

Mount Pleasant
SOUTH CAROLINA

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Your guide to doing business in Mount Pleasant, SC

100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC 29464
experiencemountpleasant.com | open4biz@tompsc.com | 843.884.8517

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We're Open for Business



Welcome. We're thrilled you're interested in locating your business within the Town of Mount Pleasant. We've taken great steps to create a healthy, vibrant business community and are proud to provide first-class customer service to our businesses.

We hope you find the following guide a useful resource as you take your business from idea to execution. While this guide covers most of the basics to getting started, each business is unique. Don't worry. We're here to answer questions and walk you through the process.

Thanks again for choosing Mount Pleasant. We are "Open for Business."

Mayor Will Haynie
Town of Mount Pleasant

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- Add these Contacts to your Phone

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1. GET STARTED

Your Checklist To Doing Business In Mount Pleasant

DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS STRUCTURE

In South Carolina, there are several legal business structure options. Take the time to really think this first step through; financial and legal implications vary depending on legal structure. Given the legal implications when choosing your business structure, new business owners should always seek the guidance of a professional tax consultant, accountant, and/or attorney to verify all legal requirements are met before choosing a business structure.

□ **REGISTER WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA SECRETARY OF STATE**

Before doing anything, check the name of your business as well as logo and graphics with the South Carolina Secretary of State to ensure it is not already in use within the state. We also suggest looking at available web domains prior to finalizing the business name. It is a best practice to immediately purchase several web domains with various iterations of your business name. We also suggest securing social media handles you plan to use in the future.

To officially incorporate, register your new business with the Secretary of State. Once the name is registered, you will be sent a Certificate of Existence via mail or email. There are additional requirements when filing for corporations and limited partnerships.

Services of an attorney are recommended. To trademark your business name, register with the South Carolina Secretary of State's Trademarks Division. 803.734.0629 or www.scsos.com



GET OFFICIAL – LICENSES, PERMITS, TAXES

APPLY FOR A FEDERAL EMPLOYER ID NUMBER

Apply for a Federal Employer Identification Number (Form SS-4) through the IRS or on www.scbos.sc.gov. All businesses with employees must apply for this number. Your local IRS will send you a form with your new EIN number via the US Postal Service. www.scbos.sc.gov/Business/Resources

It is a best practice for self-employed individuals operating sole proprietorships to make quarterly individual estimated tax payments to the South Carolina Department of Revenue (using a voucher from your CPA) and to the federal IRS (using a voucher from your CPA). At year's end, you will file your business income and expense (P & L) on Schedule C as part of your annual 1040 Tax Return. dor.sc.gov/tax/individual-income

FILL OUT FEDERAL AND STATE FORMS FOR EMPLOYMENT TAXES

When you have employees, you as the employer have certain employment tax responsibilities to pay and forms to file. Visit the IRS for specific information regarding your federal employment tax responsibilities. www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Business-Taxes

Find the South Carolina Withholding Tax Information Guide here: <https://dor.sc.gov/forms-site/Forms/Form105.pdf#search=withholding%20tax> .

Visit the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SC DEW) for state unemployment insurance (SUI) information to determine if you need to establish an unemployment tax account. <https://dew.sc.gov/employers/tax>



□ APPLY FOR A SC SALES & USE TAX ID

Sales tax is imposed on the sale of goods and certain services in South Carolina. The statewide sales and use tax rate is six percent (6%). Charleston County imposes an additional one percent (1%) local sales tax. For more information, or to apply for a South Carolina sales and use tax account, contact the South Carolina Department of Revenue. 803-898-5000 or dor.sc.gov/tax/sales

□ APPLY FOR PROFESSIONAL, OCCUPATIONAL, OTHER STATE LICENSES

If the nature of your business requires a professional license or occupational license for operation, contact the South Carolina Department of Labor and Licensing Regulation at www.llr.state.sc.us.

If your business is specific to environmental, waste management/landfill, water treatment, underground storage tank, emergency medical service, healthcare, daycare, or food service, contact DHEC for specific licensing and regulatory requirements at www.scdhec.gov.

All businesses must adhere to OSHA standards:
www.scosha.llronline.com/.

□ APPLY FOR A TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT BUSINESS LICENSE; HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMODATIONS TAXES

Every person or entity engaged or intending to engage in business is required to obtain a license based on business activity and gross receipts (including contractors). Business license taxes are due prior to commencing operations and annually on July 31. If you plan to conduct business in a physical location, you should move onto the next section and ensure zoning compliance prior to getting your business license.

