



Mount Pleasant
SOUTH CAROLINA

BE MOUNT PLEASANT MADE

Your guide to opening your business in Mount Pleasant, SC

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

Published June 2018
Current as of December 2023



On your way to being Mount Pleasant Made.



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. You are on your way to being "Mount Pleasant Made."

Mayor Will Haynie
Town of Mount Pleasant

CONTENTS

1

GET STARTED

YOUR CHECKLIST TO DOING BUSINESS IN MOUNT PLEASANT

Page 4

2

GET CONNECTED

CONTACTS AND RESOURCES TO BE MOUNT PLEASANT MADE

Page 12

3

CELEBRATE

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

Page 18

DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS STRUCTURE

- Register with the South Carolina Secretary of State

GET OFFICIAL - LICENSES, PERMITS, TAXES

- Apply for a Federal Employer ID Number
- Fill out Federal and State Forms for Employment Taxes
- Apply for a SC Sales & Use Tax ID
- Apply for Professional and Occupational Licenses; Other State Licenses
- Apply for a Town of Mount Pleasant Business License; Hospitality and Accommodations Taxes if applicable

SET UP SHOP - ZONING, SIGNAGE, PERMITTING, INSPECTIONS

- Check the Zoning
- Begin the Commercial Design Review Process, Building Permits, and Inspections
- Consider Signage

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT CONTACTS

- Add these Contacts to your Phone

UTILITY CONTACTS

- Add these Contacts to your Phone

BUSINESS RESOURCES

- Leverage these Business Resources and Industry Groups for Success

PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

- Schedule a Ribbon Cutting to Announce your Opening
- Special Event Permits and Special Event Sponsorship Opportunities
- Communicate your Events and Good News; Keep in Touch for New Promotional Opportunities



1. GET STARTED

Your Checklist To Doing Business In Mount Pleasant

DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS STRUCTURE

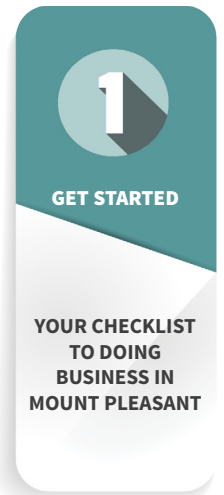
In South Carolina, there are several legal business structure options. Take the time to really think this first step through; financial and legal implications vary depending on legal structure. Given the legal implications when choosing your business structure, new business owners should always seek 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](#) or call 803.734.0629.



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](#). 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. [More Business Resources](#)

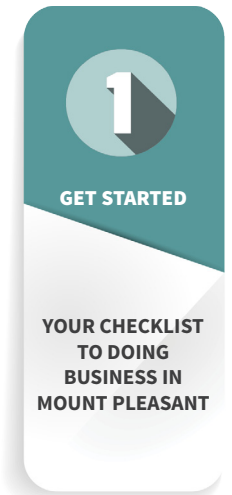
It is a best practice for self-employed individuals operating sole proprietorships to make quarterly individual estimated tax payments to the South Carolina Department of Revenue (using a voucher from your CPA) and to the federal IRS (using a voucher from your CPA). At year's end, you will file your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

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](#).

Find the [South Carolina Withholding Tax Information Guide here](#).

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.



☐ **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](#) or call 803-898-5000.

☐ **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](#).

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.

All businesses must adhere to [OSHA standards](#).

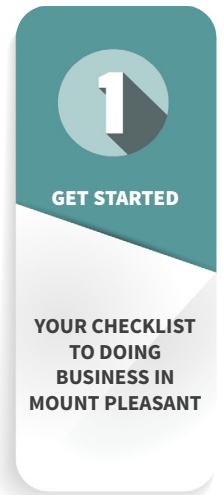
☐ **APPLY FOR A TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT BUSINESS LICENSE; HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMODATIONS TAXES**

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](#).

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.

[Learn more](#) about accommodations taxes, and if you should pay them.



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!

PLAN Department (Planning, Land Use, and Neighborhoods) [Document Library](#)

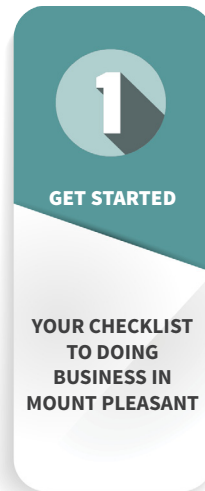
☐ **CHECK THE ZONING**

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. [View the current Zoning Code.](#)

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.

