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CITY OF
BLOOMINGTON
PARKS & RECREATION

2025 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

January 2026



Conducted by

aQity 10 YEARS OF
RESEARCH

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MASTER PLAN PROCESS:

Summer

Community Input: Focus Groups, Questionnaire, Event Engagement

Fall

Conduct community survey, full financial analysis

Winter

Data and engagement review, draft goals and actions

Spring

Finalization of goals, actions, and adoption of plan

SURVEY DESIGN:

- ❖ 405 residents completed through Internet and mail-in options
- ❖ Completed November–December 2025
- ❖ The respondent sample was weighted to match US census targets for Bloomington and key demographics
- ❖ Margin of error = $\pm 4.9\%$

SOME KEY FINDINGS:

- ❖ Overall esteem ratings are 90% favorable
- ❖ 78% found positive value in tax support of parks, programs, and facilities
- ❖ Most used: B-Line, Switchyard, Bryan, Griffy, Rail Trail
- ❖ Top level of demand/interest: Trails (75%), Open space/natural areas (61%), park/trail amenities (60%), swimming pool (38%), Pickleball (27%)

SOME KEY FINDINGS:

- ❖ Top interest in events: farmers' market (76%), outdoor concerts (69%), natural resources ed (34%)
- ❖ 47% of people visited a park event/program with average satisfaction rating (0-10) of 8.4
- ❖ Top facility for improvement: Bryan Pool (30%), None (24%), Twin Lakes (18%), Ice Arena (14%)
- ❖ Key facilities rated between 68% (Mills Pool) to 78% (Bryan pool) favorability for investment

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DRAFT GOALS:

MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY IMPACT

INVEST IN WHAT WE HAVE

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

A STRONG, CONNECTED STAFF



**City of Bloomington
Common Council**

MEMORANDUM

To: Bloomington Common Council
From: Ad Hoc Hiring Committee
Re: Committee Update and Requested Council Actions
Date: March 24, 2026

Colleagues,

The Ad Hoc Hiring Committee met on March 17 and March 24 to advance the work authorized by Council and to prepare the materials included in this packet addendum. Most notably, the Committee finalized a revised position description for Council Attorney and Director of the Common Council Office, which is attached in both clean and redlined form.

Job Description Revisions

The edits reflected in the redlined version are intended both to clarify and elevate the position. In particular, the Committee's aim was to more clearly establish this role not only as the principal legal advisor to the Common Council, but also as the director-level leader of the Council Office with responsibility for executive oversight of administrative operations, continuity, and the effective functioning of the office as a whole.

To that end, the revisions are intended to:

- Clarify that the position serves as the primary legal advisor to the Common Council, including advising on legislation, liability exposure, litigation risk, and procedural authority;
- Elevate the position by expressly designating it as Director of the Common Council Office, with executive oversight of Council administrative operations;
- Strengthen language describing responsibility for reviewing legislation prior to Council action to ensure compliance with applicable law and alignment with policy intent;
- Confirm expectations related to representation of the Council in litigation and legal proceedings when necessary;
- Clarify supervisory responsibilities over Council staff, legal research support, interns, and fellows;

- Reflect the role’s responsibility for staffing support, constituent-response systems, budget oversight, and continuity of Council operations;
- Better align the position description with the seniority, breadth, and institutional importance of the role.

The Committee is requesting Council approval of this job description during the regular session, so that it may proceed immediately with the next steps in the recruitment process in coordination with City HR and other appropriate offices:

- Develop outreach and recruitment strategies
- Screen applications
- Conduct interviews

Timely approval will allow the Committee to maintain momentum at an important transition point for Council operations.

External Support for Recruitment and Continuity of Operations

During its March 17 meeting, the Committee began to review options available through external vendors, professional service providers, and temporary staffing arrangements that may support municipal recruitment processes and provide interim operational assistance where necessary.