You may apply for or renew your Mount Pleasant business license in-person or online. For more information, including business license classifications and rates, visit: www.tompssc.com/index.aspx?NID=127.

A two percent (2%) hospitality tax on prepared meals, food, and beverages is due on the 20th of each month to Charleston County, Mount Pleasant’s collection agent.

To learn more about accommodations taxes, and if you should pay them, visit dor.sc.gov/tax/accommodations.



SET UP SHOP – ZONING, SIGNAGE, PERMITTING, INSPECTIONS

There is a wealth of information located online in the Planning and Development Department’s document library, including informational brochures, checklists, fee schedules, procedures, and more. We encourage you to browse this library as you begin looking at a physical location for your business and contemplate any buildout. We understand this can be a lot of information to a new business owner, so please reach out with questions!

Planning and Development Document Library:
www.tompsc.com/index.aspx?NID=388

☐ CHECK THE ZONING

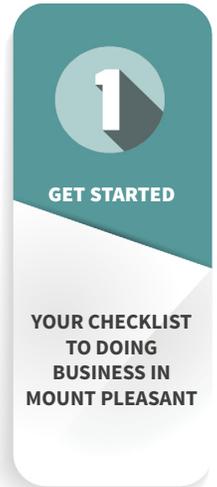
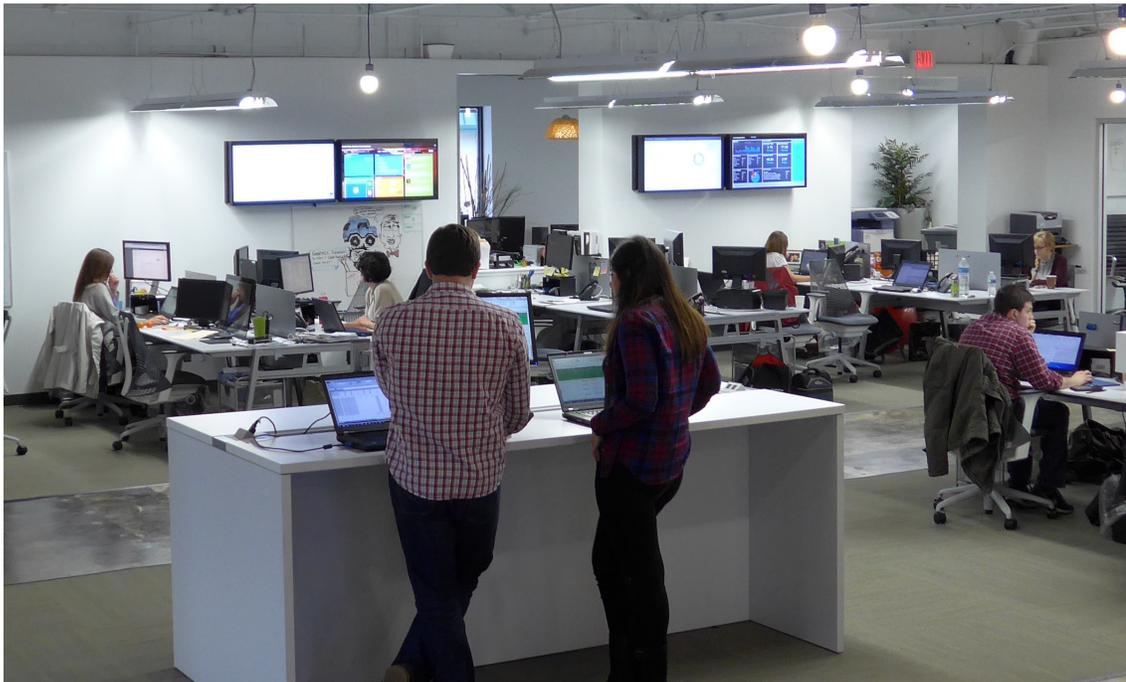
It’s important when looking for real estate to consider the property’s current zoning to ensure compliance. If you happen to have a business license before a location, that does not mean you can operate your business from anywhere in the Town. Your use must be a permitted use for the area. For the current Zoning Code, visit

www.tompsc.com/DocumentCenter/View/11061.

