



# connor concepts

Superior Dining Experiences. **Everyday.**

*Connors*  
Steak & Seafood

The Chop House logo features a small icon of a knife and a wooden block above the text. The text "The Chop House" is written in a bold, red, serif font with a yellow outline and a drop shadow effect. The word "The" is smaller and positioned above "Chop".

## **Concept & Strategy**

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*The objective at Connor Concepts is to develop and operate a regional system of restaurants offering guests a distinctive dining experience – creating a loyal customer base and generating a high level of repeat business.*

Through fulfillment of our objective, we provide an excellent opportunity for the development and success of our team members while creating exceptional investment growth for our partners.

## **The Chop House**

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This steak house concept positions itself in the market between fine dining and family fare, combining premium offerings and friendly service in a casual, relaxed atmosphere.

Chop House guests receive good value and hearty menu items. Our fare is “better and different,” using fresh ingredients prepared in-house and featuring steaks and chops grilled in our unique Montague™ ovens. Service strives to be second to none with an intensive training program for team members. The atmosphere is inviting with rich woods and earthen-colored décor. Fireplaces, alabaster chandeliers and gas lamps accent the warm environment.

## **Connors Steak & Seafood**

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Emphasizing a blend of traditionally favored entrees and fresh, uniquely prepared items, Connors Steak & Seafood is capable of responding to the increasingly sophisticated tastes of our guests. Connors Steak & Seafood offers a great price value based upon product quality, portion size, and distinctiveness. We intend to utilize and expand this concept to satisfy a marketing position with a slightly more affluent customer base than the Chop House. Connors Steak & Seafood is stylish while retaining the warmth and inviting atmosphere preferred by the casual diner.

## **Menu – The Chop House**

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The Chop House offers guests familiar food prepared in a unique manner with a passionate focus on excellence. We take no shortcuts in preparation and purchase only the highest quality products, while offering great price value. When possible all items are homemade and prepared with fresh ingredients, including soups, salad dressings, sauces, desserts and more.

Our menu is better and different in that premium aged, uniquely seasoned, USDA Choice steaks are grilled in Montague™ ovens at extreme temperatures over 1800 degrees in order to sear in juices and natural flavors. Prime Rib is seasoned and slow roasted until fork-tender. USDC inspected fresh fish is grilled and topped with a variety of seasonal vegetables and fruit toppings. Our Colossal-Sized Onion Rings are hand-breaded and hand-battered using an 11-step process. Other guest favorites are the featured 14 oz. French-Cut Pork Chop, Lamb Chops, Grilled Chicken Salad, Steakburger, hand-breaded Baked Boston Schrod, barbecued Baby Back Ribs and Caramel Fudge Cake.

Our executive chef continually develops innovative items for the menu to meet evolving trends and offer patrons fresh and interesting flavors. Our menu is intentionally limited and easy to execute ensuring quality – our highest objective. Guests may have their meal prepared in accordance with dietary needs and are also offered “down-sized” portions of many of our popular entrees.

Chop House entrees range in price from \$5.00 to \$25.00, and our appetizers range in price from \$5.00 to \$11.00. The average check per guest, including alcoholic beverages, is approximately \$16.00 to \$17.00. Sales of alcoholic beverages, featuring a nice variety of liquor, wine and beer, comprise about 10% of revenue. Lunch and dinner contribute approximately 33% and 67% of revenue, respectively.

## **Menu – Connors Steak & Seafood**

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The Connors Steak & Seafood menu offers a balanced blend of traditional American favorites and trendy entrees that excite the senses and create memorable dining experiences. Chefs are trained to prepare specially seasoned, premium cuts of aged beef. Our steaks and fresh seafood are grilled over mesquite wood to enhance the richness in flavor. A variety of impressive recipes have been created to please the most sophisticated diner. The menu is highlighted by dishes such as Lobster and Crab Bisque, Pan Seared Ahi Tuna, Caribbean Shrimp Pasta, Chicken Piccata, Steamed Alaskan King Crab Legs and Sautéed Pork Tenderloin. We offer a variety of fresh vegetables and can accommodate guests with special dietary needs.

In addition to our core menu, Connors Steak & Seafood offer a variety of lunch and light eating favorites such as Baby Spinach & Strawberry Salad, Reuben Sandwich and specially seasoned, Mesquite Grilled Burgers. Menu pricing for Connors Steak & Seafood ranges from approximately \$7.00 to \$35.00 per guest.

