

# MITCHELL | WILLIAMS

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May 7, 2026

**VIA E-MAIL:**

[LARRY.WALTHER@DFA.ARKANSAS.GOV](mailto:LARRY.WALTHER@DFA.ARKANSAS.GOV)

[DEVEN.TONEY@DFA.ARKANSAS.GOV](mailto:DEVEN.TONEY@DFA.ARKANSAS.GOV)

Mr. Jim Hudson  
Chief Fiscal Officer and Secretary  
Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration  
1509 W. 7th Street, Room 401  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Ms. Deven Toney  
Manager, Tax Credits/Special Refunds Section  
Department of Finance and Administration  
1509 W. 7th Street, Room 401  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Re: City of Jonesboro, Arkansas / InnovAsian Project  
PILOT Agreement

Secretary Hudson and Ms. Toney:

The City of Jonesboro, Arkansas (“City”) intends to issue bonds under the provisions of the Municipalities and Counties Industrial Development Revenue Bond Law, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-201 *et seq.* and Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-701 *et seq.* (collectively, the “Act”) for an industrial project consisting of the acquisition of real estate, construction of warehouse and manufacturing facilities, infrastructure and improvements and the acquisition and installation of equipment for the preparation, processing, packaging, handling and storage of food products and other manufacturing, development, research, office, storage, business operations, and warehousing activities that are supportive of or ancillary to such operations to be located on approximately 60 acres of property located in the Craighead Technology Park with an address of 2905 Quality Way, Jonesboro, Arkansas (the “Project”) relating to the operations of Nichirei Global Foods, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of InnovAsian Cuisine Enterprises, Inc., or their affiliate (collectively, the “Company”). The Project will be leased by the City to the Company.

This letter is written to notify you that bonds will be issued for the benefit of the Company and that the City intends to enter into a Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreement (“PILOT”) with the Company. A copy of the PILOT Agreement is enclosed.

Mr. Hudson  
Ms. Toney  
May 7, 2026  
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The bond ordinance approving the PILOT and related documents will be considered by the City's Finance Committee on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. If approved by the Finance Committee, the ordinance will be on the agenda for the City Council meeting on May 19, 2026 and read for the first time. It is within the discretion of the City Council to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on its second and third reading at that meeting. If the City Council exercises that discretion, then the ordinance may be adopted at the meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>. If the City Council does not exercise such discretion, the ordinance may be read and adopted at subsequent meetings of the City Council on June 2<sup>nd</sup> or June 16<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any questions about the bonds or the PILOT Agreement, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

MITCHELL, WILLIAMS, SELIG,  
GATES & WOODYARD, P.L.L.C.

By 

Michele Simmons Allgood

Enclosure

Mayor Harold Copenhaver (Via E-mail at [hcopenhaver@jonesboro.org](mailto:hcopenhaver@jonesboro.org))  
City Clerk April Leggett (Via E-mail at [aleggett@jonesboroar.gov](mailto:aleggett@jonesboroar.gov))  
Ms. Carol Duncan (Via E-mail at [cduncan@jonesboroar.gov](mailto:cduncan@jonesboroar.gov))  
Mr. Brian Richardson (Via E-mail at [brichardson@jonesboroAR.gov](mailto:brichardson@jonesboroAR.gov))  
Mr. Joe Kent (Via E-mail at [joek@innovasiancuisine.com](mailto:joek@innovasiancuisine.com))  
Mr. Dan Peach (Via E-mail at [danp@innovasiancuisine.com](mailto:danp@innovasiancuisine.com))  
Mr. Glenn Scott (Via E-mail at [glenns@innovasiancuisine.com](mailto:glenns@innovasiancuisine.com))

*Preliminary Draft  
Subject to the Final Review and Approval of the Parties Hereto  
Presented to Jonesboro Finance Committee on May 12 and City Council on May 19, 2026*

**PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES AGREEMENT**

**Between**

**CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS**

**and**

**NICHIREI GLOBAL FOODS, LLC**

**Dated as of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_**

**This Instrument Prepared By:**

**MITCHELL | WILLIAMS**

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**PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES AGREEMENT**

City of Jonesboro, Arkansas  
300 South Church Street  
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

Attention: Mayor

**Re: Not to exceed \$180,000,000 City of Jonesboro, Arkansas Taxable Industrial Development Revenue Bonds (InnovAsian Project), Series 20\_\_ (the “Bonds”)**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The City of Jonesboro, Arkansas (the “City”) proposes to issue the Bonds identified above in one or more series under the provisions of the Municipalities and Counties Industrial Development Revenue Bond Law, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-201 *et seq.* and Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14 164-701 *et seq.* (collectively, the “Act”) for the purpose of financing a substantial industrial project consisting of the acquisition of real estate, construction of warehouse and manufacturing facilities, infrastructure and improvements and the acquisition and installation of equipment for the preparation, processing, packaging, handling and storage of food products and other manufacturing, development, research, office, storage, business operations, and warehousing activities that are supportive of or ancillary to such operations to be located on approximately 60 acres of property located in the Craighead Technology Park with an address of 2905 Quality Way, Jonesboro, Arkansas (the “Project”) relating to the operations of Nichirei Global Foods, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of InnovAsian Cuisine Enterprises, Inc., or their affiliate (collectively, the “Company”). The Project will be leased by the City to the Company pursuant to a Lease Agreement (the “Lease Agreement”) for a period of 30 years for rentals sufficient to pay debt service on the Bonds. The Company will use the Project as facilities for the preparation, processing, packaging, handling and storage of food products. The Project, as defined herein, is the “Leased Premises” as defined in the Lease Agreement.

