

# 2019 Year In Review



## A Message from the City Manager

Having been here in Bloomington for just over a year & a half now, I can say from experience & with full confidence that there is tremendous opportunity here & I am proud to call this City my home. As you will see on the pages to follow, we've accomplished a lot in a year, & I look forward to even more to come.

When I think back on 2019, I'm struck by the great strides we've made in the areas of infrastructure, economic development, fiscal sustainability, & more. While the year was not without its challenges, it was also full of opportunities, & we seized them. Through the hard work of our elected officials, the public, our regional partners, & others, we continue to prosper. And, while these accomplishments highlight our forward-facing departments, know that the City's support departments were & are vital in achieving the City's goals.

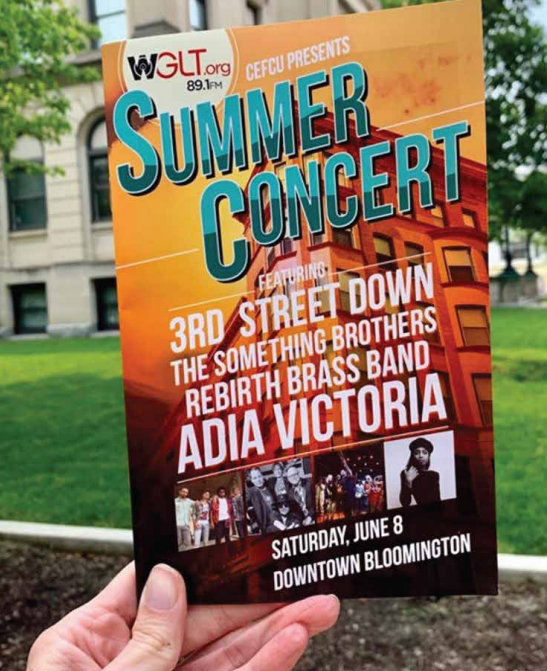
Please join me in reviewing with pride the accomplishments of 2019 & looking forward to so much more to come in 2020 & beyond.

Sincerely,

Tim Gleason

## Administration

- Initiated nationwide recruitment efforts, resulting in the hire of Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus & Police Chief Dan Donath
- Established the Economic Development department
- Promoted infrastructure improvement & transparency through the creation of [BloomingtonStreets.com](http://BloomingtonStreets.com)
- Following the state vote to legalize recreational cannabis, facilitated the crucial discussion of "what's next?" at a local level
- Partnered with the Boys & Girls Club on the Sunnyside Park project
- Through the City Clerk's office, began recodification of the City Code, which is now searchable online
- Reorganized the Legal department, bringing outside Counsel in-house and resulting in an estimated \$250,000 savings
- Completed the W. Market St. mural project in partnership with Illinois Art Station & the West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP)
- Through the work of several departments, implemented the Kronos employee timekeeping system
- Established the Technology Commission
- Worked to implement changes to the Sick Leave Buy Back program to limit the City's cost exposure
- Continued to work with VenuWorks to increase activity at Grossinger Motors Arena
- Presented a balanced budget for Council adoption, furthering the City down the path of fiscal sustainability
- Established the Downtown Cultural District, increasing potential grant opportunities for the area



# Economic Development Activity 2019

## Significant Construction Projects

- Westminster Village continued \$62M campus expansion & renovation project
- Completion of the McLean County Jail project in 2019, an over \$39M project
- New \$25M OSF Medical Office Building
- \$17M project to renovate the former Bloomington High School building into Washington Senior Apartments on E. Washington St.
- New \$10M VisionPoint Eye Center
- \$8M expansion of Chestnut Family Health Center
- \$6M Veterans Affairs clinic on Hamilton Rd.
- \$4M Rob Dob's restaurant & office building
- \$3.4M expansion of Toyo Manufacturing Company on Avalon Way off W. Market St.
- New \$3M Ancho & Agave restaurant
- New \$1.5M Parkview Inn restaurant
- \$1.9M Post Office renovation on E. Empire St.
- Iron Coyote Challenge Park Ninja Gym
- Tesla automotive service facility
- New retail shopping center on IAA Dr. with new-to-the-City Sleep Number mattress store
- New corporate offices for Bloomington-based All About Eyes corporation
- New concession stand at Miller Park Zoo

