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Nashville Business Journal

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Music café slated for Gateway Boulevard

Nashville Business Journal - February 16, 2007 by [Josh Flory](#) Nashville Business Journal

A Kentucky attorney and his partners have plans in place to transform a piece of super-hot SoBro.

Brian Schuette, of Bowling Green, is part of a team behind Country Music Cafe, which they want to locate at the corner of Third Avenue South and Gateway Boulevard. After refining the steakhouse-style restaurant in Nashville, the organizers are hoping to expand into other cities, including Chattanooga and Knoxville.

From a local perspective, the project could play a major role in overhauling the block just south of Gateway Boulevard between Third and Fourth, where another developer is planning an adjacent condominium tower that could be 25 stories high.

Schuette says the idea is to combine an upscale menu with a laid-back atmosphere, and the cafe will include a small- to medium-sized entertainment venue that will emphasize performances by songwriters.

"It's important to have that sort of connection in order to attract the sort of entertainment that we're looking for," Schuette says, adding that the cafe's primary emphasis will be a strong menu.

Other partners on the project are Dale Jennette and Tim Wipperman. Wipperman is the chief creative officer at Equity Music Group, and Schuette says he will be the venture's connection to Nashville's community of artists and music industry officials.

Schuette's group is in the process of finalizing funding for the project, but they've already signed a lease at a warehouse that was formerly home to a restaurant supply wholesaler. Jim Foley, of C.B. Ragland, represented the landlord on the transaction, while David Wilson, of Wilson and Smith Commercial Real Estate, represented the tenant.

Darren Tristano, executive vice president at Chicago-based restaurant consulting firm Technomic, says one key to a successful theme restaurant is regional relevance. In other words, Tristano says the owners should make sure they understand who their customers will be and how the restaurant is relevant to the region.

"Given that it's Nashville and it's country music, I think it's going to be very relevant," Tristano says.

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