

In the John Waldron Arts Center, 122 South Walnut Street,
Bloomington, Indiana on Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 7:00 pm
with Council President Sue Sgambelluri presiding over a Special
Session of the Common Council.

COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL SESSION
February 23, 2023

Council President Sue Sgambelluri called the meeting to order. She
noted that the meeting would be considered adjourned when the
Mayor's State of the City remarks concluded. She then asked Clerk
Nicole Bolden to call the roll.

CALL TO ORDER [7:06 pm]

Councilmembers present: Matt Flaherty, Isabel Piedmont-Smith,
Kate Rosenbarger, Susan Sandberg, Sue Sgambelluri, Ron Smith,
Stephen Volan
Councilmembers absent: Dave Rollo, Jim Sims

ROLL CALL [7:07 pm]

A selection of poems was read by the Outspoken Poetry Club from
Bloomington High School South.

POETRY READINGS

A video presentation, "Your Future is Here", was shown.

VIDEO PRESENTATION

Mayor John Hamilton presented the State of the City Remarks (text
provided by the Office of the Mayor), attached hereto.

STATE OF THE CITY REMARKS

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

ADJOURNMENT [8:15 pm]

APPROVED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana upon this
03 day of _May_, 2023.

APPROVE:

ATTEST:



Sue Sgambelluri, PRESIDENT
Bloomington Common Council



Clerk Nicole Bolden
City of Bloomington

Welcome, welcome, welcome!! It is so good to be together. Thanks City Council, Clerk Bolden and other elected officials. Thank you Indiana University Provost Rahul Shrivastav and Vice Provost for External Relations, Kirk White. Thank you to the Alissa Guntren Piano Studio students, performers from Reimagining Opera for Kids, and poets from Bloomington High School South Outspoken Poetry Club. And thanks to members of the media for attending – your coverage is so important for our democracy, including CATS for live streaming and recording us.

This is my eighth and final State of the City address. Tonight we'll celebrate how much we have done together, review what the "State of our City" is today, and how we are prepared for the future. We'll also thank some people who make it all happen.

We heard the land and labor acknowledgement moments ago. Our work continues for equity and inclusion and welcoming. We have new signs at our city limits. Everyone is welcome here. That must continue to be our core message and our mission.

Tonight, we also remember Ukraine. Today is the 365th day of the brutal Russian invasion and occupation of Ukraine. The world is in awe of the Ukrainian people and their courageous year-long resistance and self-defense. With us tonight are Viktoriia Hanicheva, with her teenage daughter Violeta, who had to flee Kharkiv, Ukraine, at about this time last year, joining an older daughter, Valeriia, who attends graduate school at IU. They have made a home for themselves in Bloomington, at high school, doing translations, and more. Join me in welcoming the Hanicheva family here, Laskavo prosymo, and expressing our support of them and all their compatriots.

Other honored guests join us tonight, a family of six who fled persecution in Eastern Congo in 2016, and spent seven years as refugees in East Africa and Madagascar. The United Nations recently helped the family resettle here in Bloomington. The family is headed by Ferdinand and Faida Agathe, with their three children and a grandson, all here in Bloomington. They report that they have found "love, peace, safety, and a warm welcome" in Bloomington. We welcome you all - Bienvenue.

Thank you, both families, for being here, being part of our future, and for teaching us resilience and hope. Thank you for reminding us Bloomington should be a refuge, and a haven for democracy and safety; a place for new people, from all across the country and world, coming for an education or coming for their families; fleeing danger or closed doors. When we open our hearts and our doors, we claim and we brighten our future.

Like the two families we just met, everyone here has a Bloomington beginning story. My own story was being born here, to parents who founded St. Marks Methodist church on the east side. After some time away I returned to law school at IU and then again 25 years ago with Dawn to raise our two boys here. Matthew and Eric, who like both of us, went through the public schools through 12th grade. Everyone has their B'town story. Some stories we know and tell better now than we used to. In this Black History Month, we may think of the Taliaferros, George and Viola, leaders who broke color barriers in Bloomington and the country. We think of the Eagleson family. It was moving to unveil the new Eagleson Avenue signs alongside members of the Eagleson family. A street once named for a leader in the disgraceful Eugenics movement now honors this prominent Black Bloomington family dating back two centuries. Just today Tobiatha Eagelson was profiled in the newspaper. Bloomington's stories are diverse and ever-changing.