You may find our Zoning Principal Use Table a great complement for simplifying our Zoning Code and understanding if your type of business is allowed at a given location: <http://www.tompsc.com/index.aspx?nid=388>.

Click here for our zoning maps: <https://www.tompsc.com/DocumentCenter/View/864/ZoningMap>.

For information about the Town’s zoning request process, visit www.tompsc.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/289.



□ ***BEGIN THE COMMERCIAL APPROVAL PROCESS TO RECEIVE YOUR CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY – DESIGN REVIEW, BUILDING PERMITS, AND INSPECTIONS***

To maintain Mount Pleasant’s unique sense of place, **all new commercial construction, exterior remodeling and alteration activity must be approved through the commercial design review process.** The design review process establishes a systematic and uniform review procedure for proposed construction based on the design review guidelines.

Upon approval through the design review process, plans can be submitted for permitting. Permit plans are reviewed by many entities, including but not limited to, the Building Inspection Division, Planning and Engineering Division, Fire Department, and Mount Pleasant Waterworks. Planning staff will be assigned to each project to assist developers and contractors through the commercial approval and permitting process. Applicants are encouraged to contact their Planning staff contact prior to making submittals. For an application checklist visit: www.tompsc.com/index.aspx?NID=257.

Submittals for Design Review and for Permits are fully electronic. Online submittals and forms can be found at: www.tompsc.com/index.aspx?NID=157.

COMMERCIAL PROJECTS DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS



1 *An Idea*
The first step is to contact Planning staff for all relevant information that will drive a project—new construction and exterior projects only. Conceptual plans are created.

2 *Pre-Application Meeting*
The applicant is required to meet with design review staff to discuss the initial site and building drawing, as well as the overall process for a project. Architects, engineers, and landscape architects are typically present.

3 *Preliminary Submittal to the Board*
A preliminary submittal is the first time a project goes before the Board. The checklist requirements are less extensive for this submittal, and the applicant will get early feedback. This approval is not vested, and Board comments should be fully addressed before final approval.

4 *Final Submittal to the Board*
Applicants that work closely with staff and have a strong submittal may wish to bypass the preliminary review entirely and submit for final board review. More checklist items are required to be completed for a final submittal. Most projects will receive preliminary approval before seeking the Board’s final decision. A final decision by the Board is vested.

5 *Final Approval*
Once final approval is voted on by the Board, the applicant may or may not have small items for correction to be handled by staff. Once the final comments of the Board and staff have been addressed, a complete set of DRB plans will be stamped with approval and returned to the applicant. The applicant shall provide this stamped set to the Building Permits office to ensure the building plans are in compliance with the DRB approved plans.

All commercial projects within the Town of Mount Pleasant must be submitted for design review. Projects greater than \$250,000 are submitted to and approved by the Design Review Board (DRB). Projects under this figure may be reviewed and approved by Planning staff.

For more information, contact Chris Luly at cluly@tompsc.com or 843.884.1229.

The Town of Mount Pleasant follows the requirements of the 2015 International Code (IBC) Series with SC Amendments. It is the builder of record's responsibility to verify actual compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances as adopted. To schedule an inspection, go to www.buildingdepartment.com.

The Building Inspections Division coordinates the review of plans in conjunction with other departments to ensure a simple, yet comprehensive review.

For building permit inspection procedures, fee schedule, and applications, visit our online library: www.tompsc.com/index.aspx?NID=388.

Mount Pleasant Waterworks also offers the following forms and documents on their website: Guidelines; Water & Wastewater Specifications; Letter of Intent; and Rate Schedule. Full contact information is in the "Get Connected" section of this guide. www.mountpleasantwaterworks.com



CONSIDER SIGNAGE

Full details on the Town of Mount Pleasant's sign ordinances can be found online within the Zoning Code: www.tompsc.com/DocumentCenter/View/11061. Please note, the Town only allows fixed, permanent signs. It does not allow moving parts on signs, temporary signs, digital/electronic reader boards, or price changers.