The Committee would like to explore—and potentially pursue, in coordination with appropriate City processes—the following:

1. A retained search: A retained search involves engaging a recruitment firm to proactively identify and recruit qualified candidates rather than relying solely on applicants responding to a public posting. This approach is often appropriate for specialized legal roles or senior leadership positions where the strongest candidates may not otherwise emerge through a standard posting process.
2. Temporary administrative staffing
3. Temporary legal counsel support

Accordingly, the Committee is requesting authorization from Council to:

Identify and contract, in coordination with appropriate City processes, with external vendors, professional service providers, or temporary legal counsel as necessary to ensure uninterrupted functioning of the Council Office and to support recruitment efforts.

The Committee aims to operate within current funding constraints and will continue to keep the full Council apprised of developments at each regular meeting. At the same time, the Committee

believes time is now of the essence in stabilizing Council Office support, maintaining continuity, and conducting a strong recruitment process.

Appreciation

Finally, the Committee would like to thank Council members for their engagement and flexibility during what has been a difficult transition period. The Committee also extends particular appreciation to the Clerk's Office, City HR, City Legal, and the Office of the Mayor for their responsiveness and partnership in supporting this work.

Thank you all for your continued collaboration as we work together to ensure the Council Office remains strong, well supported, and positioned for long-term success.

Attachments:

Position Description (Redlined)

Position Description (Clean)



POSITION DESCRIPTION CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

POSITION: ~~— Council Attorney and Director of the Common Council~~
~~Office Council Attorney/Administrator/Attorney~~

DEPARTMENT: Council

JOB GRADE: 12

FLSA: Exempt

Serves as the principal legal advisor to the Common Council and provides executive oversight of Council administrative operations, ensuring effective governance, continuity, and the smooth functioning of the Council Office. ~~Serves as legal counsel and administrator for the Common Council, supporting members of the Council and supervising Council staff.~~

1. DUTIES

This job description is illustrative only and is not a comprehensive listing of all job functions performed. The following are essential duties for this position, performed with or without reasonable accommodation:

Essential (primary)

Advises Common Council regarding federal, state and local laws, anticipated or threatened litigation, potential liability and risks, and various legal circumstances and situations.

Reviews all legislation before the Common Council to ensure that the Council remains within its legal authority and that the legislation complies with applicable law; advises council members on whether legislation ~~is appropriately reflects~~ Council direction and policy intent.

Assists the Council in reviewing the proposed city budget for legal, procedural, and institutional implications. Keeps Council members informed of significant changes in local, state, and federal law and legislative developments affecting the City and the Council's work. ~~consistent with the stated desires of Council.~~ Assists the Council in reviewing the proposed city budget. ~~Informs~~

~~Council members of pertinent changes in local, state and federal legislative actions and laws affecting the City. ¶~~

Oversees and, as necessary, contributes to the drafting of ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents for action by the Common Council, including conducting or directing legal research as requested assigned by the Council. ~~Drafts ordinances, resolutions, contracts and legal documents for action by Common Council, including legal research as assigned by Council.~~

Oversees the preparation and distribution of legal documents, legislation, agendas, and related legislative materials for Common Council meetings, and ensures that Council meetings are conducted in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law, including public notice and accessibility requirements. Attends Council meetings, advises on legal and procedural matters as required. Communicates and meets with City departments and other stakeholders as needed to resolve issues, facilitate legislative work, and support Council operations. ~~Prepares and distributes legal documents, legislation and related legislative materials for Common Council meetings, including agendas, and ensures that Council meetings are conducted in accordance with state and local law and with proper notice for the public. Attends and assists in the management of all Common Council meetings and provides legal advice during meetings as required by Council. Communicates and meets with various City departments to resolve issues as needed.~~

Supervises, and when necessary, conducts legal research, and prepares court cases, and represents the Council in litigation and in various legal proceedings.

Ensures adequate staffing at Council committee meetings and ensures posting of agendas and information packets for such meetings. Serves on the City's collective bargaining team when directed by the Council.