On January 1, 2016, I began my service as mayor with a focus on affordable housing, good jobs, and better digital access, on climate, and transparency, and innovation, and ambition. This being my last State of the City, I hope you'll excuse a little look back.

Can you recall those days of January 2016? Before a global pandemic, before four years of America's worst President, before election deniers and the insurrection of January 6th? Before newly emboldened white supremacy and anti-semitism, or the reversals of reproductive rights? Before Tik Tok? Things can change quickly; resilience and preparedness are essential.

To lead a city well requires, I believe, welding together two different elements: on the one hand, idealism and vision, picking and pursuing worthy goals and values. As the poet Robert Browning put it: our reach should exceed our grasp, or what's a heaven for? And on the other hand, pragmatism and practicality: getting things done, on the ground, in the messy mix of reality. Hillary Clinton's political philosophy speaks to me, as she says, "I'm a progressive who likes to get things done."

Bloomington city government is full of people who every day weld together idealism and pragmatism and get things done. I wish we could have all 850 employees here to thank, to congratulate. We won't all fit here. And a bunch of us are out working right now, or really early tomorrow morning.

To represent all 850, we do have 16 department heads. The cabinet. How dedicated and resourceful you all are, public minded and conscientious. How lucky Bloomington is to have you leading the very complex organism of city government, in partnership with so many in the community.

What we've done together in the past seven years is too much to detail in one sitting. The full picture of accomplishments can be reviewed at <https://bton.in/8vYDQ>.

Tonight, I will just do highlights and a high-speed version of the many accomplishments. I'm going to ask each cabinet member, as I call your name and department, please come up on stage, to feel the support and thanks of this community, and a token of appreciation. You earned it. You deserve it. Let's celebrate and get started.

Vic Kelson has led City of Bloomington Utilities (CBU) since 2016, when Lake Monroe's water quality was deteriorating, and we fixed it and now protect it. We installed tens of thousands of automatic water meters, invested tens of millions in upgraded and expanded wastewater and water plants and water and sewer lines. We are saving energy. We invested in more training for our people. CBU is planning a big brand-new location coming at Winston-Thomas. And CBU is thinking really long-term, exploring new sources of water to supplement Lake Monroe.

Kate Gazunis has led the Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA) since 2021, and we call out Amber Skoby and Jennifer Osterholt before her. BHA earns top scores regularly in its federal reviews, as it provides safe, affordable housing to several thousand Bloomingtonians. We rehabilitated hundreds of publicly owned housing units in five years instead of the planned 25 years, and this project is soon to be completed. BHA is also adding solar panels to its roofs. BHA just announced a milestone of accomplishing 100% usage of its housing vouchers. We are launching an exciting new land trust at BHA, Summit Hill, to develop and steward permanently affordable homes.

John Connell has led Bloomington Transit (BT) since 2021, and we remember Lew May before him. BT has long had the highest per capita ridership of all of Indiana's transit systems. We're transitioning to an all-electric fleet, with 14 new electric buses on site or on order. John is overseeing a huge growth in budget and service, supported by our Council. This includes new Sunday service, micro-mobility service, reduced senior fares, and our very first Bus Rapid Transit like service – with frequent, distinctive rapid service on likely our 3rd street corridor east-west. Their Strategic Plan is called "Transform BT."

Mike Diekhoff has been Chief of Police since 2008. Our innovative department has been leading change, from body-worn cameras to de-escalation training, from Downtown Resource Officers to Social Workers. We twice earned national accreditation from CALEA, something less than 5% of police departments achieve. We follow 8 Can't Wait and Obama's 21st Century Policing guidelines, and continue to see a

declining overall crime rate. We're looking forward to a new police headquarters next year, and continue our efforts to improve gun safety.

