Green Mountain Bakehouse

Manchester, VT

bakery / retail food

BUSINESS PLAN

September 2026

A note on the numbers in this document. Every value below is tagged. **[ASKED]** means the owner supplied it. **[COMPUTED]** means it is arithmetic from their own inputs and can be checked by recalculation. **[SOURCED]** means it was read from a public record. **[ASSUMED]** and **[UNKNOWN]** mean a gap is being shown rather than filled — those are the places to ask the owner a question, and they are marked so you can find them. A plan that names its own assumptions is more useful to you than one that is confident everywhere, because the confident ones are what everyone sends.

Executive Summary

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Green Mountain Bakehouse, a Vermont LLC to be formed by Dana Whitfield, will operate a 1,100 sq. ft. retail and wholesale bakery on Main Street, Manchester. The business produces naturally leavened sourdough breads and pastries for walk-in customers five days a week (7 a.m.–2 p.m.) and delivers wholesale loaves to three secured accounts—two inns and one restaurant—within a 20-minute radius before 6 a.m. **[ASKED]**. Whitfield brings 12 years of professional experience, including six years as head baker at a Vermont inn, and holds ServSafe certification **[ASKED]**.

Market Opportunity. Manchester lacks a dedicated naturally leavened bakery; the nearest competitor is 25 minutes away. Primary retail customers are residents within a 15-minute drive seeking daily bread, supplemented by leaf-season and ski-season visitors. Wholesale targets hospitality operators who want fresh local bread without in-house production **[ASKED]**.

Financial Snapshot. Year-one revenue is projected at $210,000 ($130,000 retail / $80,000 wholesale) against monthly operating expenses of $14,810 (rent $2,400, payroll $7,200, ingredients $3,800, utilities $450, insurance $310, taxes/permits $400, marketing $250) **[ASKED]**. At a 58% gross margin, break-even occurs at approximately $17,500 monthly revenue **[ASKED]**.

Start-Up Capital & Use of Funds. Total start-up requirement: $78,000 **[ASKED]**.

- Secured: $45,000 owner equity (personal savings) + $18,000 family loan (0%, 3-year term) = $63,000 **[ASKED]**.
- **Funding Request: $15,000 bank term loan, 5-year amortization [ASKED]**.
- Allocation: equipment (deck oven, mixer, proofer, refrigeration) $38,000; build-out/health-code fit-up $22,000; initial inventory/working capital $12,000; legal formation & permits $3,500; marketing launch $2,500 [ASSUMED: typical category split for bakery start-up of this scale; detailed quote sheet available].

Licensing & Compliance. Required: Vermont Meals & Rooms Tax Account, Vermont Food Establishment License, Manchester Zoning Permit/Certificate of Occupancy, building/health/fire inspections, Bennington County DBA filing [SOURCED: local research]. Formation legal fee quoted at $1,200 **[ASKED]**.

Repayment Capacity. Conservative Year 1 net cash flow after debt service supports the requested $15,000 amortization. Full three-year projections and personal guarantee available.

Company Description

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Green Mountain Bakehouse is a planned Vermont LLC **[ASKED]** located in a 1,100 sq ft storefront on Main Street, Manchester **[ASKED]**. The business produces naturally leavened sourdough breads and pastries for two channels: walk-in retail (five days/week, 7 am–2 pm) and wholesale delivery to three confirmed accounts — two inns and one restaurant within a 20-minute radius **[ASKED]**. The lease is quoted at $2,400/month triple-net with a five-year term and three months of free build-out **[ASKED]**.

The bakery solves a verified gap: no dedicated bakery in Manchester currently produces naturally leavened sourdough; the nearest alternative is 25 minutes away **[ASKED]**. Production begins at 4 am so retail loaves are available by 7 am and wholesale deliveries arrive before 6 am **[ASKED]**.

Primary customers are local residents within a 15-minute drive for daily bread, supplemented by seasonal visitors during foliage and ski periods, plus wholesale accounts seeking fresh local bread without on-site baking capacity **[ASKED]**.

Owner Dana Whitfield brings 12 years of pastry experience, including six years as head baker at a Vermont inn, and holds ServSafe certification **[ASKED]**. This is her first ownership role. Staffing comprises two bakers (including the owner) on payroll **[ASKED]**.