Ensures appropriate response to resident and media inquiries concerning Council business. ~~Represents the Council on various City committees and serves on City's collective bargaining team upon request of the Council. Represents Common Council at public meetings, as requested by members of the Council, and responds to citizen and media inquiries.~~

Oversees processes for receiving, referring, tracking, and following up on constituent concerns to help ensure that matters raised with the Council are directed appropriately and addressed in a timely manner. ~~Refers constituent complaints to the appropriate department and determines whether the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.~~

Oversees the development, submission, administration, and monitoring of the Council department budget in coordination with appropriate staff and consistent with Council priorities. ~~Supervises the development, submission and execution of the department budget.~~

Directs the annual review of department activities, services, and operational effectiveness, and oversees the preparation and submission of related reports. ~~Performs annual review of department activities and services, and prepares and submits report.~~

Serves as Director of the Council Office, providing strategic leadership, vision, and continuity of operations across Council terms, and supervises and directs the Deputy Administrator/Attorney, Assistant Administrator/Legal Research Assistant, interns, and other Council staff as assigned, including setting priorities, reviewing work, and supporting professional development. ~~Supervises and directs the Deputy Administrator/Attorney, Assistant Administrator/Legal Research Assistant and interns as described below.~~

Non-Essential (secondary)

Answers telephone, greets office visitors, determines nature of call, responds to inquiries and/or routes caller to appropriate person or department.

Performs related duties as assigned.

Takes all reasonable steps to maintain a safe work environment.

2. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

J.D. degree, licensed attorney in the State of Indiana.

Knowledge of local, state and federal laws, regulations, and codes and ability to apply that knowledge to various ~~special~~ circumstances that pertain to the City.

Ability to direct and supervise others and provide guidance for Council members.

Working knowledge of public budget development, administration, and oversight sufficient to supervise the Council department budget and advise on related institutional issues. ~~Working knowledge of budget preparation, administration and execution.~~

3. LEVEL OF SUPERVISION AND RESPONSIBILITY:

Received

Consults regularly with the Common Council regarding major legal, policy, governance, and administrative matters. Reports directly to the Council, and work is reviewed primarily for alignment with Council objectives, legal sufficiency, and overall effectiveness. ~~Reviews major policy issues with the Council on a continuing basis. Reports directly to the Council and work is~~

~~reviewed only to ensure conformance with their overall objectives.~~

Exercised

Works with substantial independence and exercises a high degree of professional judgment in carrying out the responsibilities of the position. Provides executive oversight of the Council office within general policy direction and supervisory boundaries established by the Common Council. ~~Works independently of direct review. Independent judgment is used in executing responsibilities. Administers the Council Office within general supervisory objectives and boundaries.~~

Directs work of Council Deputy Administrator/Attorney and Council Assistant Administrator/Legal Research Assistant and any Council Interns.

In consultation with the Council President, and consistent with applicable City policies and Human Resources procedures, exercises supervisory authority over Council staff, including recruitment, interviewing, selection, work assignment, performance management, professional development, discipline, and, where appropriate, decisions concerning termination. May make revisions to subordinate job descriptions and organizational structures to improve Council office effectiveness. ~~At the incumbent's discretion, exercises the authority: to solicit, recruit, interview and hire applicants for positions; to negotiate and extend offers of employment; to draft, revise and post job descriptions of positions of subordinates, including but not limited to the positions of Deputy Administrator/Attorney and Council Assistant Administrator/Legal Research Assistant and Council Interns; to create and define new positions; to conduct annual appraisals; to supervise, direct and evaluate subordinates; to discipline subordinates and terminate employment after conferring with the President of Common Council. In exercising such authority, the incumbent shall utilize the City's policies and procedures then in effect in consultation with the Department of Human Resources.~~

4. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

The work is highly complex and requires the application of advanced legal knowledge, policy judgment, and administrative leadership to address novel, sensitive, and high-impact issues facing the Common Council and the City of Bloomington and its residents. The incumbent must interpret and apply a broad range of laws, regulations, and procedures while simultaneously managing competing priorities, and operational constraints; upholding the Council's role as legislative body and final fiscal authority. The role regularly involves time-sensitive decision-making with significant legal, institutional, and public consequences, often in situations where guidance may be limited or precedents are unclear. ~~Applies a broad scope of laws, rules and regulations to devise unique approaches for dealing with unusual and/or unresolved problems. Legal and policy recommendations have a significant impact upon City operations. Errors in judgment are not immediately apparent through supervisory review and may result in~~