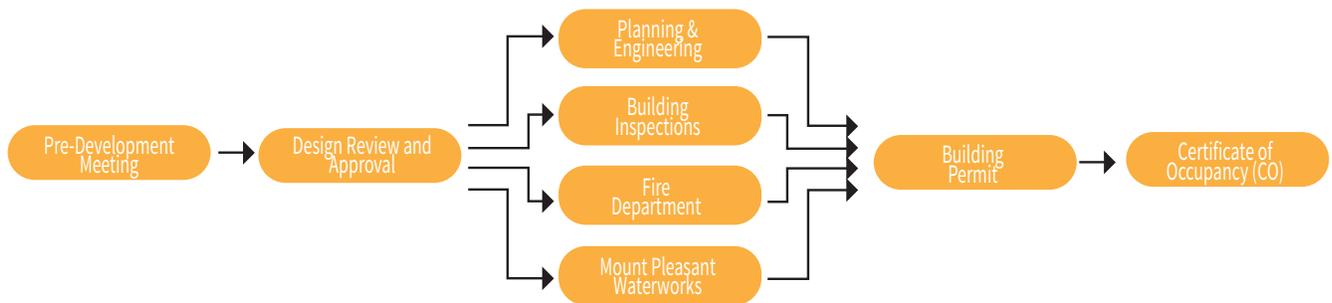
COMMERCIAL APPROVAL PROCESS

1 **Pre-Development Meeting, Design Review, and Approval**

Prior to submitting for design review, applicants must meet with Planning Division staff. Applicants will meet with the design review staff and receive valuable feedback on their proposed project. Upon submitting for site and architecture design review and approval, your project will be reviewed for compliance with the Code of Ordinances and design review standards. Once final approval is granted, it is valid for two years.

2 **Civil Site Review**

Once preliminary design review approval for a project has been granted, the project impacts are simultaneously reviewed for proper stormwater management controls, water quality, and overall general public safety. When the technical review is complete, a MS4 letter is provided which releases the NPDES permit for water quality. The developer may proceed with the installation of sediment and erosion control, tree protection, and other elements of site preparation. A Clearing and Grading Permit is issued by the Town upon a satisfactory inspection of site preparation.



3 **Permitting Review**

After receiving final design review approval, construction plans can be submitted. Plans must be submitted to both the Town and Mount Pleasant Waterworks. The Building Inspection Division reviews plans for compliance with the Building Code. Once permit is issued, it is valid for 6 months

4 **Construction and Certificate of Occupancy (CO)**

Once a building permit has been issued, building construction can begin. Building inspections will be conducted during different phases of construction. Seven to ten working days prior to the scheduled completion of the commercial structure, final CO inspections must be scheduled. This includes building, fire, site, design review, and Mount Pleasant Waterworks. A CO will not be issued until all final CO inspections have been completed.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black and white patterned dress, stands on the left side of a meeting room, holding a document and gesturing towards a large projection screen. The screen displays text about social media engagement. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads are visible as they listen to the presentation. A large window on the right side of the room provides natural light.

Different members of your social community are going to want to engage with you in different ways. With social you have the ability to listen to your audience and then control and curate the content that is going to best engage your communities, your current customers and those simply seeking to get to know you.

From that point you then develop social experiences that are creative and exciting, which are very data-driven. Convenience metrics such as community growth are nice, but seeing this translate to specific business goals (i.e. book sales) is what social is really about.

2. GET CONNECTED

Mount Pleasant is Open for Business, Call Us.

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT - IMPORTANT CONTACTS

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

planning@tompsc.com

843.884.1229

Town Hall

100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC

PLANNING AND ENGINEERING DIVISION

The Planning and Engineering Division administers and enforces the Town's zoning ordinances, land development regulations, and municipal impact fees.

Michael Robertson
Principal Planner
Architecture
mrobertson@tompsc.com

Marissa Poultney
Staff Engineer
mpoultney@tompsc.com

Chris Luly
Senior Planner
Site Plan Review
cluly@tompsc.com

BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION

The Building Inspection Division reviews construction plans for all residential and commercial development, including additions and renovations. Field inspectors ensure compliance with Town building codes and zoning ordinances throughout the construction process

The Building Inspection Division has a Floodplain Manager on staff to ensure compliance with the Town's Flood Damage Prevention regulations and to provide information to residents and businesses about flood zone requirements. Construction permits and certificates of occupancy are issued by this division.

Jeff Ball
Commercial Plans Examiner
jball@tompsc.com

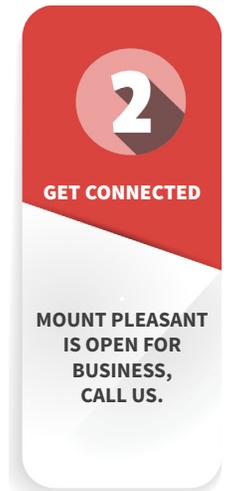
Rob Rogerson
Program Manager
rrogerson@tompsc.com

Christina Springston
Plan Review Coordinator
cspringston@tompsc.com

BUSINESS LICENSE OFFICE

The Business License Division administers the Business License and Hospitality Tax ordinances.