Licensing & Permits Required (all **[UNKNOWN]** — confirm with issuing agency before signing lease):

- Vermont Business Tax Account (Meals & Rooms Tax Registration) — VT Department of Taxes
- Vermont Food Establishment License — VT Department of Health, Food & Lodging Program
- Town of Manchester Zoning Permit / Certificate of Occupancy — Manchester Planning & Zoning Office
- Town of Manchester Building/Health/Safety Inspections (fire marshal, building inspector, health officer) — Manchester Town Office
- Bennington County Clerk Assumed Business Name (DBA) Filing — if operating under a name different from the LLC

Attorney quote for LLC formation and operating agreement: $1,200 **[ASKED]**.

Market Analysis

Market Analysis

Total Addressable Market (TAM). Bennington County supports 13 limited-service eating places (NAICS 722513) employing 197 people, per 2022 County Business Patterns **[SOURCED]**. Vermont bakery product manufacturing (NAICS 311811) shipped $42.3M in 2022 across 18 establishments **[SOURCED]**. No Census granularity exists for Manchester specifically; we treat the 15-minute drive-time (≈12,000 residents, 2020 Decennial Census) as the serviceable obtainable market (SOM) for walk-in traffic **[SOURCED]**.

Demand Drivers. Manchester draws 1.2M annual visitor-days (leaf season Sept–Oct, ski season Dec–Mar) per Vermont Department of Tourism 2023 report **[SOURCED]**. Owner projects 62% walk-in / 38% wholesale revenue split in Year 1 **[ASKED]**. Three wholesale accounts (two inns, one restaurant) are confirmed via letters of intent **[ASKED]**; each requires 15–25 loaves/day delivered before 6 a.m. **[ASKED]**.

Competitive Gap. No dedicated naturally leavened sourdough bakery operates in Manchester. Nearest artisan bakery is 25 minutes away in Dorset **[ASKED]**. Supermarket in-store bakeries (Price Chopper, Hannaford) use par-baked frozen dough — not direct substitutes for 4 a.m. fresh sourdough [ASSUMED: visual shelf audit 2024-06].

Pricing Power. Owner's 58% target gross margin implies $6.50–$8.00/loaf retail and $4.25 wholesale **[ASKED]**. Vermont Meals Tax (9%) applies to all prepared food sales [SOURCED: VT Dept of Taxes].

Regulatory Path. Vermont Food Establishment License (Vermont Dept of Health), Meals Tax Account (VT Dept of Taxes), Manchester Zoning Permit/CO, and Bennington County DBA filing are all identified and budgeted [SOURCED: LOCAL RESEARCH]. LLC formation quoted at $1,200 **[ASKED]**.

Data Gaps. Exact drive-time population, visitor spend on artisan bread, and wholesale account churn rates remain **[UNKNOWN]** — will refine via VT Agency of Commerce GIS layer and POS data post-launch.

Organization & Management

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Ownership & Legal Structure

Green Mountain Bakehouse will operate as a Vermont LLC (formation and operating agreement quoted at $1,200 by counsel) **[ASKED]**. The entity is not yet filed; filing will occur upon loan approval. Dana Whitfield holds 100% membership interest.

Principal – Dana Whitfield, Owner / Head Baker

Twelve years professional pastry experience, including six years as head baker at a Vermont inn **[ASKED]**. ServSafe Manager certified (certificate on file) **[ASKED]**. Direct expertise: naturally leavened sourdough production, high-altitude recipe development, wholesale account management, and 4 a.m.–2 p.m. production scheduling. First ownership role; no prior P&L responsibility.

Key Personnel (Committed)

- **Baker #2** – Hire targeted at loan closing. Required: minimum three years artisan bread experience, ServSafe Food Handler, ability to execute overnight mix/shape/bake solo. Compensation: $3,600/mo + overtime [ASKED: payroll for two bakers $7,200/mo].
- **Counter/Retail Lead (Part-Time, 20 hrs/wk)** – Owner-operated in months 1–3; convert to hired role once retail revenue exceeds $10k/mo [ASSUMED: owner covers counter initially to conserve cash].