Jason Moore has been our Fire Chief since 2016, represented by Deputy Chief Jayme Washel, and most notably we have earned a national top ISO 1/1x rating, for the first time ever, joining an elite group of city departments in the country with that rating (and thanks Dispatch and CBU also for their parts). Our fire department has reduced fire fatality rates 90% in the past several years and directly saved 10 people from fire deaths. We had engines stalling out on the way to fires in 2016, but now deploy virtually all new equipment; and developed new services like quick response vehicles and mobile integrated health services. We're doing more training and upgrading all five stations. And by the way, we are the only city in Indiana with a CALEA-accredited police and ISO 1 fire departments.

Paula McDevitt leads our Parks & Recreation department, since 2016. First, one word: Switchyard! What an incredible gift to our community and the future. Paula and her team also won another national gold medal, our second, something most departments fantasize about winning ever. Miles of new trails and hundreds of new trees are here. Parks developed a fantastic program with Centerstone for workers joining city efforts. Parks and Rec is beloved by Btown, and a benchmark of excellence in public service.

Adam Wason has led the Public Works family since 2016. We have accomplished a full overhaul and upgrade of the sanitation services (remember the old stickers? Remember old trucks so rusty you could put your hand through them? I do). We've greatly expanded and upgraded the animal shelter, continuing its outstanding record of saving animals and placing them in new homes. Public works uses cutting edge technology to measure the conditions of our sidewalks and streets, and has filled 41,000 potholes, repaired more than 13 miles of sidewalks, and installed 547 ADA sidewalk ramps all around town. You saw the Brighten B-Town program with Centerstone in the video. And thanks for plowing the snow whenever it arrives.

Beverly Calendar-Anderson has led Community and Family Resources since 2014. CFRD may throw the best parties in town and serious commemorations too. We've launched grant programs for downtown services and for violence prevention, and for DEI support. Beverly and her team have added a downtown after-hours ambassador to represent city government in all-kinds of new ways and times, and places. CFRD has led some of the most challenging responses to the COVID pandemic and homelessness.

John Zody has led Housing and Neighborhood Development since 2021, and before him, Doris Sims. HAND does thousands of apartment inspections a year, keeping our residents safe. We've automated and improved that process. HAND supports neighborhoods with clean-up days and grant programs and helps people buy homes, too, like Audrey in the video. HAND has been front and center in supporting nearly 1,400 affordable housing units in the past seven years and investing the \$4 million in new housing development funds we've leveraged from private developers. And sign up for residents academy if you want to learn more about city government.

Alex Crowley has led Economic and Sustainable Development since 2016, with Linda Williamson before him. The small but mighty ESD leads our response to the climate emergency, including with the first ever Climate Action Plan. We have dramatically expanded local arts funding and support. ESD developed emergency loans during the pandemic, and were instrumental in two national firsts: our CDFI Friendly Bloomington financial institution, bringing \$23 million in mission capital to town, and our Sibling City relationship with Palo Alto, California. [thank PA Council member, SCA founder Vicki Veenker] ESD is at the heartbeat of much in Bloomington: the Trades District and Mill, the Buskirk and the Waldron, small businesses, parklets, solar panels and public art.

Scott Robinson has led Planning and Transportation since 2020, with Terri Porter and Christy Langley before him. We have produced so many plans with our community and council: the Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Plan, the Unified Development Ordinance. These all truly are the blueprint for our future city. Planning and Transportation reviews plans for new developments, including those for 5,600 new units of housing. We explore big ideas with our community, like the College/Walnut corridor study, greenways, and bike and pedestrian network. We make sure development follows the Bloomington way.

Andrew Cibor, Two-time City Engineer, most recently since 2020, first to lead the new engineering department, created in 2021 - Andrew and his team oversee the over \$3.5 billion of new investments that have gone in since 2016, and manage all the public rights of way. From Hopewell to the Trades District to sidepaths and sidewalks, ADA ramps and more. So much construction to manage! The new 7-Line separated bike lane got their design and TLC, and in 2022 PeopleforBikes named it the 5th best new bike lane in the whole country!

Rick Dietz has led Information and Technology Services since 2004 [represented by Greg Overtoom] - ITS keeps all of city government connected and equipped for today's workplaces. We've added wifi in parks. We supplied so many workers with new equipment during the pandemic and trained everyone how to zoom, how to hold public meetings remotely; we've won state and national awards for best city website, digital equity trailblazing, and our public B-Clear dashboard. And, of course, after six years of trying, we've joined forces with Meridiam to get gigabit speed fiber to the whole city with the country's best digital equity program.

