

# Mixed emotions in Wisconsin town Foxconn picked for plant (Update)

October 4 2017, by Ivan Moreno

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Residents of the southeastern Wisconsin town where Foxconn Technology Group plans a massive display screen plant greeted the announcement Wednesday with excitement about the possible economic boost and wistfulness about how the community's changing landscape.

Foxconn announced the location of its planned factory after months of negotiations with the company and the village of Mount Pleasant in Racine County. The company has said it intends to build a campus with about 20 million square feet of office space over 1.56 square miles, eventually employing as many as 13,000 people to manufacture liquid crystal display screens used on phones, televisions, computers and other devices.

Tammy Graceffa, 54, the owner of the Hiawatha Bar and Grill just south of the plant's expected location, said the influx of workers and her land's possible purchase could bring her financial gains. But still, she found the moment bittersweet.

"Where we grew up and were raised will no longer be farm fields. It will be concrete and industry," she said. "You can't go back and say, 'This is the road where we used to play ball.'"

The Wisconsin Legislature approved a \$3 billion incentive package for Foxconn—contingent on the company fulfilling its jobs promise, and the state's economic development agency is working on the final contract. The intended industrial complex would be the largest in the state.

"I think it's going to be really good. The economy ought to pick its way up around here. It's been dragging a little here in Racine (County)," said Michael Rosenbaum, a village trustee in the town of Sturtevant, just a few miles from Mount Pleasant.

Rosenbaum said he understands there are landowners who are unhappy about being displaced, but hopes Foxconn will "make sure that they get a decent deal."

"You can have another dream home. That's my feeling," he said.

But some landowners said they felt like they didn't have much choice.

"It's the Foxconn train. Get on or get run over," said Katie Spencer, 27.

Gonzalo Perez, meanwhile, is already brainstorming ways to get more people to his restaurant, the House of Castlewood. The 50-year-old Mexican immigrant who bought the diner in December said he's toying with the idea of having a buffet so when the future workers come they can come in and out quicker.

His restaurant is in Sturtevant but it's just across the highway from the planned factory.

"This is like something of a miracle happening here because nobody expected that kind of business would come to a small town like Sturtevant," he said.

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