



CITY ADMINISTRATOR
WILLIAM C. SIMON, JR.

City of Bennettville, SC

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

P.O. Box 1036

Bennettville, South Carolina 29512



October 6, 2026

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

City of Bennettville, SC

Downtown Full-Service Restaurant

HOSPITALITY SERVICES

City of Bennettville, SC RFQ #26-10-001

DUE DATE:

October 30, 2026

RECEIPT LOCATION:

501 East Main Street

P.O. Box 1036

Bennettville, SC 29512

OFFICIAL CONTACT:

Tasha Townsend, Procurement Director, (843) 479-9001 Ext. 331,

tasha.townsend@bennettvillesc.com

The City of Bennettville reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or any parts thereof and to waive any irregularities or minor informalities in any submission or in the procurement process and to make a contract award in the best interest of The City of Bennettville.



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1. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Bennettville invites qualified restaurateurs, hospitality companies, restaurant development groups, and experienced restaurant operators to submit Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) for the development and operation of a full-service restaurant at 100 West Main Street, a recently acquired City-owned property located in the heart of downtown Bennettville.

The City envisions a distinctive, professionally operated dine-in restaurant capable of offering breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The selected operator should demonstrate the experience, financial capacity, and operational expertise necessary to establish a sustainable dining destination that serves residents, visitors, and the surrounding region.

The City anticipates entering into a long-term lease agreement with an option to purchase the property. The specific lease provisions, purchase terms, and financial arrangements will be negotiated with the preferred respondent at a later date.

The City is also pursuing funding to assist with building improvements necessary to accommodate restaurant operations. The availability, application, and potential recovery of these funds will be addressed through negotiations and supplemental agreements.

1.1. Method of Procurement

This is a qualifications-based selection. Award of the contract will be given to the most responsible, responsive, and most highly qualified company based on the factors outlined in **Section 4, SELECTION CRITERIA.**

Companies are advised that this evaluation and selection process is a competition and not simply a prequalification. It is the intent of the City of Bennettville to award the contract to a single company.

1.2. Project Description

The redevelopment of 100 West Main Street represents an important component of Bennettville's ongoing downtown revitalization efforts and its vision of becoming "A City on the Move."

Through participation in the South Carolina Department of Commerce's strategic planning initiative, the City is working to strengthen its economic competitiveness, attract private



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investment, encourage entrepreneurship, and position downtown Bennettville as a destination for commerce, dining, entertainment, and community activity.

City Administrator William Simon Jr., and his team, is supporting and advancing this restaurant development initiative as part of the City's broader downtown master planning and economic development efforts.

The City's objective is to establish a successful restaurant that serves as an anchor business, increases pedestrian activity, encourages complementary investment, and contributes to the long-term economic vitality of downtown Bennettville.

The selected restaurant operator will have an opportunity to participate in this larger revitalization effort while establishing a business in a strategically located, City-owned property.

1.3. Desired Restaurant Concept

The City seeks an experienced operator capable of developing and managing a full-service dining establishment with the following characteristics:

- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner service, with operating hours to be negotiated.
- Professional table service and a welcoming dining environment.
- A diverse, high-quality menu that appeals to residents, visitors, business professionals, and families.
- The operational capacity to accommodate regular dining, business meetings, community gatherings, and special occasions.
- A sustainable business model supported by experienced restaurant management, qualified personnel, and sound financial planning.

The City welcomes innovative restaurant concepts, including independently owned restaurants, established regional restaurant groups, and experienced hospitality operators.

Although the City has identified its preferred operating characteristics, respondents are encouraged to present creative concepts that enhance the property's commercial potential and complement the character of downtown Bennettville.

1.4. Property Development and Conceptual Layout

A conceptual layout (**Appendix B**) is provided for illustrative and planning purposes only. It is not intended to establish mandatory architectural requirements, prescribe a final restaurant configuration, or represent approved construction documents.



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Respondents may propose modifications to the conceptual layout based on their restaurant concept, operational requirements, and professional experience.

Any proposed building modifications will be subject to City approval, applicable building and fire codes, accessibility requirements, and other regulatory approvals.

1.5. Proposed Business Arrangement

The City intends to negotiate a public-private arrangement that supports the establishment of a successful restaurant while protecting the City's investment in the property.

The anticipated arrangement includes the following components.

A. Long-Term Lease

The City anticipates entering into a long-term commercial lease with the selected operator. Lease duration, rental payments, maintenance responsibilities, insurance requirements, improvements, and other provisions will be negotiated.

B. Option to Purchase

The City is willing to negotiate an option to purchase the property as part of the long-term lease arrangement.

