

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Thomson Calls for Accelerated Closure of Monroe County Thomson Property Encampment

Bloomington, Ind. – Mayor Kerry Thomson today called on Monroe County officials to accelerate the closure of the encampment on the County-owned Thomson property, citing repeated and escalating safety concerns at and around the site.

The City and County have remained in regular communication regarding the property, including coordination among law enforcement, homelessness response staff, and community service providers. The City has shared with County partners the outreach practices and response protocols that helped Bloomington move from more than a dozen encampments on City-owned property to none.

In addition to extending offers of support in the planning process, the City has increased patrols in the area surrounding this encampment and coordinated social services to provide assistance at the camp. On an ongoing basis, the Bloomington Police Department continues to co-respond to calls with Sheriff's Deputies in the encampment area. The encampment continues to destabilize, and it is time to act with haste.

Monroe County has announced plans to close the encampment by September 1. Mayor Thomson issued the following statement:

"Everyone should be safe—and feel safe— and have a place to belong in Bloomington. That includes the residents who live and work near this property, the public safety teams who respond when something goes wrong, and the individuals who are living there because they do not have somewhere safer to go. Right now, this situation is serving none of them well.

"The County has determined that the encampment needs to close. We agree. And given the repeated safety concerns we have seen, I do not believe September 1 is soon enough.

"I urge our County partners to move that timeline forward. The City stands ready to support an accelerated closure. And our experience has taught us that closing an encampment responsibly requires more than a date.

"Over the last two years, our teams have helped move Bloomington from more than a dozen encampments on City-owned property to none by staying focused on the persistent, person-by-person work that changes what happens after a tent comes down.

"Our Downtown Resource Officers and social workers know the people living outside. City staff work alongside shelters, healthcare providers, housing navigators, and nonprofit partners. They return after the first conversation and the fifth. They work through barriers. They connect people to shelter, housing, treatment, reunification with their hometowns, and other resources that can create a real next step.

"That work does not produce an easy headline, but it produces the outcome that matters: fewer people living in crisis in our community.

"That same work needs to accelerate at the Thomson property now. The transition plan and the closure are not competing timelines. We need to move urgently on both.

"The City has shared our practices and protocols with County partners, and our teams remain in regular communication. We will continue to provide our experience, our partnership, and the resources within our authority. Homelessness does not stop at a jurisdictional line, and neither should our willingness to help someone reach stability.

"But partnership does not erase responsibility. Monroe County owns this property. Monroe County controls this site and has the information they need to do the right thing. The County has already decided the encampment must close, and now the County must decide to act with the urgency, care, and responsibility this moment requires to keep our community safe.

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