

# A new hop(e) for North Park

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Entry sign to North Park Beer Co.

Image courtesy of North Park Beer Co. / Instagram

Kelsey McNair isn't a terribly chatty guy. But get him talking about his passion project that's tantalizingly close to fruition and it's evident that he's truly, madly, deeply invested in every microscopic detail of long-awaited [North Park Beer Co.](#) (3038 University Ave.), slated to (finally) open at the end of the month.

A home-brewing prodigy turning pro, McNair has the potential to crush his already legendary amateur status with North Park Beer Co.'s nearly 9,000 square foot prime corner location at University Avenue and Ohio Street. The

former mixed-martial arts gym now boasts a 15-barrel brewhouse, beer cellar basement, a mezzanine whose square footage exceeds many other brewery tasting rooms in entirety and a kitchen that will be home to [Mastiff Sausage Company](#) by midsummer.

North Park Beer Co.'s 32 total taps will unleash plenty of indie/craft guest beers that will likely reflect the many regional connections McNair has cultivated in his 12-year home-brewing history (think [Stone Brewing](#), Long Beach's [Beachwood BBQ & Brewery](#), etc.). McNair's own generally American-styled recipes "focus on drinkability" and will include a stout, cream ale, pale ale and of course his award-winning flagship IPA Hop-Fu!, among others.

The first year's output is estimated to be around 1,000 barrels, but with the capability of producing two to three times that amount we're likely to see plenty of rotating recipes, barrel-aged beers, collaborations with local and regional superstars and eventually bottles. (Here's hoping cans make the cut as well.)

Despite the construction delays and burner troubles that have plagued McNair for months (his flooring saga is worth a read on the [NPBC blog](#)), he's still been able to let his past experience as an art director shine through with decor details that promise to captivate patrons. Every bit of minutiae has been so obsessively pored over that it's easy to forgive the years that have passed since the initial brewery announcement. Customization is rampant, from the indoor street lamps illuminating the ground floor to the stainless steel piping that will move beer from the fermentation vessels to serving tanks for fresh, direct service. Even the hexagonal floor tiles and font choice emulate the brewery's namesake neighborhood, giving it a Craftsman-esque vibe that melds modernity with tradition.

Together, these design choices (spearheaded by [BASILE Studio](#), the firm behind several of [Consortium Holdings'](#) acclaimed interiors) articulate a comfortable neighborhood brewpub feel rather than the more utilitarian tasting room approach that seems to be the standard nowadays. And if you think the last thing that San Diego needs is another hop-forward brewery/tasting room (especially in North Park), McNair's refreshing approach to creating a welcoming and elegantly tasteful ambiance—along with some damn tasty brews—will very likely change your mind.

It's taken years for North Park Beer Co. to go from rumor to reality. But if McNair's past successes are any indication of the rabid fandom to come, then San Diego can expect to enjoy "Ales and Lagers" with "Friends and Neighbors" for a long time to come.