## New Retail Businesses

- Mystic Kitchen & Wine Bar (Downtown)
- Bloomington Spice Works (Downtown)
- Main Street Scoop ice cream shop (Downtown)
- Rock, Soul, Love alternative & holistic health store (Downtown)
- Dollface Desserts (E. Oakland Ave.)
- Indian Street Food Center (Eldorado Rd.)
- Lupita's Restaurant & Taqueria (W. Market St.)
- Seoul Mama restaurant (N. Veterans Pkwy.)
- Nothing Bundt Cakes (N. Veterans Pkwy.)
- Breathe wine bar (S. Hershey Rd.)
- JP's Wheel & Ale House restaurant (Hershey Rd.)
- The Farm House Diner (E. Washington St.)
- The Pass Pub & Grill (E. Washington St.)
- Once Upon a Child clothing (Krispy Kreme Dr.)
- Mass VR virtual reality gaming (Currency Dr.)
- Amazing Space banquet hall (Currency Dr.)
- Arby's (S. Veterans Pkwy.)
- Dollar General (S. Main St.)

Construction at Miller Park Zoo



# Economic Development Activity 2019

## Major Renovations

- Ongoing renovations at all State Farm office facilities in Bloomington
- Growmark offices (Towanda Ave.)
- Country Financial offices (G.E. Rd.)
- Cybernautic offices
- TENTAC ENTERPRISES (formerly Snyder)
- Chris Bryson State Farm Insurance Agent office
- Binny's Beverage Depot
- Pheasant Lanes Family Fun Center & Kegler's Pub
- Chuck E. Cheese
- KFC restaurant (W. Market St.)
- Marcus Bloomington Cinema
- Moose Lodge
- YWCA
- St. Vincent de Paul Society/Holy Trinity Food Pantry
- Wal-Mart Supercenter
- Verizon corporate store (IAA Dr.)

## Anticipated in 2020

- New \$2.6M+ Aldi (W. Market St. & Wylie Dr.)
- New \$2.5M+ pool house at Bloomington Country Club
- New Biaggi's Italian restaurant in the Empire Business Park
- New Texas Roadhouse restaurant next to former Toys R Us building
- Relocation of JoAnn Fabrics into renovated former Toys R Us building
- New Brass Pig Smoke & Ale House restaurant (Downtown)
- New 1107 West Bar & Grill restaurant (W. Locust St.)
- Renovations underway at La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries
- New Lu Lu's Pizza restaurant (E. Washington St.)
- New Firehouse Pizza restaurant at Morrissey Crossing Shopping Center
- New Club car wash at former Hardees site (E. Oakland Ave.)
- New Panda Express (W. Market St.)
- Renovated McDonalds (W. Market St.)
- New \$1.2M Chapel at OSF Hospital
- Improved 4G & new 5G cellular data in locations throughout the City by major cellular networks



# Community Development

- Adopted the comprehensive update to the Zoning Ordinance, which was last undertaken in 2006
- Adopted a Carbon Monoxide Detector Ordinance to provide local authority for enforcement of the state of Illinois Carbon Monoxide Detector Act
- Created a new Commercial Building Inspector position to better assist our business community and commercial developers
- Received a \$30,000 Certified Local Government Grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to update the City's Historic Preservation Plan
- Received one of only six Healthy Housing Initiative technical assistance grants in the nation from the National League of Cities to enhance our aging housing stock
- Received a \$100,000 Home Accessibility Program Grant from the Illinois Housing Development Authority to assist the elderly and disabled with accessibility improvements to their homes
- Provided \$58,000 through the Harriet Fuller Rust Grant, resulting in over \$120,000 of investment in the Downtown

