

Huntley officials 'cautiously optimistic' about 2020 Panera Bread opening

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The village of Huntley is expected to see a number of new businesses in 2020.

Huntley Village Manager Dave Johnson said the More Brewing microbrewery and brewpub on Automall Drive should be open next month, a new Starbucks should be open mid-year, and a new Jewel-Osco should open in the fourth quarter.

However, one project that's been in development for years has Huntley officials "cautiously optimistic" it will open in 2020 – Panera Bread.

Johnson said Panera Bread has expressed interest in Huntley since the end of 2013.

In 2017, Hamra Enterprises submitted conceptual plans for a 7,500-square-foot building at the intersection of Route 47 and Kreutzer Road.

About 4,200 square feet of the building would be used for the Panera Bread restaurant with a drive-thru, and the remaining 3,300 square feet would host another retailer. The Village Board had approved a final planned unit development and special use permit for the proposal in 2017.

Although a sign was put up at the intersection saying that the new Panera Bread would be coming in 2019, Johnson said there were certain obligations related to the ownership of the land that held up construction.

Representatives of Panera Bread could not be reached for comment Friday.

More Brewing initially was set to open at the end of the year. However, the Village Board agreed to extend the completion of renovations to 13980 Automall Drive to the end of February because of delays in construction and licensing at the state and federal level.

In February 2018, the Huntley Village Board approved a business development agreement with Jewel Food Stores for construction of a new store at Route 47 and

Reed Road, which was set to open by the end of 2019 at the cost of \$11.5 million. But because of a lack of available capital to build new stores, the agreement was amended to give the grocery chain until the end of 2020 to finish the building.

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