

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City Clarifies Ownership and Removal of Peoples Park Mural

Bloomington, Ind. – The City of Bloomington is aware of community concern regarding the recent removal and replacement of the Black Lives Matter mural located on the building wall adjacent to People’s Park, 501 E Kirkwood Ave.

While the mural has long been associated with [Peoples Park](#) because of its location and visibility from the public space, the wall itself is privately owned and is not under the City’s control.

The site has featured a number of murals over the last three decades. In 2017, the [Bloomington Arts Commission \(BAC\)](#) commissioned a mural entitled, “You Belong Here.” In 2020, in the context of national and local demonstrations following the killing of George Floyd, the mural was altered with the words “Black Lives Matter” through an unsanctioned but intentional act of public expression.

City staff, the Bloomington Arts Commission, the original artist, and the property owners at the time discussed the mural’s future. No final decision was made to replace it and the Black Lives Matter mural remained in place for nearly six years. Following the sale of the property, the new owner made the decision to paint a different mural on the building. As the property owner, the new owner has the right to decide on the use and appearance of the wall, including whether to maintain, replace, or repaint a mural.

Peoples Park holds an important place in Bloomington's history as the site of the former Black Market, which was firebombed by members of the Ku Klux Klan in 1968. That history continues to be recognized through the historical marker installed at the park in 2020 and through the City's ongoing care for the park's legacy as part of Bloomington's civic and cultural life.

The City remains committed to supporting public art, community expression, and spaces that reflect Bloomington's values of belonging, dignity, and shared civic life. The City will continue to look for opportunities to work with artists, property owners, residents, and community partners to support meaningful public art throughout Bloomington.

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