## Economic Development: In & Near Downtown

- Entered into a brokerage agreement with Coldwell Banker Commercial Devonshire Realty for the marketing of the City & IWU-owned site at 800 N. Main St.
- Created the Downtown Bloomington Commercial Real Estate Report, a listing of vacant Downtown commercial real estate in retail, office, & industrial sectors, which is updated frequently & posted to the City's website
- Continued to coordinate streetscape improvements Downtown with the addition of 60 self-watering planters, expanded winter holiday decorations, & an updated Downtown Bloomington wayfinding kiosk map
- Celebrated the Downtown Bloomington Farmers' Market's 10th anniversary of accepting LINK cards from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), receiving a grant to match LINK card purchases at the market throughout the year and another grant from Green Top Grocery to provide additional match to LINK card users, increasing total LINK spending with vendors to almost \$11,000
- Participated in 56 events with an average attendance of 700 people during signature events

### ***Just the Facts***

In 2019, the City issued:

- 7,534 construction permits
- 2,255 building permits

Total construction value for the year was \$84,398,357





## Public Works

- Completed sewer separation, drainage improvements, resurfacing, & sidewalk improvements on Forrest Street from Morris Ave. to Hinshaw Ave.
- Completed improvements on Front St. from East St. to Madison St.
- Began using Routeware route optimization software on 13 automated refuse trucks, enabling management, crews, & office staff to view & monitor routes & photos of solid waste pickups to improve efficiency & cost-effectiveness
- Completed the Water Infrastructure Master Plan, which creates a 20-year plan for capital improvements & smart water technologies
- Installed two pumps at Fort Jesse Pump Station, obtaining an incentive from Ameren Illinois that covered \$56,396 of the \$61,300 total cost
- Received a grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to update the City's Watershed Master Plans

## Just the Facts

In 2019, there were...

- 22,393 JULIE calls to the City
- 3,558,050,000 million gallons of water pumped
- 3,558 water meters & elements replaced
- 25,599 Public Works service requests completed
- 368 Radio Frequency (RF) water meters installed
- 86 Davis Lodge rentals



# Public Safety

## Fire

- Responded to 11,402 emergency calls for the year, an increase of almost 700 over the previous year & a record for the department
- Began working on an accreditation document describing our community & on the second phase to identify community risks
- Earned an ISO Public Protection Classification Number 2 for another evaluation period
- Developed specifications & purchased a new 100 foot aerial fire apparatus to be stationed at Headquarters, needed for protection of Downtown & the number of high-rise buildings in that district
- Contracted with SiteMed & now have completed the first annual wellness physicals on over 90% of Bloomington firefighters

## Police

- Continued to keep our streets safe from those driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, making 349 DUI arrests, an all-time record surpassing 300 in 2016
- Became ILEAP accredited, a program in Illinois that verifies the Police department has policies, procedures, & daily routines that are in full compliance with the professional standards of modern law enforcement
- Continued to be successful in solving major crimes, including Bloomington's single 2019 homicide, which was solved with the arrest of 3 individuals
- Solved a significant crime series of several armed robberies of primarily check cashing institutions with the arrest of one individual
- Started the process of increasing the public safety camera program, which, though historically small, has been very helpful in solving serious crimes

### *Just the Facts*

You can view crime maps & statistics & sign up for notifications & crime alerts at [www.cityblm.org](http://www.cityblm.org).





# Quality of Life & More

## Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts

- Completed & presented to City Council the Parks Comprehensive Master Plan
- Finished construction of the Miller Park Zoo concession stand & parking lot
- Renamed the ice center the “Bloomington Ice Center” & unveiled the memorial “Joe Olson Ice Rink”
- Completed the Rollingbrook Park/Harmony Park inclusive playground project & expanded pickleball courts

## Library

- Implemented a new, more user-friendly checkout system & catalog, which involved launching online, paperless registration for new cardholders & waiving all fines that existed on migration day to remove barriers for people that stopped coming to the Library because of accumulated late fines
- Negotiated a bargaining unit contract in a record-breaking 3-half day sessions & 1 full day session
- Worked diligently with City staff to test, train staff on, & implement the new Kronos timekeeping software
- Increased vocabulary, improved focus, & inspired more active imaginations by encouraging reading during the annual Summer Reading Program; 3,339 children, 572 teens, & 589 adults completed the program
- Partnered with District 87 during Summer Reading to offer a second year of summer lunches, serving 2,522 lunches over 10 weeks