The timing, purchase price or valuation method, eligibility requirements, treatment of building improvements, and other conditions will be established through subsequent negotiations and appropriate City approvals.

C. Building Improvements

The City is actively seeking funding to support improvements necessary to convert the property into a functional restaurant.

Potential improvements may include building renovations, utility infrastructure, commercial kitchen accommodation, accessibility improvements, and other work necessary to prepare the property for its intended use.

Funding is not guaranteed. The scope and timing of improvements will depend on available resources, funding requirements, regulatory approvals, and negotiated agreements.



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D. Recovery of Public Investment

The City anticipates negotiating supplemental agreements addressing the use and potential recovery of public funds invested in the property.

Such agreements may address rental payments, improvement reimbursements, purchase-price adjustments, performance obligations, or other mutually acceptable arrangements, subject to applicable law and funding restrictions.

E. Business Startup Incentives

The City recognizes the financial challenges associated with establishing a new restaurant and is willing to consider a tailored incentive package for the selected operator.

Potential incentives may include negotiated rental arrangements, phased lease payments, eligible building improvements, or other appropriate forms of startup assistance.

The availability and structure of any incentives will depend on the proposed business concept, demonstrated financial need, anticipated economic benefits, applicable legal requirements, and approval by the appropriate City authorities.

No incentive, financial commitment, or property conveyance is guaranteed through this solicitation.

2. REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) PROCESS AND POLICIES

2.1. Submittal of Statements of Qualifications

The City of Bennettville is hereby issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to companies that have the capability and interest in undertaking and performing the scope of work described in Section 1.3.

The OFFICIAL CONTACT for this solicitation is:

Tasha Townsend
Director of Procurement
The City of Bennettville
(843) 479-9001 Ext. 331
tasha.townsend@bennettvillesc.com



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Each firm responding to this solicitation is officially a RESPONDENT. Each respondent must submit a sealed package containing five (5) hard copies of the package and one (1) digital copy of the package to Tasha Townsend at the address above no later than **November 6, 2026**. Complete packages may be submitted in person or by regular mail. All submissions will be logged in and date and time stamped. **Any qualifications package that is received after the date and time specified will be logged and date and time stamped as "late" and returned unopened to the respondent.**

2.2. Procurement Timeline

Release date for RFQ	October 6, 2026
Final Date to Receive Written Questions/Clarifications	October 19, 2026
RFQ Closing Date	October 30, 2026
Completion of Selection Committee Review and Recommendation	November 2, 2026
Execution of Contract <i>(both parties can request additional time)</i>	No later than 60 days after the official award

2.3. Questions/Requests for Clarification

All questions and/or requests for clarification regarding this RFQ should be provided in writing to Tasha Townsend no later than November 6, 2026, at 5:00 pm. All questions submitted and their answers will be posted on the City of Bennettville website as an addendum to this RFQ prior to the RFQ deadline. No telephone inquiries will be accepted.

2.4. Addenda

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ, a written addendum will be issued. All addenda issued by The City of Bennettville will become part of the official RFQ and will be posted on the City of Bennettville website, www.bennettville.sc.com. Receipt of all addenda must be acknowledged in the response to this RFQ.



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2.5. Contact Policy

No direct or indirect contact regarding this solicitation may be made with any representatives of the City of Bennettville other than the official contact identified in this RFQ. If such contact is made, the City of Bennettville reserves the right to reject a submission by that respondent. All questions and/or requests for clarification must be provided in accordance with Section 2.5 of the RFQ. This contact policy applies to site visits and requests for technical information. Any technical information needed from the City of Bennettville to prepare a submission should be coordinated through the Questions/Requests for Clarification process outlined in Section 2.3.

2.6. Acceptance and Rejection of Submissions

Any submissions that do not conform to the essential requirements of the RFQ shall be rejected. The City of Bennettville reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in submittals and reserves the sole right to determine what constitutes informalities and minor irregularities. The City of Bennettville also reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submissions received in response to this RFQ. The City of Bennettville is not obligated to enter into any contract on the basis of any submittal in response to this RFQ. The City of Bennettville reserves the right to request additional information from any firm submitting under this RFQ if such information is necessary to clarify the submission.

2.7. Cancellation/Rejection

The City of Bennettville may cancel this RFQ in whole or in part at any time if it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Bennettville. The City of Bennettville may reject any or all submissions in whole or in part if it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Bennettville.