[Click here for our zoning maps.](#)

Information about the Town’s zoning request process [found here.](#)



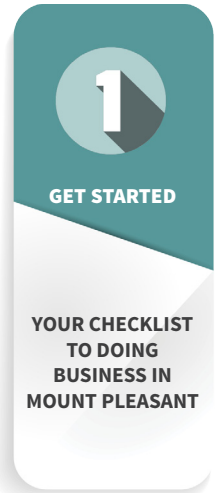
□ ***BEGIN THE COMMERCIAL APPROVAL PROCESS TO RECEIVE YOUR CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY – DESIGN REVIEW, BUILDING PERMITS, AND INSPECTIONS***

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, PLAN, 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 the Development Services Coordinator prior to making a submittal. [View an application checklist.](#)

Submittals for Design Review and for Permits are fully electronic. Online submittals and forms [found here.](#)

COMMERCIAL PROJECTS DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS



1 *An Idea*
The first step is a Feasibility Meeting with various Town Staff to discuss high level plans with the applicant.

2 *Conceptual Submittal*
This goes through the Development Review Team. Applicants do not need to be present for this meeting.

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 *Technical Review & 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.

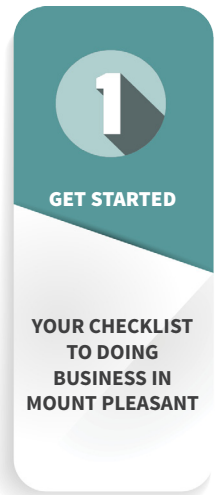
For more information, email Jake Carter (jcarter@tompsc.com) or Chris Lubert (clubert@tompsc.com) or call 843.884.1229.

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. [Schedule your inspection here.](#)

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

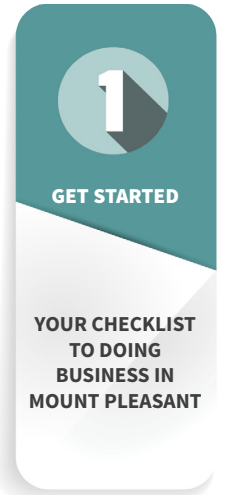
For building permit inspection procedures, fee schedule, and applications, visit our [online library.](#)

[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.



CONSIDER SIGNAGE

Full details on the Town of Mount Pleasant’s sign ordinances can be found online within the [Zoning Code](#). 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

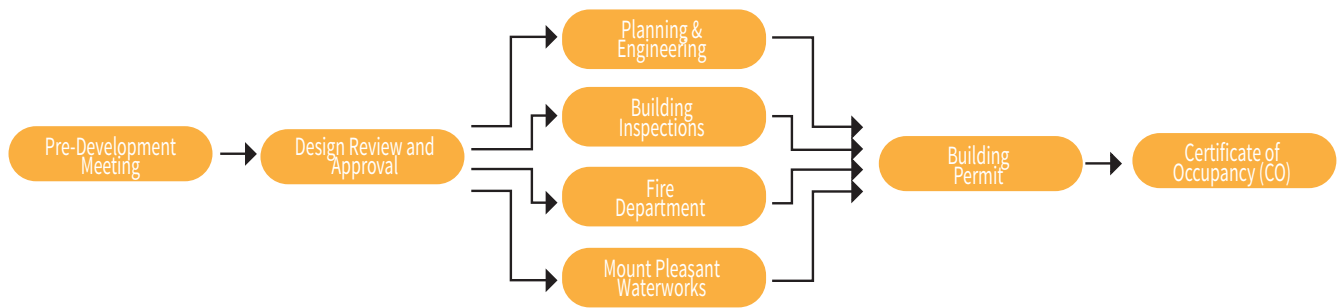
Pre-Development Meeting, Design Review, and Approval

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.

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.



2. GET CONNECTED

Contacts and resources to be Mount Pleasant Made.

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT - IMPORTANT CONTACTS

PLAN DEPARTMENT (PLANNING, LAND USE, AND NEIGHBORHOODS)

planning@tompsc.com

843.884.1229

Town Hall

100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC

PLAN & ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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

Jake Carter
Planner Architecture
jcarter@tompsc.com

Marissa Poultney
Staff Engineer
mpoultney@tompsc.com

Chris Lubert
Planner Site & Landscape
clubert@tompsc.com

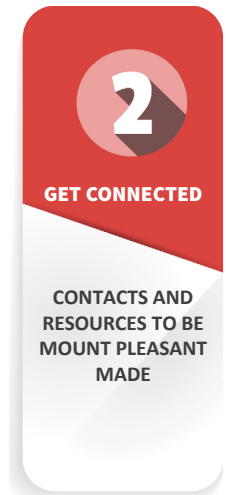
BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION

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

Lori Cole
Plan Review Coordinator
lcole@tompsc.com



BUSINESS LICENSE OFFICE

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

Melody Lane
Business License Official
mlane@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.