Beth Cate has been the city's lead lawyer since 2022, and before her, Philippa Guthrie. Our lawyers help everyone else in city government do their jobs, advising on contracts and new ordinances, property acquisition and enforcements. Beth and her team negotiate labor contracts and deal with personnel issues. We defend lawsuits, and bring lawsuits. We won a landmark city-rights annexation lawsuit at the Indiana Supreme Court. We monitor, investigate, and report on hate and bias incidents in our city. We're the only city in Indiana scoring 100% on the Human Rights Campaign municipal index score, and we've done it eight years in a row!

Jeff Underwood is our two-time City Controller, most recently since 2014. Jeff and his sharp team monitor every penny that goes in and out of city government, and that's a lot of pennies. We earn top reviews in our audits, and high rankings in our bond ratings. We issue refinance, bicentennial, utility, infrastructure, and public safety bonds. We have added critically important local income taxes for public safety and economic development. We've taken on big new projects like Switchyard, Hopewell, Trades District and the Waldron right here, requiring extra efforts from Jeff and his team. And we have weathered the pandemic economic collapse and kept city government in excellent fiscal health throughout, with strong cash balances and financial ratings.

Emily Pierson is acting head of Human Resources, taking over for Caroline Shaw before her. HR takes care of all 850 of us city employees - hiring us, training us, planning with us, and yes, sometimes having hard talks with us. Emily and her team dealt with the upheavals of the pandemic with great skill, keeping us safe and productive. We've added paid family leave, and a living wage for every city employee, and enhanced savings matches. We've reviewed compensation and trained in DEI. HR has been the front line in dealing with the new labor market realities of higher turnover and vacancies, and led outside management reviews of every city department to enhance effectiveness.

Coordinating all those 16 departments is the Office of the Mayor, led by Deputy Mayor Mary Catherine Carmichael since this year, preceded by Don Griffin and Mick Reneissen since 2016. The deputy mayor has one of the toughest jobs in Bloomington, to oversee all the biggest projects, keep tabs on all the goings on, and assure our performance and accountability.

The mayor's office also includes Communications Director Andrew Krebbs since 2021, preceded by Yaël Ksander, with a team of Justin Crossley, Digital Brand Manager, preceded by Laura Collins, and Copywriter Deirdre Sheets. And Innovation Director Devta Kidd, since 2019, preceded by Tom Miller, also Public Engagement Director Kaisa Goodman since this year; and our Chief of Staff, officially starting tomorrow, Josefa Madrigal, preceded by Elizabeth Karon. Rose Smith runs our front office, preceded by Celeste Wolfinger and Morgan Allen, with awesome interns filling out the team.

All the good things happen because of people. So cabinet, stand as you're able; city council and clerk and any other local elected officials stand up; city employees, current or past, stand up; any current or past members of boards or commissions, stand up! Members of our community stand as you're able to celebrate all these hometown heroes.

These government and community leaders, collaborating with residents and partners, have realized record investments and change in the past seven years – much of it during a global pandemic. The state of our city is very strong. And ready for the future.

And there's more to come in 2023:

We'll see major Public safety investments of \$30+ million in a new public safety headquarters with police and fire co-locating in the newly purchased section of the Showers building, as well as three fire facilities. And new \$100,000 forgivable loans to help first responders buy homes in the city.

"Project 46" is our planned three-county climate collaboration, including Bartholemew, Brown and Monroe counties we look to launch next month - watch for it.

Our new 501c3, City of Bloomington Capital improvements meets next week and will help steer the exciting Hopewell redevelopment as we review developer proposals.

Dozens of miles of fiber-optic cable are being installed right now to bring a new Digital Future to Bloomington: ubiquitous, net neutral, gigabit speed available to all. And the most comprehensive digital equity program in the country, offering free high-speed internet to thousands of needy households.