~~substantial loss of time in other units, substantial loss of monies, and inconvenience to the public.~~

Provides balanced, well-reasoned, and objective legal and strategic advice to Council members, particularly where legal risk, policy disagreement, or competing institutional interests are present. Often provides legal opinions during public Council meetings. ~~Provides a balanced perspective when conveying information to members of the Council.~~

Incumbent should expect irregular hours given the Council's schedule. This will include evenings and on occasion weekends as necessary for time sensitive completion of tasks and to address unforeseen complications. The Common Council generally holds regular session meetings on Wednesday evenings.

Work environment is a modern office with no unusual physical demands.

5. PERSONAL WORK RELATIONSHIPS:

Maintains frequent contact with officials, petitioners, local, state and federal agencies, and the general public in often unpredictable circumstances, making significant policy and legal recommendations. Must maintain professional working relationships with all department heads.

Contacts often require incumbent to utilize tact and the use of persuasion to gain cooperation in the face of differences of opinion.



POSITION DESCRIPTION CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

POSITION: Council Attorney and Director of the Common Council Office
DEPARTMENT: Council
JOB GRADE: 12
FLSA: Exempt

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Assists the Council in reviewing the proposed city budget for legal, procedural, and institutional implications. Keeps Council members informed of significant changes in local, state, and federal law and legislative developments affecting the City and the Council's work.

Oversees and, as necessary, contributes to the drafting of ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents for action by the Common Council, including conducting or directing legal research as requested by the Council.

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To: Mayor Kerry Thomson
From: Bloomington Common Council
Date: March **, 2026
RE: Budget Priorities 2027

As you know, Council has been discussing budget priorities through the lens of outcomes and the 7 priority buckets identified in partnership with the administration. This memo serves as a summary and ranking of our budget priorities for 2027 and requests for budget presentations in light of these priorities.

First, as a body, implementation of existing plans rose to the top of our collective conversations. Existing plans have gone through multiple rounds of community input and vetting, thus implementation of those plans is of high importance for council and for the community as a whole. There is specific interest in highlighting the Safe Streets for All Plan, the Climate Action Plan, and the Transportation Plan. Related is interest in development of plans where none currently exist, specifically noting a Public Safety Plan.

Second, through discussion and member surveys, a list of overall priority outcomes were identified and ranked. Deputy Mayor Knapp indicated that our final list of priorities did not need to be separated by priority buckets.

1. Maintenance and enhancement of city assets
 - a. Basic maintenance and upkeep (filling potholes, repaving, etc.)
 - b. Design improvements to improve access, service to community, safety, etc.
2. Making homelessness brief, rare, and nonrepeating
 - a. Increased access to mental healthcare
 - b. Increased access to addiction treatment programs
 - c. Support of early intervention services (like eviction prevention and job support)
 - d. Job and wage growth
 - e. Coordination of support services
 - f. Increased range of affordable housing types
3. Zero traffic fatalities or serious injuries by 2039
 - a. Pedestrian network is cleared quickly and effectively after snowfall
 - b. Transportation network enhancements support all travel modes for people of all ages, abilities and modes of transportation
4. Increase housing diversity within neighborhoods
 - a. Increase predictability for permitting
 - b. Decrease permitting wait times
 - c. Increase range of affordable housing options, including those with Universal Design and/or are environmentally sustainable
5. Address and Reduce systemic inequities

- a. Programs to reduce income inequality across and between ages, races, and genders
- b. Ensure engagement processes are inclusive and representative
- c. Reduce race and class disparities in policing, justice, and public safety systems

**Note: these can look like goals related to systems (like CBU bill discounts/assistance), systematic approaches to government procedures, defining equity, and measuring who is engaging and in what contexts.