Article IV of the Lease Agreement provides that the Company is obligated to pay all taxes and assessments levied and assessed on the Project during the term of the Lease Agreement. The Company is informed and understands that, notwithstanding the provision of Article IV of the Lease Agreement, under Article 16, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, as interpreted by the Arkansas Supreme Court in *Wayland v. Snapp*, 232 Ark. 57, 334 S.W. 2d 633 (1960), and *Pulaski County v. Jacuzzi Bros. Div.*, 332 Ark. 91, 964 S.W.2d 788 (1998), and Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-701 *et seq.*, the Project will be exempt from ad valorem taxes because it is owned by the City and used for a public purpose within the meaning of the applicable Constitutional and statutory provisions affording the exemption.

Thus, the Company understands that it, as Lessee of the Project owned by the City, will, in fact, pay no ad valorem taxes on the Project under the provisions of Article IV of the Lease

Agreement. The taxing authorities (defined below) have indicated a reluctance to lose all tax revenues which would otherwise be received by it if the property involved was privately owned.

Therefore, to induce the City to proceed with the issuance of the Bonds for the purpose indicated, which will inure to the benefit of the Company, and for other valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Company agrees with the City pursuant to this Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreement (the “Agreement”) as follows:

1. In lieu of ad valorem property taxes, the Company will pay to the City an annual sum equal to 35% of the amount which would be payable as ad valorem taxes that would have to be paid on the Project to, as applicable, the State of Arkansas, Craighead County, the City, the Nettleton School District, and/or other political subdivisions of the State of Arkansas (the “taxing authorities”) if the Project were not exempt from ad valorem taxes under the provisions of Article 16, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the State of Arkansas in *Wayland v. Snapp, supra*, and *Pulaski County v. Jacuzzi Bros. Div., supra*, and Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-701 *et seq.* Payments are due not later than October 15 each year commencing after completion of construction. Payments not paid when due shall bear interest at 10% per annum until paid.

The payment is based on the leasehold interests, buildings, improvements and equipment comprising the Leased Premises, excluding licensed vehicles. Any expansion or improvement of the Project will become subject to this Agreement using the same formula for the term of the Bonds.

2. The payments to be made pursuant to paragraph 1 are intended to be in lieu of all ad valorem taxes that would have to be paid on the Project to the taxing authorities if the Project were not exempt from ad valorem taxes under the provisions of Article 16, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the State of Arkansas in *Wayland v. Snapp, supra*, and *Pulaski County v. Jacuzzi Bros. Div., supra*, and Ark. Code Ann. §§ 14-164-701 *et seq.*, but are not intended to be in lieu of (i) any licenses, occupation or privilege tax, or fee imposed upon the Company for or with respect to its right to carry on its business in the State of Arkansas, (ii) any special benefit or local improvement tax or assessment, or (iii) fees or charges for utility services rendered, such as for water or sewer services.

3. The City agrees to distribute each payment under paragraph 1 among the taxing authorities in the proportion that the millage collected bears to the total millage collected by all during the year of distribution, unless all such taxing authorities, including without limitation the school districts, shall otherwise agree and document the alternate basis upon which the payments shall be distributed.

4. The City and the Company agree to cooperate in sustaining the enforceability of this Agreement. However, if by reason of a change in the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, a change by the Supreme Court of the State of Arkansas in its interpretation of the Constitution, a change by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas, or otherwise, the Company is required to pay any tax for which the payments specified in paragraph 1 are intended to be in lieu, the Company may deduct the aggregate of any such payments made by it from any amount herein

agreed to be paid under paragraph 1. Furthermore, inasmuch as the payments in paragraph 1 herein agreed to be made are intended to be in lieu of taxes, it is agreed that said payments shall not as to any year be in an amount greater than would otherwise be payable for such year in ad valorem taxes, in the aggregate, on account of its ownership of the Project.

5. Representatives of the Company will confer at least annually with the Craighead County Assessor and determine the assessed valuation of the real and personal properties comprising the Project. The determination shall be made by mutual agreement if possible, and if not, shall be made by the Craighead County Assessor as though the Project were privately owned. Because the valuation of such property is a key factor in calculating payments due, the City agrees to cooperate with the Company in any reasonable challenge to the valuation assigned to such property by the Craighead County Assessor to the fullest extent permitted by Arkansas law.

It is recognized by the City and the Company that the payments described in paragraph 1 hereof are to be calculated on the basis of annual amounts that would otherwise be payable as ad valorem taxes under Arkansas law on the Leased Premises if such property were on the tax rolls. The amount to be paid each year shall be determined by applying the millage that would be applicable to the Project for that year if the Project were privately owned. The Company shall be entitled to any refund occasioned by overpayment or a reduction in millage which requires a refund by the taxing authorities.

6. This Agreement shall terminate and be of no further force and effect from and after the date that the Lease Agreement shall terminate for any purpose other than a default on the part of the Company, including, but not limited to, the transfer of ownership of the Leased Premises to the Company. If such termination shall be at a point constituting a portion of a year, the Company shall pay for the year in which termination occurred that portion of the specified annual payment that the number of days in such year that the Project was exempt prior to the termination bears to 365 days (366 days in a leap year).

7. This Agreement shall be binding upon the successors and assigns of the Company, but no assignment shall be effective to relieve the Company of any of its obligations hereunder unless expressly authorized and approved in writing by the City.

8. This Agreement may be executed simultaneously in several counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original.

9. This Agreement shall be governed by, and interpreted in accordance with, the laws of the state of Arkansas.

[Signature Page Follows]

When executed, this Agreement shall constitute a valid and binding contract between the Company and the City.

Very truly yours,

**NICHIREI GLOBAL FOODS, LLC,**

A Delaware limited liability company

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCEPTED:

**CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

ATTEST:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

City Clerk