Melinda Turner
Business License Official
mturner@tompsc.com
843.849.2786
Town Hall
100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC



FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department completes inspections of all projects in the town, much the same as the building department does, except for that which pertains to fire protection (above ceiling, fire walls, alarm systems, and fire protection systems).

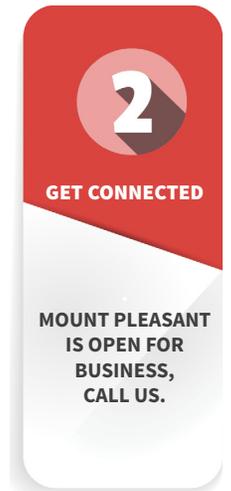
Fire inspections are typically conducted on all commercial businesses twice a year for code compliance, however, you may request a courtesy inspection at any time throughout the year.

Dale Johnston
Fire & Life Safety Division
djohnston@tompsc.com
843.884.0623
Fire Station 2
355 7th Avenue | Mount Pleasant, SC

BUSINESS & TOURISM OFFICE

The Business & Tourism Office is responsible for all development and marketing efforts related to business development, tourism, hospitality, park, cultural and event initiatives, as well as event sponsorships, booking of Alhambra Hall, and support of East Cooper Hospitality Alliance (ECHA).

Amy Livingston
Business & Tourism Manager
open4biz@tompsc.com
843.884.8517
Town Hall, Building A
100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC
experiencemountpleasant.com



All mail for the Town of Mount Pleasant departments should be sent to 100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464 regardless of physical address

#open4bizmp

UTILITIES - IMPORTANT CONTACTS

MOUNT PLEASANT WATERWORKS

Ashley Jenkins

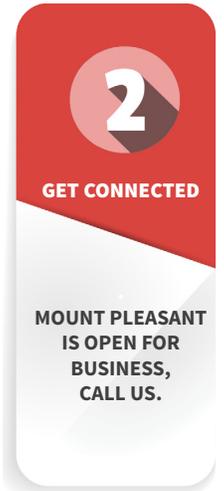
Development Services/ Permit Coordinator

ajenkins@mpwonline.com

843.375.5472

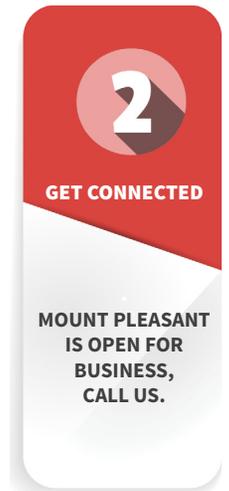
1619 Rifle Range Road | Mount Pleasant, SC

www.mountpleasantwaterworks.com



GET TO KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

There are a number of resources out there to help you get started and integrate into our dynamic business community. Any given day, there numerous events and opportunities to network and learn from your peers. We encourage you to engage with local experts and leverage their knowledge for your own success.



SC BUSINESS ONE STOP

SCBOS.SC.GOV

The official state portal enabling businesses to file permits, licenses, registrations, or pay taxes

MOUNT PLEASANT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MOUNTPLEASANTCHAMBER.ORG

Providing information, education, and networking to promote and enhance the Mount Pleasant business community

CENTER FOR WOMEN

C4WOMEN.ORG

Awareness and advocacy; financial management and entrepreneurship; and leadership and development

HARBOR ENTREPRENEUR CENTER

HARBOREC.COM

Creating collision among entrepreneurs; mentorship, space, funding, events, etc.