A focal point of the restaurant’s atmosphere is our Exhibition Kitchen, while the Cook Line and Seafood & Dessert Bar offer tempting aromas, add visual appeal and entertain guests as they anticipate their dining experience.



Coldwater Lobster Tail at Connor's Steak & Seafood.



Sweet Corn Tamale Cakes – one of three new appetizers at The Chop House.

## Potential Sites & Guidelines for Expansion

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- Approximate 6,500 square foot building
- Capitalized investment not to exceed \$2.8 million for total project cost
- \$1 to 1.25 million building cost
- \$600k equipment
- \$200k start-up
- \$500–750k property cost (1.25 minimum acreage)
- Lease vs. purchase of real estate
- Visibility, accessibility, ample signage, traffic count 30k+ per day
- 110+ dedicated parking spaces
- Within 300 mile radius of Knoxville, TN
- Major metropolitan area (MSA Population 300,000+)
- Anticipated annual net sales volume \$3 million+
- Anticipated restaurant contribution minimum of 12%
- Availability of our niche in market
- Population 75k people within 5 mile radius
- Average income level \$60k+ per household
- Able to do at least 30% sales at lunch
- 200,000 square feet of leased office space within 1 mile radius
- Education of adults minimum 50% with some college
- Labor pool available (university or college nearby)

NOTE: Connors Steak & Seafood locations preferred in slightly more affluent areas.



The Chop House at I-40 and Hwy. 66 in Kodak, TN (next to Bass Pro).



Sunrise at The Chop House Fountain City in Knoxville, TN.



Fresh seafood display at Connors Steak & Seafood in Knoxville, TN.



The Chop House in Murfreesboro, TN.

## **Mike Connor — President & Chief Executive Officer**

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Mike began his restaurant career with Steak & Ale in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1973. He continued in management with the Norman Brinker-owned restaurant chain for almost 10 years working in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia and Texas.

In 1982 along with the Regas' of Knoxville, Mike started and served as president of the Grady's Restaurant chain in Knoxville. Over the next seven years Grady's opened seven additional restaurants (averaging \$3.6 million each in annual sales) and merged with Mike's old mentor Norman Brinker and the Chili's group in 1989. Mike continued to serve as the concept head of Grady's and opened seven more restaurants in the next two years. In 1987, Ken Blanchard (The One Minute Manager) selected Grady's, along with several large companies, to participate in a video he produced entitled "Legendary Service."

In 1992 Mike left Brinker and formed Connor Concepts, Inc., which developed The Chop House restaurant, specializing in heavily-aged, hand-selected, uniquely-seasoned steaks and chops. The first Chop House in Knoxville was opened with several associates from Grady's, and has been very successful. To date Connor Concepts, Inc. has opened ten Chop House restaurants in Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio (averaging \$3.2 million in annual sales each). The company also owns and operates the Connors Steak & Seafood brand of restaurants.

Mike is married to Carol Gray Connor, his wife of 30 years. Together they have four children: Mandy, Ryan, Brett and Patrick. Mike serves on the board of St. Mary's Hospital, the board of the Tennessee Restaurant Association, and is Chairman of the Finance Council for the Catholic Dioceses of East Tennessee. Mike was a member of the Leadership Knoxville class of 1990 and was selected the "Tennessee Restaurateur of the Year" in 1995 by the Tennessee Restaurant Association.

## **Bo Connor — Vice President & Chief Operating Officer**

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Bo Connor is a veteran restaurateur with over 25 years experience with high volume, limited menu concepts. After graduating from the University of Tennessee with a business degree, Bo has been involved in the development of eight successful operations, including Steak & Ale, J Muggs, Grady's, Chop House, Chops Grill, Connors Steak & Seafood, Bennigan's and Regas. Bo began his career under the tutelage of Norman Brinker at Steak & Ale. He rose through the ranks from assistant manager in the Chattanooga area to Regional Director of Steak & Ale operations in the Georgia/Alabama region. Realizing the opportunity for growth with a new cutting edge concept, Bo left Steak & Ale and joined his brother Mike at Grady's restaurants. Grady's grew to seven locations in the Southeast and was an unquestionable success. The restaurants in the Knoxville and Chattanooga areas maintained the highest guest counts and sales of any restaurant in their respective cities during this period. After Grady's was sold by the partnership to Brinker, Inc., Bo joined Mike and partner Kevin Thompson to form Connor Concepts, Inc., which developed The Chop House and Connors Steak & Seafood. Bo is currently Chief Operating Officer overseeing all operations for the 13-restaurant company, which employs over 1,200 team members.