2.8. Conflict of Interest

Respondents shall promptly notify the City of Bennettville in writing of all potential conflicts of interest for any prospective business association, interest, or other circumstance, which may influence or appear to influence the respondent's judgment or quality of services being provided hereunder. Such written notification shall identify the prospective business association, interest, or circumstance, the nature of work that such a person may undertake and request an opinion of the City of Bennettville as to whether the association, interest, or circumstance would, in the opinion of the City of Bennettville, constitute a conflict of interest. By responding to this RFQ, the respondent certifies that there is no conflict of interest with any



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employee, agent, elected official or officer of the City of Bennettville or any other conflict as may be set forth herein.

3. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS CONTENTS

The submission must include the following, in the order listed:

3.1. Company Profile

Provide the legal business name, ownership structure, principal business address, primary contact information, and a brief organizational history.

3.2. Relevant Experience

Describe previous restaurant ownership, development, management, or hospitality experience.

Identify existing or previously operated establishments, including their locations, general concepts, and operating history.

3.3. Proposed Restaurant Concept

Provide a narrative describing the proposed restaurant, anticipated cuisine, target customer base, intended operating hours, and approach to breakfast, lunch, and dinner service.

3.4. Operational and Management Capacity

Describe the proposed management structure, relevant professional experience, staffing approach, and anticipated involvement of the business owners or principals.

3.5. Financial Qualifications

Provide evidence of financial capacity or a credible strategy for securing the resources necessary to establish and operate the restaurant.

Respondents may submit a general financing plan, evidence of available capital, lender relationships, or other relevant financial information.

Detailed financial statements may be requested during subsequent negotiations.

3.6. Preliminary Development Approach

Describe the respondent's general approach to adapting the property for restaurant operations.



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Identify any significant modifications to the conceptual layout and major building or equipment requirements anticipated by the respondent.

3.7. Proposed Partnership and Incentive Needs

Identify the general type of assistance, lease structure, building improvements, or startup incentives the respondent believes would support a successful project.

Detailed financial negotiations are not required at this stage.

3.8. References

Provide at least three professional or business references familiar with the respondents' relevant experience, where available.

4. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The City will review submissions to identify qualified respondents with experience and capacity to successfully develop and operate the proposed restaurant.

The City anticipates considering the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Relevant restaurant and hospitality experience	25%
Proposed restaurant concept and alignment with the City's vision	25%
Financial qualifications and business sustainability	20%
Operational and management capacity	15%
Proposed development approach and potential economic contribution	15%
Total	100%

The City may invite one or more respondents to participate in interviews, provide additional information, tour the property, or engage in preliminary discussions.

Following its review, the City may identify a preferred respondent with whom to negotiate a development and operating arrangement.



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Selection as a preferred respondent does not constitute an award of a lease, purchase option, financial incentive, or development agreement.

Any final agreement will be subject to required approvals and applicable procurement, property disposition, and other legal requirements.

5. ANTICIPATED PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

Activity	Date
RFQ advertisement	October 6, 2026
Solicitation period	October 6 – October 30, 2026
Submission deadline	October 30, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET
Evaluation of qualifications	Following submission deadline
Interviews, if necessary	To be determined
Selection and negotiations	November 2, 2026

***The City reserves the right to modify the schedule, as necessary.

6. GENERAL CONDITIONS

The City reserves the right to reject any or all submissions, request additional information, conduct interviews, negotiate with qualified respondents, or discontinue this solicitation when determined to be in the City's interest and consistent with applicable law.

The City is not responsible for costs incurred by respondents in preparing or submitting qualifications or participating in subsequent discussions.

The issuance of this RFQ does not obligate the City to enter into an agreement, provide funding, complete improvements, or convey any interest in the property.

All proposed financial arrangements, incentives, and property transactions will be subject to applicable legal requirements and necessary City approvals.

Information submitted in response to this solicitation may be subject to disclosure under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.



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APPENDIX A

CHECKLIST

(to be submitted with the package content)

100 West Main Street – Restaurant Development and Operation

Appendix A – Required Submission Documents

Submission Deadline: October 30, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Company Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Signature: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Instructions

All respondents should complete this checklist and include it in the completed package. The checklist corresponds to **Section 3** of the Request for Qualifications.

Check each box to indicate that the requested information has been included. If an item does not apply, indicate N/A and provide a brief explanation.

- ☐ Company Profile _____
- ☐ Relevant Experience _____
- ☐ Proposed Restaurant Concept _____
- ☐ Operational and Management Capacity _____
- ☐ Financial Qualifications _____
- ☐ Preliminary Development Approach _____
- ☐ Proposed Partnership and Incentive Needs _____
- ☐ References _____



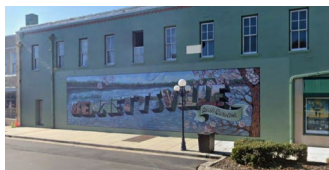
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1st Floor

2nd Floor