S.C.O.R.E. (SERVICE CORPS OF RETIRED EXECUTIVES)

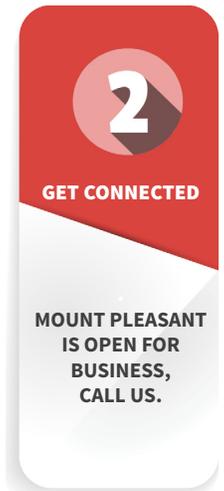
CHARLESTONSC.SCORE.ORG

Free business mentors for entrepreneurs, existing and start-up businesses

LOWCOUNTRY LOCAL FIRST

LOWCOUNTRYLOCALFIRST.ORG

Advocate for the benefits of a local-living economy by strengthening community support of our local independent businesses and farmers



CHARLESTON METRO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHARLESTONCHAMBER.ORG

Legislative advocate for business community; networking; education; office space

CHARLESTON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

CRDA.ORG

Assists companies with competitive location or expansion projects by connecting them with the right people, the appropriate resources and the most meaningful and relevant information

CHARLESTON OPEN SOURCE

CHARLESTONOPENSOURCE.COM

A collaborative regional effort to promote, grow, and connect the region's tech sector

INNOLABS

INNOLABSCCHARLESTON.COM

A co-working space and technology hub

CHARLESTON DIGITAL CORRIDOR

CHARLESTONDIGITALCORRIDOR.COM

Attract, nurture and promote Charleston's tech economy through technology-enabled initiatives and business incentives, private business support and member-driven programming

TRIDENT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

TRIDENTTECH.EDU

The state's largest technical college system

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

COFC.EDU

A nationally-recognized public liberal arts and sciences university

THE CITADEL

CITADEL.EDU

Named five years in a row by US News as the top public college in the South for institutions granting up to a master's degree



3. CELEBRATE

You did it! Let us help you promote your business.

PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

**Congratulations! You've done it. We're glad you're here.
Let us help you spread the word.**

□ **SCHEDULE A RIBBON CUTTING**

Once you've obtained your business license and certificate of occupancy, you're eligible for a ribbon-cutting event. At this event, we will provide the requisite red ribbon and scissors, and the Mayor, Town Council and local area Chambers of Commerce will be invited to attend. While staff cannot guarantee an elected official will be in attendance, a representative from the Town will be there for the ribbon cutting ceremony. We will also help distribute photos and information about the opening through our media contacts, website, and social media.

To schedule a ribbon cutting, please reach out to the Business and Tourism Office (open4biz@tompsc.com). They will coordinate with you to find a day and time to suit your business needs. Ribbon cuttings are generally held Monday through Friday 8am-4pm.





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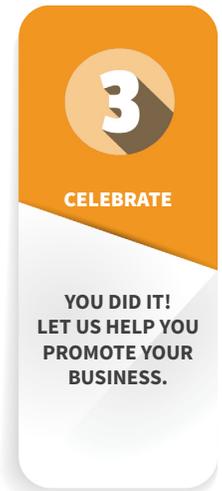
CELEBRATE

**YOU DID IT!
LET US HELP YOU
PROMOTE YOUR
BUSINESS.**

□ **ADD YOUR BUSINESS TO THE EXPERIENCE MOUNT PLEASANT WEBSITE, RESTAURANT MAP, AND/OR GET ENGAGED WITH ECHA**

If your business is in the hospitality and tourism industry, we would love to feature it on our Experience Mount Pleasant website. If your business is a restaurant, you are also eligible to be placed on our restaurant maps which are distributed to local tourism destinations.

The Town also supports this sector of our economy through the East Cooper Hospitality Alliance (ECHA) which hosts dynamic meetings involving accommodations, attractions, restaurants, and industry partners. To be included in these promotional opportunities, or to get engaged with ECHA, please reach out to our Business and Tourism Office (tourism@tompsc.com).



□ **COMMUNICATE YOUR EVENTS AND GOOD NEWS; KEEP IN TOUCH FOR NEW PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

As your business grows, please stay in touch. There are a number of ways we can continue to support your company. The Business and Tourism Office produces a weekly “Around the Town Newsletter” which is distributed to area hotels and features local events and unique happenings throughout the Town. To be considered, email tourism@tompsc.com.

Do you have something that is of national news? Is this something unique to your industry? Talk to the Business and Tourism Manager (open4biz@tompsc.com) to see if you are eligible for the Wired for Business initiative. Regardless, we may be able to assist you with other methods of engagement.

The Business and Tourism Office has recently kicked-off the Town Proud certified local business program. This program helps residents, visitors and business owners identify the local businesses that are rooted here and make our coastal community unlike any other. For more information and to apply for the program, please visit our Business Programs page (<https://experiencemountpleasant.com/work/programs/>).





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Mount Pleasant, SC 29464
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 [@mtpleasantgov](https://twitter.com/mtpleasantgov)

 experiencemountpleasant.com