John Pool

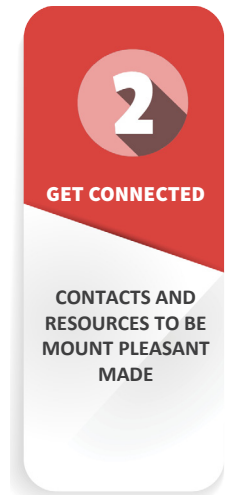
Fire Marshall

jpool@tompsc.com

843.884.0623

Fire Station 2

355 7th Avenue | Mount Pleasant, SC



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT + BUSINESS AND TOURISM

The Economic Development office is responsible for business attraction and expansion, innovation, entrepreneurship, support of small businesses and other business support services.

Business and Tourism is responsible for marketing efforts related to tourism, business promotion, hospitality, park, cultural and event initiatives, as well as coordinating ceremonies such as ribbon cuttings and groundbreakings.

Matt Brady

Economic Development Manager

economicdevelopment@tompsc.com

Town Hall, Building A

100 Ann Edwards Lane | Mount Pleasant, SC

mountpleasantmade.com

John Greenberg

Social Media & Marketing Manager

tourism@tompsc.com

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.

UTILITIES - IMPORTANT CONTACTS

MOUNT PLEASANT WATERWORKS

engineering@mpwonline.com

843.884.9626

1619 Rifle Range Road | Mount Pleasant, SC

www.mountpleasantwaterworks.com

2

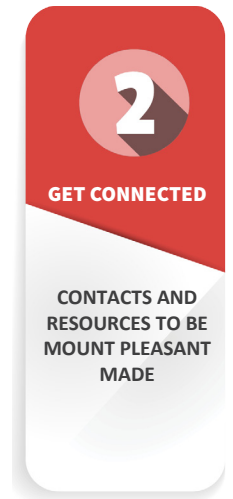
GET CONNECTED

CONTACTS AND
RESOURCES TO BE
MOUNT PLEASANT
MADE



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

HARBOR ENTREPRENEUR CENTER

HARBOREC.COM

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

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

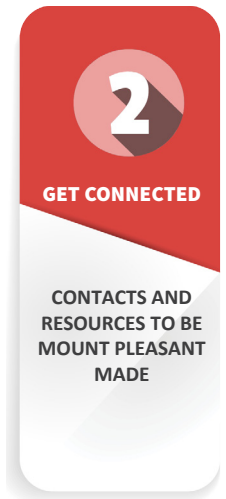
CHARLESTONSC.SCORE.ORG

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

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

□ **SCHEDULE A RIBBON CUTTING**

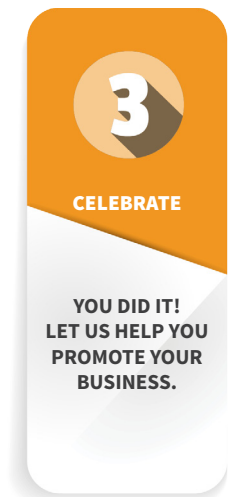
Once you've obtained your business license and certificate of occupancy, you're eligible for a ribbon-cutting ceremony. At this event, Town staff will provide the brilliant blue ribbon and scissors, and the Mayor, Town Council, and the local area Chamber of Commerce will be invited to attend. While staff 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 [Business and Tourism](#).



□ **ADD YOUR BUSINESS TO THE EXPERIENCE MOUNT PLEASANT WEBSITE**

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 hotels and attractions.



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

Just because your business grows, does not mean we lose touch with your business. The Town has a number of ways to stay in touch with residents and business owners.

- NotifyMe Alert Center [Signup](#)
- Town Administrator's Monthly E-Brief [Signup](#)
- Mount Pleasant Made Newsletter [Signup](#)
- Around The Town Newsletter [Signup](#)
- Town of Mount Pleasant [Social Media](#)
- Mount Pleasant Made business meetups and workshops

The Town also has several business programs and incentives for all local businesses. View the Town's [business and economic development strategy, programs, incentives, and more.](#)



100 Ann Edwards Lane
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464
843.884.8517