And one breaking news item tonight: Our Utility department has partnered with the county solid waste district to study a major potential Waste to Energy project. There's plenty more work and study to come, and we sincerely appreciate the partnership of the solid waste district and Tom McGlasson their director. But early reports suggest pursuing a Resource Recovery facility to anaerobically digest compostable waste locally and up to a 50-75 mile radius to produce methane gas at our Dillman Road plant. The facility could possibly generate enough heat and electricity to operate the plant. Such a facility could partially or fully address up to ten items on the City's Sustainability and Climate Action Plans. Thanks again to the county solid waste district for partnership; watch for an upcoming public meeting sharing the findings.

Much as I would like to dig further into all that has been going on and the progress this team and this community has made – Dawn warned me against too much detail about all this. (and thank you, Dawn for all the advice and support through all the years – and please join me in thanking Dawn for her incredible service to our country lately at the US Dept of Justice).....

Let's turn to a forward view. The next seven years – the critical decade of the 20s. What will we look like in 2030? I'm going to answer perhaps not as an aspiring mayor would, but perhaps as a retiring one should.

Any forward look must be done with humility, as Winston Churchill knew when he said: “Politics is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month and next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn’t happen.”

What do the 2020s demand of us – starting right now, so that indeed “your future is here” – and not just those of us here now, but “you’s” all over the state and nation and world:

First: We acknowledge that Bloomington’s future is not automatic. (repeat). Hundreds of cities around the country and world – thousands – are striving to be the best places to live and work and play. We are lucky to live in such a great small city..... no doubt. But there are lots of great cities to live in, small and large. We can’t be too proud or too self-congratulatory.

We’re a terrific place to be, but not unique. I ran for mayor, and have served, intending to up our game. To activate us. To be more ambitious. I believe we have done so. But there is much more to do, including, of course, long after I am out of office, because no future is automatic.

Second point: Change is hard, and essential. (repeat) Change can be unpopular with vested interests or settled expectations. Traditions and nostalgia can hinder progress. We Bloomingtonians today can sometimes love a city that doesn’t welcome all among us, or newcomers, or next generations. Saving our county courthouse and the Buskirk and the Waldron all were excellent moves. But losing the Chocolate Moose’s traditional and charming little A-Frame let us gain 54 new housing units, including ten permanently affordable workforce apartments. My parents lived in an apartment right next to the Penguin/Moose when they first came to town in the 1950s. Dawn and I took our boys there many, many times – walking there from our home was a ritual as each summer began. Important change can be unpopular. By the way, while the A-Frame is gone, the delicious ice cream remains at the new Moose. (and If you want to see the old building, check out Mellencamp’s Jack & Diane music video.)

Former Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel said, “Change is our new constant. It comes swiftly, unannounced. And the hardest thing to figure out is how to make change a friend and not a foe. A mayor who denies change is going to fail.....fail in their responsibility to the public to better prepare their city for the future.”

We change to improve equality and access, to protect our environment and advance our children’s health and education and future. Our land/labor acknowledgement reminds us that this imperfect union, and imperfect city, must continue to struggle to improve.

Third point: much of this change, we’ll have to do ourselves, as a community. (repeat) That is, we won’t always have willing partners around us and above us. For the changes we need, state government is unlikely to help enough. Indeed we can expect they may impede or oppose some of our efforts. Cook Group CEO Pete Yonkman recently said, “we can’t sit around and wait for the governor, and for the state of Indiana, to solve our problems and our challenges in our communities.” Agreed. And federal government has been so fractured and stuck as well; they’ve seemed unable to come together and fix important problems. A lot of this truly falls to us here locally.

Now one bit of very good news: in the past two years, the federal government has made extraordinary progress. President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer together produced an incredible package of support – including some coming directly to Bloomington and cities like ours – first the American Rescue Plan Act, then the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill, and the Climate/inflation reduction act, and the Science bill (CHIPS). This over 4 Trillion dollars of support is an extraordinary package to help in our transformations. What is possible in the next five plus years is fantastic – if we have the wisdom and gumption to pursue it. It is fantastic and also rare: We are unlikely to see another such combination of federal help in the next 20 or 30 years.

