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LOCAL NEWS

# After months of planning, work begins on minor league stadium in Beloit

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Updated: June 17, 2020 7:10 PM by [Adam Duxter \(https://www.channel3000.com/bios/adam-duxter/\)](https://www.channel3000.com/bios/adam-duxter/)



BELOIT, Wis. – While COVID-19 concerns took away an opportunity for a public groundbreaking ceremony, work has begun on a 3,800 seat stadium in downtown Beloit.

The stadium, which will be home to Oakland A's Single-A affiliate Beloit Snappers, will have a multitude of uses, including soccer, football, concerts and other events.

"This is a really big project," said John Gackstetter, Senior VP of Development for Hendricks Commercial Properties. "It's something that will serve as a catalyst to help the vibrancy in downtown Beloit."

In the fall of 2019, the Snappers were sold to Gateway Baseball group, comprised of Florida-based philanthropist Quint Studer, who already owns a minor-league team in Pensacola.

ADVERTISING

Studer teamed with businesswoman Diane Hendricks, along with a small group of entrepreneurs, to form the Riverbend Stadium Authority, which was able to privately fund the stadium's \$35 million cost.

Under the Riverbend Stadium Authority, the park will operate as a non-profit entity, with Gateway Baseball Group as its primary tenant.

After breaking ground Monday, the stadium hopes to be complete in time for the 2021 baseball season.

"It's something that's been discussed for a long time," Gackstetter said. "Now that it's actually happening, that we're actually breaking ground, it's really exciting."

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The stadium's completion will do more than give the team a new home, however. It will likely save the franchise.

In November, Major League Baseball announced its plans to consolidate the minor leagues. In the plan, a reported 42 teams, including the Snappers, to be cut.

"It wasn't something we expected," Studer said. "You'd always heard rumors of facilities and Major League Baseball not happy with facilities and travel, so we knew that Beloit needed to have a better facility, but we didn't know the team would be contracted."

"We are taking a huge risk by proceeding with this project," Gackstetter said. "But we thought that by moving forward we would show the community that we believe in them and the prosperity in Beloit."

Studer says he's confident the development will help to increase both property values and could lead to the city as a whole growing larger.

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