this would be like franchising your name to a concept inside the airport.

During upcoming information sessions, Zachrisson said the airport will also be providing information about various concessionaire companies that are interested in connecting with local businesses.

Right now, local businesses can fill out an interest form and learn more about the Terminal 1 remodel on the airport's website. The following are confirmed dates for information sessions that will take place across the county:

- **July 6, 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Procurement Technical Assistance Center in National City**
- **July 20, 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan Community Center in El Cajon**
- **July 26, 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the East Valley Community Center, Vineyard Room in Escondido**

A request for proposals will start around late September, which is when businesses can outline a pitch of how their concept would work in the airport, and the selection process will conclude next year, Zachrisson said. The multi-million dollar remodel of Terminal 1 is already underway and the entire project is expected to be complete by 2028 at the earliest.