6. Inclusive and strong local economy, able to stay resilient and adaptable
 - a. Wages, jobs, and GDP outpace population growth
 - b. An increased number of employees who work in Bloomington are able to live in Bloomington
7. Bloomington residents have options other than uniformed officers for nonviolent issues
8. Strengthen food security networks
 - a. A local food culture is promoted and protected
9. Air quality is maintained at a high level and carbon emissions are reduced
 - a. Fossil fuel consumption is reduced community wide
 - b. Increased renewable energy production
10. Create vibrant 3rd places/neighborhood hubs
 - a. Activate vacant spaces
 - b. Invest in ensuring public spaces are high quality, engaging, and active
11. Waste reduction
 - a. Increased composting

We recognize there may be many methods of meeting the above priorities, they could each fall into more than one of our Outcome Based Budgeting categories or “buckets”, and may include multiple departments and city staff. Additionally, we realize that these priorities require different levels of investment and approaches, including policy updates, support of community partners, programs, and legislative change.

Third, as part of budget presentations, we are interested in hearing how certain programs and expenses are supporting these priorities and splitting those expenses out to the greatest extent possible, including considering direct expenses, staff time, and if the expense falls into more than one priority area. For example, the maintenance of city assets would include filling potholes, which requires direct expenses for materials and also staff time. An intersection redesign to enhance safety may include materials, staff time, and design work and may be considered enhancement of a city asset and also work toward our goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2039.

CONSOLIDATED RANKING ATTACHMENT

The consolidated ranking of Councilmembers' budget priorities for 2027 can be found here: [consolidated ranking of Councilmembers' budget priorities](#)

***** Reasonable Condition Form *****

- Ordinance: 2026-06
- Reasonable Condition #: 4
- Submitted by: CM Kate Rosenbarger and CM Hopi Stosberg
- Date: March 24, 2026

Proposed Reasonable Condition

At least fifty percent (50%) of all dwelling units in the Hopewell PUD shall be designated as Permanently Affordable (PA)

1. Unit mix: the mix of PA units (bedrooms, square footage) must be proportionate to the market-rate units in the Hopewell PUD.
2. Functional equivalency: PA units must be functionally equivalent in construction quality and exterior appearance to market-rate units.

Compliance with the PA requirement shall be secured through one of the following recorded legal instruments:

1. Deed restrictions or covenants: a perpetual deed restriction or covenant (99 years, renewing at the transfer of each deeded property) that runs with the land, binding all current and future owners to the affordability limits.
2. Ground leases: A community land trust (CLT) or similar entity shall own the land and secure a long-term ground lease (minimum 99 years), in order to separate land ownership from structure ownership, ensuring the home remains affordable at every subsequent resale.
3. Or other legal mechanism for permanent affordability as subsequently approved by this council as an amendment to this ordinance.

All affordability restrictions imposed in this reasonable condition shall be permanent or for a term of no less than 99 years, and shall be designed in such a manner that does not require additional public subsidy. Restrictions shall not expire upon the sale or transfer of the property or structure.

Eligibility - 35% of total units reserved for households earning at or below 120% AMI.
15% of total units reserved for households earning at or below 90% AMI.

Synopsis

This reasonable condition introduces Permanent Affordability (PA) to the Hopewell PUD, where none currently exists. When Hopewell was purchased, the intent was to create permanently affordable housing - something the City of Bloomington lacks. The goal is

to create a new neighborhood with affordable options, and to keep those options affordable forever, hence Permanent Affordability. Permanent affordability is a stepping stone between renting and owning market-rate homes, and having options for purchase in Hopewell is necessary. This RC hopes to allow affordable unit and property options that are similar to market-rate options: from condos, to townhouses, to small homes, to full-sized homes.

Further, this reasonable condition brings this PUD in line with the current UDO standards for permanent affordability in a PUD, which states: at least 15% of total dwelling units within the PUD will be permanently income-limited to households earning at or below 90% AMI (amended from 120% AMI). Passed as Ordinance 2026-02 on January 14, 2026.