I hope I'm wrong about that 20-30 year horizon and the need to be more self reliant, but I'd bet I'm not. By 2040, it's estimated that 70 US senators will be chosen by 30% of Americans living in smaller, more conservative states. Our federal judiciary, from the Supreme Court down, is terribly conservative and reactionary, including, of course, their outrageous and devastating overturning of Roe v. Wade 8 months ago tomorrow. Gerrymandering and money in politics impede progressive ideas. Our own state has some of the worst gerrymandering in the country, and just passed SB1 to prohibit almost all abortions. These and other challenges mean we need to chart our own destiny locally.

So heading toward 2030, I'll propose four big changes we should pursue locally. And making these big changes, we must do them all at once. (repeat) We can't slow down our momentum or look backwards.

We also can't imagine that we will all reach consensus about these issues. They are complicated, hard, even divisive sometimes. A majority of us have to lead this change. To spur Bloomington to the future 2030.

First, on our global and local climate emergency. We need to lead. Our State of Indiana won't. Period. By 2030 we need to accomplish real progress on our excellent and detailed – and at least partially funded – Climate Action Plan. We have potential regional and cross-sectoral climate progress coming with our planned 3-county Project 46 (aka Green Ribbon panel). With regional planning, and more funding and focus, we can achieve our climate goals by 2050 or earlier. And notably for public transit, we have quintupled our local support from 1 to 5 million dollars a year: Imagine the best public transit in a small city in America, where you have the access and ease of a big city. Think of the convenience of transit in a New York or DC or London – but in a small city like ours. We could do it. We should do it. One Bus Rapid Transit line is already funded, with planning underway, for an east-west 3rd street. As well as micro-transit options. What about three more lines to criss-cross our community? With transit-oriented density of development at the stations. Imagine America's very best small-city transit system. The feds are ready to help in this. We should do it.

Second, imagine our 2030 quality of life and jobs supporting it, with more trails, more parks, more arts, more delight! Imagine the private sector growth expanding jobs and building on the successes of Cook, Catelet, Baxter, Boston Scientific, IU Health, Secretly Group, The Mill, Remote Bloomington and many more 1000s of new good-paying jobs. We have such a well-educated workforce. Thank our school system and Ivy Tech and IU.

Remember Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who said, "If you want a great city, found a great university, and wait 200 years." By 2030 we need to be leaning in together even more, IU and Bloomington. Imagine Bloomington with thriving private jobs fueled by IU and intelligence, with wages among Indiana's highest.... And imagine if we accelerate our family friendly policies and establish free pre-K for 3- and 4-year olds? These are all possible. And in all this we must advance our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Belonging efforts. Can you imagine a 2030 Bloomington with booming tech and new-economy jobs, free universal pre-K, and a measurably more diverse and welcoming city?

Third, affordable housing. You know we must expand and accelerate housing production – both market rate and dedicated affordable housing. In the last seven years our city team has supported 5,609 new or retained units of housing in Bloomington, with almost a quarter of it, fourteen hundred units, affordable housing. (that's a 20-fold increase over the previous seven years' affordable units). So we've gotten a great start. But we should accelerate that pace, with continued 25% affordable units. I believe strongly we have to continue to expand opportunities.....to let more people live and work in our great city.

We need more choices with a mix of housing types. We're only averaging about 30 new single family homes per year. Our neighborhoods have to continue to evolve, to improve, for more, and for better lives. It means in the city, yes, more height, more density. Because that also means less sprawl, and more

sustainability. We'll do up to a thousand new units at Hopewell. We have a new land trust with Summit Hill, and we have CDFI Friendly Bloomington to bring in tens of millions of dollars.

I believe we should imagine housing for 250,000 people in our 3-county Metropolitan Statistical Area of Monroe, Owen, and Greene counties. Put another way, that's about a 30% growth in population from 192,000 today. This won't be easy to do well. But we have done it before: in two decades of, the 1940s and the 1960s, Monroe County's population grew by 37 and 44%, respectively. In the decades of the 70s and the 90s our neighbor Owen County grew by 30 and 26%, respectively. Imagine 250,000 people in our MSA. The energy and creativity. The diversity and innovation. The sustainability. If we manage it right.

That's three areas with good momentum where we need to up our game and keep stretching – climate..... jobs and quality of life....and housing.

