



CITY OF OAK PARK

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Craft Brewery Gets MDARD Grant Ahead of Opening State grant will help brewery proprietor Edward Stencel cover expansion costs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 8, 2019

OAK PARK, MI – Today, the City of Oak Park is proud to announce that the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) has awarded Edward Stencel of River Rouge Brewing Company a \$100,000 grant to help cover the costs of expanding his craft brewing operation into Oak Park. The grant, [first announced on July 30](#), is part of funds awarded to 20 total projects under the competitive Value Added and Regional Food System Grant Program. MDARD received 94 proposals with requests totaling nearly \$8.5 million. The \$1.8 million in grants awarded for the 20 projects are expected to leverage more than \$12 million in private investments.

“Clearly, Michigan remains committed to partnering with its food and agriculture businesses, as well as the towns, villages, and cities they call home,” said MDARD Director Gary McDowell. “When people talk of economic growth and job creation, they often think of large companies and corporations, but the truth is, it’s the sum of all the small and mid-sized businesses that employ the most people and help the most communities thrive. So, we’re proud to use the resources we have to incentivize even more private investments in the great state of Michigan.”

River Rouge Brewing Company, currently based in Royal Oak, has had plans to open a second, larger [location in Oak Park](#) on Eleven Mile Road since 2018. The new location, to be titled Unexpected Craft Brewing Company, is expected to house brewing operations as well as a tasting room. The brewery will be the first of its kind in Oak Park and comes just a few short years after residents voted to allow for Class “C” liquor licenses.

“Ultimately, this grant allows us to expand into Oak Park. Without it, it would be very difficult to make this jump because of the overall costs and expenses of the project,” says Stencel. “It’s going to help with the infrastructure, the plumbing, and adding additional cold rooms, as well as allowing us to use more Michigan agricultural products and increase our overall production.”

“This project ushers in a new era for our city, and that era is an era of a more diverse group of businesses locating here with attractions that will improve the quality of life overall for residents here,” said City Manager Erik Tungate.

As of now, the new brewery is anticipated to open in the spring of 2020.

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About:

Situated within the southeast corner of Oakland County, the City of Oak Park has a long history of being an integral, inner-ring suburb of Detroit. With approximately 30,000 residents in 5.16 square miles, we pride ourselves on the richness of our cultural diversity and our safe, secure neighborhoods.

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