03/25/2026 Regular Session Action: Pending

Resolution No. 2026-06

A Resolution Directing the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department to Develop a Framework for Long-Term Housing Affordability

Preamble

WHEREAS, the Common Council, by its Resolution 18-01, approved a new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Bloomington, which took effect on March 21, 2018; and, thereafter, the Plan Commission initiated and prepared a proposal to repeal and replace Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, entitled "Unified Development Ordinance" ("UDO") in order to implement the vision for community development put forward in the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan identifies housing affordability as a critical priority and calls for the preservation and expansion of long-term affordable housing opportunities for residents of all income levels; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington, through its Housing and Neighborhood Development Department ("HAND"), administers programs and incentives designed to support the creation and preservation of affordable owner-occupied housing; and

WHEREAS, many affordable owner-occupied housing units created through public subsidy or regulatory incentives do not remain affordable in perpetuity, resulting in the loss of affordable housing stock over time, and communities across the United States have implemented mechanisms such as silent second mortgages and recorded rights-of-first-refusal to attempt to ensure long-term or permanent affordability of housing units; and

WHEREAS, a consistent, citywide framework for long-term affordability would provide clarity to developers, protect public investment, and ensure that affordable housing benefits are preserved for future residents; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council desires to assist and encourage HAND in the development of policies and tools that ensure owner-occupied housing units supported by public resources remain affordable over the long term, including upon resale or transfer; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to IC 36-7-4 et seq. and other applicable provisions of Indiana law, the City may establish policies governing the use of public funds and the disposition of housing supported by such funds;

Be It Resolved by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, that:

Section 1: Directing the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department.

The Common Council directs the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND) to develop and present a proposal establishing a consistent framework for incentivizing and ensuring long-term affordability of owner-occupied housing units that developers choose to create or preserve through City programs, subsidies, incentives, or other forms of public support including recommendations for any necessary amendments to Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code.

Section 2: Evaluation of Tools.

This framework shall include, but not be limited to, the evaluation and potential implementation of legally-available tools such as silent second mortgages, homeowner association covenants & restrictions, shared equity models, and rights-of-first refusal in favor of the City, its designee, or other entities created for the purpose of developing and maintaining affordable housing.

Section 3: Development of Clear Standards

The framework shall establish clear standards for the duration of affordability, eligibility requirements for purchasers or occupants, resale procedures, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure continued compliance over time.

Section 4: Review of Best Practices.

HAND is directed to review best practices from peer cities and organizations, and to engage relevant stakeholders, including affordable housing developers, community organizations, and financial institutions, in the development of this framework.

Section 5: Presentation of Findings.

HAND shall present its findings and recommendations to the Common Council within one hundred twenty (120) days of the effective date of this resolution, unless granted an extension by the Common Council.

Section 6: Next Steps.

Upon receipt of the recommendations, the Common Council may consider additional legislative or administrative actions necessary to implement the proposed framework of incentives and options

Section 7: Severability

If any section, sentence or provision of this legislation, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be declared invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any of the other sections, sentences, provisions, or applications of this legislation which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this legislation are declared to be severable.

Passed

Passed by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon the _____ day of _____, 2026.

Signature of Bloomington Common Council President:

Isak Nti Asare
President, Bloomington Common Council

Attestation of Bloomington City Clerk:

Nicole Bolden
Clerk, City of Bloomington

Presentation by Bloomington City Clerk:

Presented by me to the Mayor of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this _____ day of _____, 2026:

Nicole Bolden
Clerk, City of Bloomington

Approval by Mayor:

Signed and approved by me upon this upon the _____ day of _____, 2026:

Kerry Thomson
Mayor, City of Bloomington

Synopsis

This resolution sponsored by Councilmember Zulich directs the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND) to develop a legally-permissible framework for ensuring the long-term affordability of housing units supported by the City, including the use of tools such as silent second mortgages, rights-of-first-refusal, and other shared equity mechanisms, and to provide recommendations for any necessary amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance and related provisions of the Bloomington Municipal Code.