

DEVELOPMENT



Buc-ee's breaks ground on first West Tennessee location; summer 2026 opening projected



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A groundbreaking ceremony took place Wednesday for the first Buc-ee's location in West Tennessee.

The new Buc-ee's will be located at Interstate 40 and Tennessee 196 in Gallaway. At 74,000 square feet, the location will be one of the chain's larger stores. It will have 120 fueling positions and 71 restrooms. The Texas-based travel center chain touts itself as providing guests with the cleanest restrooms in the country.

On Wednesday, Arch "Beaver" Aplin III, co-founder and co-owner of Buc-ee's, said several factors made it ideal to build another location in Tennessee. There are only two operating Buc-ee's locations in the state: one in Sevierville and the other in Crossville.

Aplin noted the business-friendly environment, location off Interstate 40 and the lack of a Buc-ee's in the region.

"We have another store on Interstate 40 currently in eastern Tennessee (Sevierville), so we wanted to have another store on the same interstate more for the Western Tennessee," he said after Wednesday's ceremony. "We looked at a lot of areas, and this is just an ideal location. The community, the (Fayette) County and the City of Gallaway were all very business-friendly."

Buc-ee's initially announced plans for the site in April.

Aplin said the Gallaway Buc-ee's is projected to open in summer 2026, with construction expected to take 16-18 months. While Aplin didn't know the total cost of the project, he did

say it would cost tens of millions of dollars to build.

Gallaway mayor: 'This is major to our city'

Several Fayette County and City of Gallaway officials came out to the groundbreaking, including Gallaway Mayor Jamie Mayo. Mayo said he and other local officials spent a little more than a year working to bring the Buc-ee's project to Gallaway.

While Mayo knows Buc-ee's is going to bring in additional tax dollars and revenue to the community, he was more pleased to hear the starting wage for those who work at the Gallaway Buc-ee's is projected to be \$22 per hour, above the normal starting pay in the area of \$15 an hour.



Gallaway Mayor Jamie Mayo said the new Buc-ee's is something "major" for the tiny city in Fayette County. *Stu Boyd II - The Commercial Appeal*

Buc-ee's is set to bring more than 200 full-time jobs to the area, according to previous reports.

"The wages from what we understand is going to be really a step up from what we are used to in this area," Mayo said. "... Gallaway has been a small town, and we're only like around 600 residents. We've been struggling for a long time, so we finally got this coming, and this is major to our city."

Another Buc-ee's coming to the Memphis area



The Buc-ee's mascot gives two thumbs-up during a groundbreaking ceremony for the new location in Gallaway on Wednesday. This will be the first Buc-ee's in West Tennessee. *Stu Boyd II - The Commercial Appeal*

Founded in Texas in 1982, Buc-ee's currently operates 50 stores. Since beginning its multistate expansion in 2019, Buc-ee's has opened travel centers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri and Colorado. Buc-ee's broke ground on the first Virginia, Mississippi and Ohio locations earlier this year.

Buc-ee's announced recently plans to open a new travel center in West Memphis, Arkansas, about a 10-minute drive from Downtown Memphis. It will be located on the eastbound side of I-40 between Missouri Street and 7th Street adjacent to Cracker Barrel, according to Chad Bowman, director of planning and development in West Memphis. That's about a 10-minute drive from Downtown Memphis.

This is the second Buc-ee's location announced for Arkansas this year. The other is in Benton.

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