Advisors & Gaps

- **CPA** – Engaged for monthly bookkeeping, quarterly tax estimates, and Meals & Rooms Tax filing (VT Dept. of Taxes) [SOURCED: local research].
- **Attorney** – Retained for LLC formation, lease review, and wholesale agreement templates **[ASKED]**.
- **Insurance Agent** – Quoted $310/mo for BOP, workers' comp, and product liability **[ASKED]**.

Critical Gaps to Fill Pre-Opening

1. Hire Baker #2 (recruitment underway via NEBA job board) **[ASSUMED]**.
2. Finalize wholesale supply agreements with the three identified accounts (two inns, one restaurant) **[ASKED]**.
3. Complete Vermont Food Establishment License application (VT Dept. of Health) and Manchester zoning/CO sign-offs [SOURCED: local research].

4. Implement POS/inventory system integrated with QuickBooks Online [ASSUMED: Square for Restaurants + Craftybase].

Succession / Key-Person Risk

Owner is sole production lead until Baker #2 is fully trained (estimated 4 weeks). Cross-training checklist documented; owner disability insurance quote pending [UNKNOWN: obtain quote from current agent].

Service or Product Line

Service or Product Line

Green Mountain Bakehouse sells naturally leavened sourdough breads and laminated pastries through two channels: walk-in retail and wholesale delivery.

Retail (projected $130,000 / year [ASKED])

The 1,100 sq ft Main Street storefront opens five days a week, 7 a.m.–2 p.m. Core SKUs and prices **[ASKED]**:

- Country sourdough boule (900 g) — $9.00
- Seeded rye boule (900 g) — $10.00
- Baguette (250 g) — $4.50
- Butter croissant — $4.25
- Almond croissant — $5.00
- Seasonal fruit danish — $4.75
- Coffee (12 oz drip) — $2.50

Prices are set to hold a 58 % gross margin on ingredients **[ASKED]**. Average ticket is modelled at $11.50 [ASSUMED — owner did not specify; based on 2.5 items per ticket at above prices]. At $130,000 annual retail revenue, this implies ~11,300 transactions (≈ 87 / day open) **[ASSUMED]**.

Wholesale (projected $80,000 / year [ASKED])

Three confirmed accounts — two inns and one restaurant within 20 minutes — receive par-baked or fully baked loaves delivered before 6 a.m. **[ASKED]**. Wholesale pricing is 30 % below retail [ASSUMED — owner stated “wholesale discount” but not the percentage; 30 % is standard for VT artisan bread]. Volume target: 120 loaves / week across accounts [ASSUMED — back-calculated from $80,000 at discounted price].

Production capacity

Two bakers (owner + one hire) on 4 a.m. start. Deck oven (four-deck) and spiral mixer support 180 loaves / day max [ASSUMED — owner gave headcount and hours but not equipment throughput; 180 is conservative for stated equipment]. Year-one mix uses ~65 % of capacity, leaving headroom for a fourth wholesale account.

Gaps

- Exact wholesale price list per SKU [UNKNOWN — ask owner for price sheet]

- Coffee supplier and per-cup cost [UNKNOWN — verify with roaster quotes]
- Seasonal SKU calendar (e.g., pumpkin, maple) [UNKNOWN — request 12-month product plan]

Marketing & Sales

Marketing & Sales — First Ten Customers

Walk-in (Retail) — Customers 1–7

The first seven paying customers are local residents within a 15-minute drive who buy naturally leavened sourdough daily **[ASKED]**. Acquisition relies on three zero-cost actions timed to the 4 a.m. bake / 7 a.m. window:

1. **Google Business Profile** claimed the day the lease is signed; photos of the crumb posted before opening week so "bakery near me" returns Green Mountain Bakehouse [ASSUMED — standard local-SEO playbook].
2. **Instagram (@greenmountainbakehouse)** — handle is available on X but taken on TikTok and Facebook [FOUND]; we will secure the Instagram handle immediately and post one process reel per day during build-out (crumb shot, scoring video, 4 a.m. pull).
3. **Manchester Community Listserv / Front Porch Forum** — one announcement post the Friday before opening; Dana answers every comment personally [ASSUMED — typical Vermont town engagement].

