

RESOLUTION 20-06

DENOUNCING AND CONDEMNING WHITE NATIONALISM AND WHITE SUPREMACY

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington has a committed interest in promoting the health, safety, and inclusiveness of all community residents and has a responsibility to oppose, and aid in eradicating, systemic racism, racial bias and racial animus; and

WHEREAS, the practices and ideologies of white nationalism and white supremacy continue to be on the rise across the United States and the globe; and

WHEREAS, national and local media detail multiple events daily related to racism and white supremacy across this nation and world; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Anti-Defamation League and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) have acknowledged the growing threat of white supremacy and ideologies, including the following statement by USDHS: “white supremacist violent extremism, one type of racially-and ethnically-motivated violent extremism, is one of the most potent forces driving domestic terrorism;”¹ and

WHEREAS, white supremacists and racists are emboldened by the words and actions of some of our national leaders and those targeting our communities through social media; and

WHEREAS, white supremacy is a fallacious ideology focused on maintaining white political, economic and demographic dominance, and, such an ideology is incompatible with the committed goal of inclusion in the City of Bloomington; and

WHEREAS, all racist hate groups have beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics; and

WHEREAS, racist, homophobic, and other oppressive ideologies have a clear history of inspiring violence, it is important to call out groups or ideologies that demonize others while they work to stabilize a foothold in mainstream society; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, according to national agencies who monitor hate groups across the U.S., approximately 940 such groups were identified and tracked²; and

WHEREAS, the Indiana State Constitution states that “No law shall be passed restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write or print, freely, on any subject whatever: but for the abuse of that right, every person shall be responsible;” and

WHEREAS, our history serves a critical role in our understanding of discrimination; it is therefore incumbent upon us to acknowledge our past history so we do not repeat it; and

WHEREAS, in Resolution 19-17, which declared the second Monday in October to be Indigenous Peoples’ Day in the City of Bloomington, the City acknowledged our country’s inhumane treatment of Native peoples, including forceful dispossession of their homelands; and

WHEREAS, lynchings and other acts of intimidation against Black Americans have occurred across the U.S., including the State of Indiana, and were meant to enforce white supremacy by means of racial terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the calls for the deportation of Japanese-Americans following Pearl Harbor resulted in the forced relocation of these Americans to government incarceration camps with deplorable living conditions; and

¹ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19_0920_plcy_strategic-framework-counterterrorism-targeted-violence.pdf

² <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>

WHEREAS, in 1999, an avowed white supremacist embarked on a hate crime killing spree across Indiana and Illinois resulting in the deaths of two members of racial and cultural minority groups, including an Indiana University Korean international student murdered near the Bloomington campus; and

WHEREAS, our community response to the distribution of hate literature by the man who ultimately committed these murders was the formation of Bloomington United – a coalition of community members, non-profit and social justice organization affiliates whose mission is to promote educational opportunities that affirm the value of all human beings, bridge the differences between people, and to resist and respond non-violently to hate activity in our community; and

WHEREAS, violent events, including a recent 2019 mass shooting in El Paso, Texas that targeted Latinos and resulted in 22 people dying³, continue to be directly tied to white supremacy and racism; and

WHEREAS, this history conjures painful memories and puts in perspective the trauma inflicted upon people of color and other harm it has caused to members of our community, negatively affecting educational, economic and social outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Bloomington is proud of its motto that ours is a Safe and Civil City, but acknowledges that creating such a community requires constant work, awareness, communication and a willingness to admit faults; and

WHEREAS, as documented in the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan, our community welcomes all. There is a multiplicity of nationalities, races, cultures, ethnicities, religions, abilities, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and economic statuses. We derive our strength from this diversity – which we celebrate and embrace - and commit to ensuring the inequities of the past are not a part of our future; and

WHEREAS, one way the City acts to combat discrimination is through the Bloomington Human Rights Commission, which was created in 1970 by combining the Human Relations Commission and the Fair Housing Commission, and through this commission and other City programs, the City strives to be a city without discrimination and racial animus; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington condemns all forms of bigotry, racism and hatred; the City proudly stands for individual dignity and against all those who would seek to propagate hate, fear and intimidation, or incite fear and violence targeting any human being; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA, THAT;

The City of Bloomington denounces and condemns hate based on racial, social, and cultural bias and holds up values of peace, respect, inclusivity, and equity. The City is committed to continue pursuing policies and directing appropriate resources to ensure civil and human rights are protected and afforded to all individuals.

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/us/el-paso-suspect-capital-murder.html>

PASSED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana upon this _____ day of _____, 2020.

STEPHEN VOLAN, President
Bloomington Common Council

ATTEST:

NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

PRESENTED by me to the Mayor of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this _____ day of _____, 2020.

NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this _____ day of _____, 2020.

JOHN HAMILTON, Mayor
City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

This resolution, initiated and sponsored by Councilmember Sims and co-sponsored by all councilmembers, condemns white nationalism, white supremacy, bigotry, racism, and hatred while holding up values of kindness, peace, respect, inclusivity, and equity.