

Buffalo Grove board to discuss incentives with Woodman's Food Market following building tour



A traveler waits for a bus in January on the southwest corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Deerfield Parkway in Buffalo Grove. Woodman's Food Market announced plans earlier this month to build a new store near that location. (Ronnie Wachter / Pioneer Press)

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Although [Buffalo Grove](#) officials soon will start formal talks on it, some in village hall couldn't contain their excitement for the proposed Woodman's Food Market in Buffalo Grove during a recent tour of one of the business' stores in Wisconsin.

Clint Woodman, vice president of Woodman's Food Market, said he rarely sees such an eager response from a government after village officials announced earlier this month the proposal for a Woodman's grocery store at the intersection of [Deerfield](#) Parkway and Milwaukee Avenue. On June 13, several members of the Village Board drove up to Kenosha, Wisc., to tour a Woodman's Food Market there on the east side of Interstate 94

"It's been great to deal with everyone in Buffalo Grove," Woodman said. "It isn't like that in all the municipalities we've dealt with. It's great that they're as excited about it as we are."

The proposed development includes a 241,000-square-foot Woodman's grocery store on the northwest corner of the intersection, along with a combination gas station, convenience store and car wash on the southwest corner. The two sides total 25 acres that have never been developed — an area village officials last year called one of their most important remaining open spaces.

Woodman's Food Market, an employee-owned business, should bring about 250 jobs to the Buffalo Grove area, Woodman said, if the proposal earns village board members' approval.

On Monday night, members are discussing the project for the first time before they vote on an development agreement with the company. The agreement would provide up to \$7 million over the next 20 years in various sales tax rebates to Woodman's, including \$4 million for roadway and intersection improvements, according to village documents.

Over those 20 years, the proposed Woodman's store is projected to generate \$25 million in new revenue for Buffalo Grove, village documents show.

Village President Beverly Sussman made her support for the concept clear after the village and Woodman's announced the project on June 8. She reiterated her support after touring the Kenosha business and warehouse.

"An amazing store," she said. "Like nothing I've been in before."

The Wisconsin-based grocer has been looking to expand in recent months, proposing a new store and similar concept earlier this year in the village of Lakemoor located in Lake and McHenry counties. Woodman said that because their stores are so large, they keep them spaced at least 30 minutes apart.

The last store the company built in Illinois was in 2006, he said. Since then, the business has opened four more around Wisconsin.

"[Buffalo Grove] fits perfectly with our other locations," he said.

With the proposed development agreement, infrastructure changes near the site's intersection also could happen to make room for the large Woodman's store. The company wants approval from the [Illinois Department of Transportation](#) to add extra turn lanes — a process, Woodman said, the company would like to see expedited.

Woodman said several of their locations also are alongside major highways — something this project lacks. IDOT records show that Milwaukee Avenue moves between 24,000 and 30,000 cars daily, but I-94 is located almost three miles away.

But Woodman said the company is confident shoppers will flock to the proposed site.

"We do expect people to travel a long distance, and take the highway to get there," he said. "Our stores are very large, so we need a very large piece of land."

He said he hopes to open the Buffalo Grove Woodman's by summer 2018 if construction starts within the year.

"It's going to go over pretty well in Buffalo Grove," he said.

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