### **Kevin Thompson – Vice President & Co-Founder**

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Kevin's professional career began with Del Taco in California where he successfully facilitated their nationwide expansion as Regional Supervisor. In 1980, an opportunity presented itself to join Mike Connor at Steak & Ale in Dallas, Texas. Kevin and Mike later decided to partner and relocate to Knoxville, Tennessee and develop a new concept, Grady's Goodtimes. Grady's was a seminal example of the emerging "casual dining" segment and quickly expanded to seven restaurants and \$22 million in revenues. Brinker International acquired Grady's in 1989. In 1992 Kevin joined forces with Mike and Bo Connor to form Connor Concepts Inc. In 2001, Kevin joined Mike Connor and Bill Regas to form Connor, Regas & Thompson LLC which owns and operates the venerable, Ivy Award-winning Regas Restaurant in downtown Knoxville. Kevin currently serves as President of Connor, Regas & Thompson as well as Vice President of Connor Concepts, Inc.

### **Brian Keyes – Vice President Operations**

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Brian began his professional career in restaurant management in 1984. Upon completion of college degrees (B.S. cum laude Virginia Tech '81 & M.S. Tennessee '84), Brian was the first team member promoted to Manager under Mike Connor at the original Grady's in Knoxville, Tennessee. Brian relocated with Grady's numerous times and opened many new restaurants. He was promoted to General Manager in 1988 and Area Director in 1991. In 1993 Brian joined the Chop House team and has mainly been responsible for multi-unit supervision with Connor Concepts, Inc. In addition to operations, some other areas Brian is responsible for are: human resources, management information systems (POS), menu and web site development and design, training and manuals. Brian is also a food safety instructor and he certifies all management personnel through the National Restaurant Association's ServSafe seminars. Brian currently serves on the board of the University of Tennessee's Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Management Curriculum, and is president of Knoxville's Franklin Square Merchants Association.

### **Tony Watson – Vice President Concept Development & Purchasing**

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Tony has over 30 years experience in the restaurant industry. Experience includes being line supervisor for The Hungry Fisherman and kitchen manager for TGI Fridays. He assisted with the research and development of new menu items for Grady's Goodtimes, ordered smallwares packages, and coordinated back of house operations for several new restaurant openings. He has created menus and back of house operations for such concepts as Cheers, TW Lees, Captains Quarters, J. Alexanders, Chops Grill, The Chop House, NASCAR Cafe and Connors Steak & Seafood. Current duties include ongoing research and development of new menu items and products, back of house design and systems, purchasing of food products, FF&E supplies, smallwares, handling all rebates, and coordinating back of house operations at new restaurant openings for Connor Concepts, Inc.

### **Mark Davis — Corporate Chef**

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Mark's restaurant career began with Darryl's 1808 in North Carolina where he worked as a server, line cook and Kitchen Manager. In 1990, Mark joined the kitchen staff of Grady's Goodtimes in Charlotte. During this time, Mark gained valuable experience assisting in several new restaurant openings and met Kevin Thompson, the current Vice President & Co-Founder of Connor Concepts, Inc. After its formation in 1992, Mark joined Connor Concepts and became the Head Chef for their second location in Kingsport, TN. Mark relocated and also served as Head Chef for units in Chattanooga, TN and Dayton, OH. In 1997 he was promoted to Food and Beverage Director for NASCAR Café in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Responsible for coordinating all kitchen operations and new restaurant openings, Mark facilitated concept expansion into Florida, Tennessee, and Nevada. Mark rejoined Connor Concepts in 2003 as Corporate Chef. Mark's main responsibilities are coordination of back-of-house training at new restaurant openings and menu planning & implementation for the company's three concepts.

### **Brent West — Vice President/Area Director**

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While attending the University of Tennessee in 1992, Brent joined the Connor Concepts team. He began as a server at the first Chop House, located in Knoxville, Tennessee. After graduation, Brent was promoted to a management position and assisted in the opening of several new locations. Brent was promoted into a General Manager role after a few years, and has since worked in multiple locations. He has often taken over stagnant locations and improved operations, sales, and profit to above average performance in short periods of time. Brent is currently a Vice President/Area Director, supervising four locations spanning three states.

## **Professional References**

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Contact: Brenda

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Contact: Roger Lietner

## **Contact Connor Concepts, Inc.**

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The Chop House 14 oz. New York Strip.

visit us on the web  
[www.thechophouse.com](http://www.thechophouse.com)