

OKC Buc-ee's plans for 120 pumps, estimates it will draw 5M a year

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A proposed Buc-ee's in far west Oklahoma City is expected to bring serious money to the local economy with projections showing it will generate an annual payroll topping \$9 million and a local sales tax boost of over \$1 million.

Kenton Tsoodle, president of the Alliance for Economic Development of Oklahoma City, gave an update on the project on Thursday, Oct. 8, estimating the store will employ between 175 and 225 workers with wages starting at \$20 an hour, plus benefits.

Buc-ee's, based in Texas, is a popular tourist attraction that offers road trippers gas, food, clothing and other merchandise. The company is well known for its Beaver Nuggets, brisket and iconic beaver mascot.

"Five million visitors will be coming into the store, and we think 90% will be from outside Canadian County," Tsoodle said. "We're looking at it bringing a million dollars a year to the city."

Plans presented Thursday to the Oklahoma City Economic Development Trust show the store will span 74,000 square feet with what will likely be a record-setting state number of 120 fuel pumps.

Tsoodle said projections of the Oklahoma City store selling 18 million gallons of fuel annually are likely low. The store is expected to generate \$25 million a year in gross taxable inside sales.

Tsoodle said reconstruction of the Cimarron Road and Interstate 40 junction plus other area infrastructure improvements will take at least two years

to complete. The Buc-ee's store, he said, is expected to open at the northwest corner of the junction in early 2030.

New details about the development were provided at Thursday's meeting of the Oklahoma City Economic Development Trust prior to its approval of spending up to \$12 million in economic development bond money on waterline and sewer upgrades for the area.

The Oklahoma City Council previously approved spending up to \$10 million on the junction while CSMS, the chain's land acquisition and development arm, agreed to pay up to \$8 million for the project.

That deal, signed by representatives of Buc-ee's, calls for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to pay up to \$15 million.

The Oklahoman reported Thursday that total public investment in the area will total \$57 million, with up to \$35 million of that total expected to be funded by the state. The development itself is expected to cost about \$50 million.

The store is expected to draw 100,000 visitors a week and 5 million annually with 90% traveling from outside of Canadian County.

Crowds can be even higher in the days immediately after an opening; the city of Goodyear, Arizona, reported 41,000 people visited a new store along Interstate 10 when it opened in late June.

The traffic projections of 4,000 to 8,000 vehicles visiting the proposed Oklahoma City store daily far outpace the current counts of 2,319 daily travelers along Cimarron Road at I-40 recorded by the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments.

The array of planned improvements will provide expanded capacity, especially with the sewer lines, for the airport, existing area customers, and anticipated development of 1,000 acres the city purchased three years ago around the airport. That land, purchased for \$17 million, is being kept in reserve for high-employment prospects.

Tsoodle said he expects significant commercial development in the area once the Buc-ee's is open.

“This will create a significant amount of tax for the city,” Tsoodle said. “And there’s a lot of other undeveloped property around that, and where ever these travel centers have gone, they attract other tax creating development like retail and restaurants. It really provides us an opportunity to have a great development and a great store where people want to buy.”