



## **MAYOR KERRY THOMSON'S INAUGURATION REMARKS**

January 1, 2024

To Clerk Bolden, Mayor Hamilton, members of the City Council, current and former elected officials, all City of Bloomington employees and colleagues, and to our colleagues from Ellettsville, supporters, friends, family and neighbors, thank you for being here.

And thank you for giving me the incredible honor of working for you as your mayor.

Today is not only the start of a new year, it's the dawn of new day.

A time of renewal. Of hope. And of aspiration.

Like many cities, our past includes frustrations, failures and fractures. Today, we begin anew.

It's time to move forward and embrace our expansive horizon of possibilities, to dream big dreams and create the Bloomington we all want to gift to our children and grandchildren.

As your mayor, my mission is this: to bring this community together around a shared vision and turn that vision into a reality.

We will do it by listening to one another and inviting all people and perspectives to the table. That means making our government more transparent and accessible. It means seeking input from every corner of our community before plans are made. It means unleashing the talent of our city workers to find new and innovative ways to serve the public. And it means a bottom up, not top down approach to leadership.

We will do it by building new alliances and restoring old ones. We are not an island and Bloomington cannot succeed without partnerships at the federal, state, county and local levels. It's time to move past territorial battles and meaningless fights. It's time for productive conversations, and reasonable compromises that yield action.

We will prioritize public safety and housing. We will address the substance use and mental health disorders that plague far too many of our neighbors. If we are to be the exceptional community we want to be, we must first be safe, housed and healthy.

And we will double down on all the things that make Bloomington Bloomington. Our arts, music and cultural scene, our parks and trails, a world class school system and

world renowned research university, an active and progressive business community, and a network of nonprofits, charities and faith based organizations that support us all.

I want to thank Mayor John Hamilton, his team and the outgoing members of the city council for your work in getting us here. We appreciate all you have done and will continue to do for Bloomington

As we cast our eyes to the future, everything we need to build the Bloomington of tomorrow is in our hands today. Together we have the human potential – the services and systems – the time, the talent, and the imagination to create a brilliant future. Where our democracy not only invites and welcomes **your** participation, but a democracy that is the model for the rest of our nation. And when we achieve that—when we energize our residents to work alongside us, that is what will catalyze the movement to grow our many assets, and indeed to heal our challenges the way that only Bloomington can— with innovation and dignity— a vision for a community where all are valued for what they bring, and offered the opportunity to operate at the very top of their human license.

As we look to our shared future, I'm thrilled to be entering public life alongside the most diverse city council in Bloomington's history. The voices you've elected to represent you come from many backgrounds, with a shared call: to serve you as your legislative branch of the City. While we may not always agree, I am confident that with mutual respect, transparency and assuming positive intent, we will find common ground and make real progress.

For each of us, as we enter into a new year full of possibilities it's time to look forward. It's time to get moving. And it's time to build an even better Bloomington for us and for generations to come.

Thank you for this opportunity. Let's get SWORN IN AND THEN LETS GET to work. Together.