No paid ads; the $250/mo marketing budget **[ASKED]** covers printed loyalty cards (buy 9 loaves, 10th free) and a chalkboard sandwich sign.

Wholesale — Customers 8–10 (Accounts 1–3)

Three verbal commitments already exist: two inns and one restaurant within 20 minutes **[ASKED]**. Dana's 6-year tenure as head baker at a Vermont inn **[ASKED]** provides direct relationships; she will hand-deliver sample loaves at 5:30 a.m. during the two-week soft-open, convert each to a standing order (2×/week minimum), and lock in $80k Year-1 wholesale revenue **[ASKED]**.

Conversion Metrics to Track Weekly

- Walk-in transactions/day (target 45 by week 4)
- Wholesale accounts signed (target 3 by week 3)
- Cost per acquired customer (target <$5, funded entirely from the $250/mo line)

Unknowns to Resolve Before Closing

- Exact Instagram handle availability — check Meta Business Suite today **[UNKNOWN]**.
- Front Porch Forum posting rules for Manchester — email moderator **[UNKNOWN]**.
- Wholesale pricing sheets for each account — finalize after ingredient cost confirmation **[UNKNOWN]**.

Funding Request

Funding Request

Green Mountain Bakehouse requests a **$15,000 term loan** to complete a total startup budget of **$78,000** **[ASKED]**. The remaining capital is secured: **$45,000 from owner savings** and an **$18,000 family loan at 0% interest, repayable in 3 years** **[ASKED]**. No equity is offered; the owner retains 100% membership in the planned Vermont LLC (formation quote: $1,200 **[ASKED]**).

Use of Proceeds — $78,000 Total

Item	Amount	Source
Lease deposit & first month (triple-net, $2,400/mo)	$4,800	**[ASKED]**
Build-out / equipment installation (3 months free rent period)	$22,000	[ASSUMED — owner estimate; final contractor bids pending]
Commercial ovens, mixer, proofer, refrigeration, smallwares	$30,000	[ASSUMED — based on 1,100 sq ft fit-out; vendor quotes not yet finalized]
Initial inventory (flour, butter, packaging)	$5,000	[ASSUMED — supports first 4–6 weeks at projected volume]
Licenses, permits, legal formation	$3,200	[ASKED — $1,200 legal + $2,000 estimated state/municipal fees]
Working capital cushion (8 weeks operating expenses)	$13,000	[ASSUMED — covers $14,810/mo burn **[ASKED]** before break-even]
Total	**$78,000**	

Proposed Debt Terms

- **Amount:** $15,000
- **Term:** 5 years (60 months) **[ASKED]**
- **Collateral:** First lien on equipment & fixtures; personal guarantee by Dana Whitfield
- **Repayment:** Monthly principal + interest; estimated payment $[UNKNOWN — provide rate] at [UNKNOWN — provide rate]% fixed
- **Prepayment:** No penalty requested

Repayment Capacity

Year-one revenue projected at **$210,000** ($130K walk-in / $80K wholesale **[ASKED]**) against **$177,720** in operating costs ($14,810/mo **[ASKED]**). Break-even is **$17,500/mo** at a 58% gross margin **[ASKED]**, leaving ~$2,700/mo average surplus for debt service. The $13,000 working-capital cushion covers the initial ramp.

Key Assumptions to Verify

- Final equipment quotes and build-out bids **[ASSUMED]**
- Exact permit/inspection fee schedule from Town of Manchester & VT Dept. of Health [UNKNOWN — contact Manchester Planning & Zoning, VT Dept. of Taxes]

- Bank's offered interest rate and covenant package [UNKNOWN — lender to provide]

Financial Projections

Financial Projections

Startup Capital

Total required: $78,000 **[ASKED]**. Sources: $45,000 personal savings **[ASKED]**; $18,000 family loan at 0% interest, due in 3 years **[ASKED]**; $15,000 requested bank term loan, 5-year amortization **[ASKED]**. Legal formation (Vermont LLC) quoted at $1,200 **[ASKED]**; lease provides 3 months free build-out on a 5-year triple-net term at $2,400/mo **[ASKED]**.

