



Request for Information

for

Reverse Vending Machine Programs

by

**Northeast Maryland
Waste Disposal Authority**

Date of Issue: January 27, 2026

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (the “Authority”) is a multi-county agency created by the State of Maryland to assist participating member jurisdictions (“Member Jurisdictions” or “Members”) with recycling and waste management systems. Members include Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, and Montgomery Counties. Maryland Environmental Service, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland, is an ex-officio member. More information on the Authority can be found at: www.nmwda.org

The Authority is issuing a Request for Information (“RFI”) on behalf of the Baltimore City’s Department of Public Works (“DPW”) to gather information from businesses and/or other entities that may be interested in partnering with the City of Baltimore (“City”) to implement reverse vending machines for commonly used beverage containers. The Authority and DPW seek responses to the questions listed in the “RESPONSES” section of this RFI. The Authority and DPW may use the information collected through this RFI to plan for future waste diversion efforts, related costs and draft a potential Request for Proposal (“RFP”). This RFI does not constitute a commitment, implied or otherwise. The Authority and City will not be responsible for any costs incurred by respondents to prepare and submit their response to this RFI.

B. BACKGROUND

Waste Reduction Goals

In June 2020, the DPW, Bureau of Solid Waste released the City’s Long-Term Solid Waste Operational Plan as part of the [Less Waste Better Baltimore](#) (LWBB), a multi-year planning process led by waste consultants, Geosyntec Consultants (“Geosyntec”). Tangible progress on LWBB’s goals and objectives requires implementing programs that incentivize waste reduction and recycling, which can take many forms.

For many years, there has been a statewide effort to establish a Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program. However, given the uncertainty

and extended timeline associated with potential passage by the Maryland General Assembly, the City seeks to explore opportunities for more immediate, local action. This interest is driven in large part by the significant presence of beverage container litter on the City's land and in its waterways.

Of the estimated 5.2 billion beverage containers sold in Maryland each year, only 23% are recycled. The other four billion containers a year are incinerated, landfilled, or littered in the natural environment. As a result, reverse vending machines in public spaces near food retailers are of particular interest to the City to reduce waste. Reverse vending machines would reward recycling beverage containers, which include aluminum cans, glass bottles, and plastic bottles. In exchange for dropping off beverage containers, the City envisions the reverse vending machine issuing some type of incentive, such as money, tokens, credit for parking meters, or vouchers for public transportation.

Based on the potential for waste diversion, the Authority and DPW are requesting information on the best reverse vending machine options.

Baltimore City's Contribution

The City understands that it will likely need to support business models related to reverse vending machines. One goal of this RFI is to better understand how to budget for such reverse vending machine devices and programs. The City envisions a few scenarios for contributing to the program:

- Providing limited operating support to an entity that can run a reverse vending machine program and provide reverse vending machines.
- Providing land and/or city owned buildings on/within which to site reverse vending machines
- Building connections with local businesses like grocery stores, and public hubs, such as libraries, to establish a network of potential vending machine locations

C. RESPONSES

This RFI seeks responses to the following questions from Businesses, Organizations, Non-Profits, Engineering Firms, Solid Waste Associations, and other members of the public about reverse vending machine programs and devices. The feedback from this RFI may be used to develop future Requests for Proposals and implement waste diversion strategies and practices. Responses are not limited to the list of questions below, and the Authority and City are open to other ideas or feedback not detailed within this RFI.

Guidelines for Submission

- A. Contact Information
 - a. Organization Name
 - b. Organization Address, Phone Number, E-mail, Website
 - c. Name, Title, Phone Number, and Email of Contact Person at Organization the Authority and City may contact concerning your response and all subsequent information regarding this RFI.
- B. Include a brief history of the organization, operational experience, and list and describe the reverse vending services offered
- C. Responses to Questions

RFI respondents should provide a general overview of the reverse vending solution(s) they would provide, including siting, technology, and logistics considerations. RFI respondents should, at a minimum, answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the general costs and high-level budget considerations associated with implementing the reverse vending machine program?
- 2) Can you demonstrate any cost avoidance/savings for an organization that implements reverse vending machines?
- 3) What types of beverage containers do the reverse vending machine accept? What types of containers do the reverse vending machine prohibit?
- 4) Could reverse vending machines accept beverage containers/packaging that are cartons, pouches, aseptic or gable top containers?
- 5) What support would be needed from the City, either up front or on an ongoing basis?
- 6) What potential incentives would be provided in exchange for the returned beverage containers? Please provide examples from your experience, if applicable.

- 7) Would you recommend that the project/program start with a pilot or a subset/subgroup and build over time? What would an ideal roll-out of the program look like?
- 8) What staffing needs would need to be considered when implementing and servicing the reverse vending machine?
- 9) What happens to the collected materials? Who are the downstream vendors (if any) and what is their recycling process?
- 10) How much waste (in tons) can be reduced/diverted by each machine per year?
- 11) Are there other environmental benefits that can be quantified?
- 12) Are there any barriers that could impact the implementation of your recommended program?
- 13) How does the reverse vending machine system protect against fraud?

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The submission deadline for responding to this RFI is **Friday, March 13, 2026** at 12:00 pm. All times referenced in this RFI refer to local time.

Each Vendor shall submit a copy by email with the subject line “Attention: Reverse Vending Machine RFI Response” to procurement@nmwda.org. The response shall not be longer than 30-pages.

Questions and Requests for Clarification related to this RFI should be submitted prior to 12:00 p.m. on **Friday, February 13, 2026**. Questions shall be emailed to procurement@nmwda.org.

RFI Issued	Tuesday, January 27, 2026
Questions and Requests for Clarifications Due	Friday, February 13, 2026 by 12:00 p.m.
Responses to Questions (tentative)	Friday, February 27, 2026
Submission Due	Friday, March 13, 2026 by 12:00 p.m.
Determination of Next Steps	April 2026

D. DISCLAIMER

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes; it does not constitute a Request for Proposals, applications, proposal abstracts, or quotations. This RFI does not commit the Authority nor the City to contract for any supplies or services. Further, the Authority and DPW are not seeking proposals through this RFI and will not accept unsolicited proposals. The Authority and DPW are not obligated to enter any financial or legally binding relationships with respondents. Responders are advised that the Authority and DPW will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Respondents should identify any portions of their RFI submission that they consider to be confidential, proprietary commercial information, or trade secrets, and provide justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the Authority under the Maryland Public Information Act, Section 4-201 of the General Provisions ("GP") Article of the Maryland Code. Respondents agree that the Authority has no liability for release of information it determines in good faith must be disclosed under the law.

Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future procurement, if conducted. It is the responsibility of potential responders to monitor this RFI announcement for additional information pertaining to this requirement. This RFI and related information will be posted on the Authority's website at www.nmwda.org.