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In 2018, the village of Huntley saw the opening of the Alden of Huntley senior living community and a number of local businesses, including [BBQ King](#), a [dog day care facility](#), a [driving school](#), a new Verizon store and a Panda Express.

Residents also can expect a number of new businesses to open their doors in 2019, according to the village's State of Huntley address delivered Friday.

Casa Rubi-os, a Mexican kitchen and bar, already has opened at 11900 Freeman Road.

Another restaurant almost ready for business is Beef Shack, which Village Manager Dave Johnson said is expected to open in March.

In April, Sew Hop'd Brewery and Tap Room is expected to open. Johnson said he marvels at this business and its partners – Terry Hitpas, Tom Bartel, Lance Lamb and Doug Vandewalker – for having a dream and working tirelessly to see it through.

"The amount of effort and activity that's going on there clearly is, in my mind, what we're all about," Johnson said.

More Brewing Company, another microbrewery that will be situated at the former Chevrolet dealership on Automall Drive, is targeting an opening date in the late summer.

Johnson highlighted Country Delight President Joe McMahon's plans to buy [the former Dean Foods plant](#), 11713 Mill St., and use it for distribution, storage and eventually production of dairy products.

He added that the village still is exploring what to do with the property on the north side of Mill Street once Country Delight moves into the plant.

The milk and dairy distributor is expected to bring about 75 to 105 employees to the Dean Foods plant, which was forced to end production in December.

Improved residential survey results also were a highlight of the address.

A 2010 survey showed that 66 percent of Huntley residents felt the quality of life in the village was exceptional or good. In 2018, that number became 94 percent.

Residents who felt snow and ice removal operations were excellent or good went from 54 percent to 78 percent, residents who had a feeling of safety went from 82 percent to 91 percent and positive police and public safety satisfaction reviews went from 70 percent to 89 percent.

The atmosphere for development was optimistic, but village and the Huntley Area Chamber of Commerce staff both are conscious about how decisions in Springfield will affect local businesses this legislative session.

Although government agencies in Huntley collectively work to keep property tax rates as low as possible, Johnson said he gets nervous when he hears elected officials in Springfield talk about additional taxes and then address property taxes.

"I don't want anybody in this room to think I'm minimizing the property tax implications in this state," Johnson said. "There is no doubt that we need to do something to correct where this has gone."

Sunday Graham, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber's job is to act as a liaison to business partners and that it was heartbreaking to hear responses to a survey sent out last week regarding legislation to [increase the minimum wage to \\$15 an hour](#), which was signed into law by Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Tuesday.

Graham said 50 percent of small businesses that participated in the survey expected they will not be open in five years with the new wage in place. Therefore, she said her teams are working diligently to ensure Huntley businesses are successful.

"It's up to all of us to make [Huntley] the best place possible," Graham said.

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