

## Panera Bread to rise in Wausau

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Written by  
**Amanda Seitz**  
Wausau Daily Herald

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By summer 2013, Panera Bread will sell in Wausau the warm soups and sweet pastries that made the restaurant famous.

The Wausau City Council on Tuesday unanimously approved a permit to allow the cafe-style restaurant to build an outdoor seating area on 1700 Stewart Ave., which sits on the corner of the 17th Avenue intersection. The Panera Bread building, which will be a newly constructed building, will feature a drive-thru addition, as well.

Panera Bread will draw lots of bread fans with its prime spot near Highway 52, said Chris Ghidorzi, the property development director of Ghidorzi Co., which will develop and construct the new restaurant.

### Other City Council action

The council unanimously passed a chronic nuisance premise ordinance. The ordinance allows city inspectors to label a property as a chronic nuisance if that property has violated building codes three or more times in a six-month period. The ordinance also allows the city to label a landlord a chronic nuisance landlord if that landlord has three chronic nuisance properties or if 10 percent of a landlord's properties are a nuisance. If problems persist at the nuisance property, the owner could be charged for the police or city staff time to enforce violations.

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"(Panera) will be a nice entry point into our community," Ghidorzi said. "It's what I consider the landing pad into our community off our interstate system. A lot of people use Highway 52."

Ghidorzi said work on the site to prepare for Panera Bread will begin this fall. The city will knock down the Stettin Mutual building, which has been unoccupied on the Stewart Avenue site, for roughly \$170,000, Heather Wessling, the city's assistant community development director said.

Panera Bread was on the list of desirable restaurants residents named in a Wausau survey the city conducted in May and June of this year.

City Council member David Nutting said several local residents told him they were eager for a Panera to land in their community.

"I had a lot of people who met me and said, 'Yes, we're excited about this,'" Nutting said. "People were thrilled."

Ghidorzi said that Panera was interested in settling in Wausau over other Wisconsin towns.

"They went through an extensive site selection; they settled on our site," Ghidorzi said.

Ghidorzi said plans are in the works to develop two more businesses next to the Panera on Stewart Avenue.

"We are talking with a possible, another quick-service user, but the third tenant will not be a restaurant," Ghidorzi said.

Panera Bread owns roughly 1,500 cafes in the U.S. and Canada under the names Panera Bread Co., Saint Louis Bread Co. and Paradise Bakery & Cafe.

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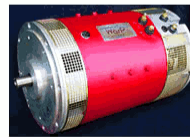


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