



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New Gateway to City at Miller-Showers Park**

**Bloomington, Ind.**— The City's Bicentennial Gateway project, conceived and funded as part of celebrating Bloomington's bicentennial, will bring a monolith-style gateway this fall on the north end of Miller-Showers Park, 100 W. 17th St.

The gateway that will welcome people to Bloomington is approximately 40' tall, constructed of powder-coated aluminum, and will display the name "Bloomington" with a customizable color palette of LED lights behind it.

The architects at Rundell Ernstberger Associates (REA), an Indianapolis-based landscape architecture firm, designed the element with input from City staff and officials, the Bloomington Arts Council, and residents over the past five years. The monolith's flower bud and vein structural appearance is a nod to the origins of Bloomington's name. White settlers that arrived in this area in 1818 were impressed by the "haven of blooms" they encountered, and named their settlement Bloomington.

The design is also intended to reflect the extensive green infrastructure and native plantings at Miller-Showers Park, as well as Bloomington's commitment to promote native plants and diversity and to the City's long-time status as a Tree City USA.

"The Bicentennial gateway will proudly welcome residents and visitors to Bloomington and also give them a final image before they leave," said Mayor John Hamilton.

“Bringing design that reflects the story of our City and the ideas of residents is the perfect way to bookend people’s time in Bloomington. It represents both a nod to our past and a gift to the future.”

Before the installation of the gateway begins, contractors will make site improvements that include repaving a part of the Gourley Pike crossover, improving the pedestrian refuge, and updating curb ramps for accessibility. Contractors will also remove 18 trees, including some invasive Callery pears, and replace them with 26 new, native trees. Contractor Reed and Sons was awarded a contract for \$575,000 in July for the site improvement work. An additional contract for \$395,105 was awarded to Bo-Mar in May for the fabrication of the gateway itself. REA received \$133,925 for the research and design.

In 2019, REA provided conceptual designs for gateways in four different locations in Bloomington before the project was put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. When the project was restarted in 2022, the City narrowed the potential gateway locations to Miller-Showers Park and the Arlington Road pedestrian bridge. The Arlington Road pedestrian bridge gateway was removed from the project due to construction scheduled to take place on the bridge by its owner, the Indiana Department of Transportation.

REA landscape architect Kevin Sweetland said, "Through research and conversations with the public, our design team translated the city’s story into a compelling palette of materials and complementary forms. The gateway relies on a combination of natural materials, light, and dramatic industrial elements to highlight the resiliency of Bloomington’s people and natural environment."