In a fourth area we are deplorably lacking: public health and our criminal justice system. Indiana is near rock-bottom in the nation for investments in public health, and in many public health indicators. We know the State House and Governor last year enacted terrible Senate Bill 1 that seeks to cripple reproductive health services, devastating women and families. We generally lack adequate access to health care doctors and direct services. We have to respond to all this locally with all that we can, relying extensively on our county government's primary leadership role in public health. We cannot wait for the state to save us. Yes, we continue to urge their support, but we have county-wide resources available right now to invest in public health, including mental health and substance-use disorder services, and reproductive health.

Let me speak a moment about our neighbors whom we often see on the streets and in parks or encampments in and around our city. We should all thank the extraordinary nonprofits and partners of government who together are embracing the "Built for Zero" model of making homelessness "brief, rare and non-repeating" in our community. The city and county collaborate with these partners, and contribute millions of dollars to advance this Heading Home solution. We are moving forward, but the calamities and suffering we often see on our streets are only in part a housing issue. Primarily, we are in the midst of a public health emergency in our community. We must invest significantly more, locally, in public health, including specifically mental health and substance-use treatments.

And we know the debacle and moral catastrophe of our jail, which in many ways is also a cry for more public health investment. I challenge us in our highly over-incarcerated country and state: Imagine if for every new dollar we propose to invest in needed jail and jail-related services, we also invest a new dollar or more in prevention and pre- and post-incarceration services and facilities. Again, we can't wait for more state public health money. Despair, isolation, and addiction are real. We should dedicate millions a year locally into mental health services. Imagine if, by 2030, Bloomington were a national leader in local mental health services.

I imagine Bloomington thriving in 2030 if we address these four areas energetically. None of this is automatic or easy. But it is possible.

I'll close and highlight two things to make all of this possible: resources, that is, financing and political will—two necessities to achieve a vision.

First on the funding of all this government effort. "Taxes" is not a bad word. They are how we achieve many important things together. Recent decades have seen a terrible, harmful denigration of public investment and efforts. That's wrong-headed and wrong history. It is precisely public investment that has dramatically advanced humanity in our country and across the globe – in equality and opportunity, in public schools and health care and public health and social security and infrastructure.

Remember that our own local income tax, even after our recent major new local efforts, is still the 2nd lowest of our seven immediate neighbors – in a low-tax state in a low-tax country. With some resources already on hand, and capacity for additional bonding or revenues as needed, we have ample financial capacity to meet the challenges of 2030.

The second essential ingredient is political will. Nancy Pelosi quoted Abraham Lincoln recently about how to get things done; Lincoln said, quote “In this country, public sentiment is everything. With it, nothing can fail; against it, nothing can succeed.” end quote. I’ll say it again: “In this country, public sentiment is everything. With it, nothing can fail; against it, nothing can succeed.”

Is there Public Sentiment to meet these big challenges? I believe fervently yes. Our public wants us to respond and lead concerning the climate emergency. Our public wants us to support great new jobs and achieve increased diversity and rising quality of life. Our public wants us to ensure housing opportunities so people from all walks of life can live here. Our public wants us truly to protect public health in all its dimensions.

When our public wants these things, we are called to muster the political will to deliver them. I believe in Bloomington and believe we can continue our progress accelerate our progress.

With excellent local momentum, and unprecedented federal support available, we can combine resources and political will to rise even higher. It is a great time to be in Bloomington, with the state of our city so strong.

“Your future is here” should be heard far and wide. Your future is here – a new graduate imagining a career and a family. Your future is here: A family fleeing rising seas, or wildfires, or other climate impacts, from our coasts or around the world. Your future is here: Immigrants fleeing depressed opportunities or war or persecution. Your future is here: Families just wanting a great place to work and play. Your futures are here.

My friends, the future is very bright in our home city, these lovely, verdant, forested, water-rich, gentle and generous hills of southern Indiana. The state of our city is strong. And I join you in imagining all the possibilities ahead of us. What a privilege. And a responsibility. It continues to be a great honor to serve as mayor. For which I thank you, and I sincerely look forward to our next chapters. May Bloomington’s blessings continue to flow.

Thanks again for being here.