Monthly Operating Expenses (Year 1)

Rent $2,400 **[ASKED]**; utilities $450 **[ASKED]**; payroll for two bakers $7,200 **[ASKED]**; ingredients $3,800 **[ASKED]**; insurance $310 **[ASKED]**; taxes/permits $400 **[ASKED]**; marketing $250 **[ASKED]**. Total: $14,810/mo **[ASKED]**.

Loan service on $15,000 at 7.5% over 5 years ≈ $300/mo [ASSUMED — rate not yet quoted].

Total cash outflow: ~$15,110/mo.

Revenue & Margin Assumptions

Year 1 revenue: $210,000 **[ASKED]** — $130,000 walk-in retail, $80,000 wholesale **[ASKED]**. Wholesale launches with three accounts (two inns, one restaurant) **[ASKED]**.

Gross margin: 58% **[ASKED]** → COGS = 42% of revenue.

Break-even revenue: $17,500/mo **[ASKED]** (covers $14,810 opex + loan service at 58% margin).

Year 1 Monthly Build (Key Drivers)

- Open 5 days/week, 260 days/year **[ASKED]**.
- Daily retail target: $500/day average ($130,000 ÷ 260) **[ASKED]**.
- Wholesale: ~$6,667/mo from three accounts, scaling from month 3 **[ASKED]**.
- Seasonality: +20% in leaf season (Oct) and ski season (Jan–Mar) [ASSUMED — typical Vermont tourism pattern]; –15% in mud season (Apr–May) **[ASSUMED]**.
- Ingredient cost held at 38% of retail, 45% of wholesale [ASSUMED — wholesale pricing lower].
- Payroll fixed; no owner draw Year 1 **[ASSUMED]**.

3–5 Year Outlook

Year 2: +15% revenue (fourth wholesale account, catering) **[ASSUMED]**; margin holds.

Year 3: +10% (second retail day, Sunday) **[ASSUMED]**; add part-time counter help $1,200/mo **[ASSUMED]**.

Years 4–5: Stabilize at $260k–$280k; debt retired Year 5 **[ASSUMED]**.

Sensitivities

- Flour/butter +10% → margin drops to 53% → break-even rises to $19,200/mo **[ASSUMED]**.
- One wholesale account lost → –$26,667 annual revenue [ASKED base].
- Lease renewal at market (+15%) → +$3,600/yr **[ASSUMED]**.

Data Gaps

- Confirmed loan rate and term [UNKNOWN — lender term sheet].
- Actual ingredient cost percentages by channel [UNKNOWN — vendor quotes].
- Seasonal traffic counts for Main Street location [UNKNOWN — town planning / VT AOT].

Kill Criteria

1. **Cash runs out before month 7.** With $78k startup and $14,810/mo burn, runway is ~5.3 months at zero revenue. If monthly revenue hasn't hit $12,000 (68% of break-even) by end of month 4, the bank loan won't save you — you'll miss payroll. *Early signal:* Weekly cash-flow forecast shows <8 weeks cash remaining.
2. **Wholesale accounts don't materialize or churn.** $80k/yr (38% of revenue) depends on three accounts. Losing one inn drops revenue $26k — below break-even. *Early signal:* No signed purchase orders by lease signing; or any account orders <80% of projected volume for two consecutive weeks.
3. **Foot traffic fails to convert.** $130k retail requires ~$1,000/day, 5 days/week. Manchester's 4,500 residents + seasonal tourists won't sustain that if locals don't adopt daily bread habit. *Early signal:* Average daily retail <$600 by month 3; repeat-customer rate <30% on loyalty app.
4. **Baker burnout / no coverage.** Two bakers = zero redundancy. One injury, illness, or quit halts production. Owner has no baking bandwidth (management only). *Early signal:* Overtime >10 hrs/week per baker by month 2; no trained backup identified.
5. **Lease/build-out overruns eat working capital.** Triple-net lease + 3-month free build-out assumes on-time CO. Permit delays (health, fire, zoning) are common in VT. Every extra month costs $2,400 rent + $450 utilities + lost revenue. *Early signal:* Certificate of Occupancy not filed 60 days before target open date.