

Mayor Gorton delivered her inaugural address at 2 p.m. on Jan. 6, 2019 at the University of Kentucky Gatton Student Center.

Good afternoon. Thank you, **Ann**, for that warm introduction.

And thank you to everyone who has helped with this event ... **Beverly Fortune, Peggy Stamps**, and their organizing committee; and the **donors** who made today's event possible.

I want to welcome my family and friends. My husband, **Charlie**; daughter, **Abby**, and her family; son, **Clay**, and his family; my sister, **Connie**, and her husband; my brother, **Tom**, and his wife; and so many of our long-time good **friends** from all over the country, including my best friend from high school.

And thank you, **Dr. Capilouto**, for making it possible for us to hold this inauguration in the beautiful new Gatton Student Center on the University of Kentucky campus.

- By taking our very first steps as a new Mayor, and as new Councilmembers, right here on this UK stage, we're sending a message ... UK and the City of Lexington are walking hand in hand into the future.
- What's good for UK, our city's biggest employer, is good for Lexington; and what's good for Lexington is good for UK. It's a **partnership!**

**And congratulations, Councilmembers!**

- Again, it's a **partnership** ... Mayor and Councilmembers are partners.
- Vice Mayor **Steve Kay**, ...
- Council members-at-Large **Richard Moloney** and **Chuck Ellinger**, ...
- District Councilmembers **James Brown**, **Josh McCurn**, **Jake Gibbs**, **Susan Lamb**, **Bill Farmer**, **Angela Evans**, **Preston Worley**, **Fred Brown**, **Jennifer Mossotti**, **Amanda Mays Bledsoe**, **Jennifer Reynolds** and **Kathy Plomin** ...
- ... let's start this new term with a pledge to work together, as partners, to make progress for our City, listening to each other and speaking respectfully to each other. Our citizens expect, and our City deserves, *the best* we have to offer.

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We are also partners with the Mayors and Councilmembers who preceded us ... we are building on the foundation they laid, and it's humbling to think about all they have done for Lexington. I want to welcome **Mayor Jim Gray**, **Mayor Scotty Baesler** and **Mayor Teresa Isaac** who have joined us today. You all stand, please, and let's give them a hand ....

*[applause]*

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I think everyone on this stage can agree, the most important **partnership** we have is with **our citizens**. Each and every member of our community ... people from every neighborhood; every age; all incomes; all points of view .... our big, loud, diverse, Lexington family.

In a democracy, this **partnership** with citizens is a sacred bond. We must always remember and respect the people who put us on this stage today. We must heal any differences and make sure everyone has a seat at the table, and a stake in our future. And we must listen to them.

I've spent the better part of the past 20 years, including 16 years on Council, listening to our citizens talk about what they want for their hometown. This past year I had many opportunities to hear from them during the campaign.

I know our citizens want the very best for their city ... they want us to **dream big dreams** for Lexington. And they're willing to work with us, side by side, to turn dreams into reality.

The lasting impact of big dreams has made Lexington a Great American City ... including big dreams that stretch back 244 years to our founding.

- In our earliest days, there was the dream of being a center of higher education ... Transylvania moved here in 1789, and UK was founded in 1865 ... today, we're one of the most highly educated cities in the country.

- We started investing in a professional police force in 1870, and a professional fire department in 1871 ... today, because of their outstanding work, we are one of the safest cities of our size in the country.
- In the 1970s we merged our city and county governments, a radical idea at the time ... today, we are considered a national model of progressive, non-partisan government ...
- In 1958, we put in place the first growth boundary in the country ... our urban services boundary. And in 2001, we strengthened protection for our farmland with the Purchase of Development Rights program ... today, it's still possible to travel from the heart of downtown into the world-class countryside that surrounds our city in a matter of minutes.
- In the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, like many cities, we fought to keep our downtown vibrant. Unlike some cities, we were successful through a mixture of public and private investments. Downtown is alive with restaurants, an arts and cultural community that is attracting national attention, events, City Center coming on line, and new residents ... today, we're taking our urban core to the next level with Town Branch Commons, an expanded Convention Center, and a reinvented Rupp Arena.

Yes, big dreams have meant big progress in Lexington. And those big dreams will continue.

Now, I know it won't be easy. For the next few years we are projecting that City budgets will be really tight, and we know our challenges are always many.

But it has never been easy to dream big ... ask any of the Mayors or veteran Councilmembers who are here today.

Even though there will be many hurdles to clear, I firmly believe our future holds great promise.

Our city's big dreams are fueled by economic growth ... a growing economy and new jobs enable the city to afford quality of life investments, which in turn attract new companies that place a high premium on quality of life to Lexington.

Two recent initiatives give us the opportunity for significant economic growth.

**First**, Lexington is well on its way to being one of the largest gigabit cities in the country. A fiber optic network is already being installed downtown and in our suburbs, connecting citizens to high speed internet, plus an option for new TV and phone service.

- That's a great first step.
- Now, we must prepare to take full advantage of this opportunity to leap into tomorrow's economy. To become a technological hub.
  - That means an aggressive economic development campaign to attract new high tech companies, support

high tech agriculture, and help Lexington companies as they grow and expand.

- We must focus our workforce development on **local needs**, including high tech.
  - Our job training should be designed around the needs of local employers, and the needs of local citizens looking for a new job, or a better job.
  - And we must have the right workforce training for today's jobs, and for the jobs of the future ... a well trained workforce for **all sectors** of employment.

**Second**, there's the partnership we recently entered into with UK ... it's another reason I'm optimistic about future economic growth.

In exchange for ownership of some sections of streets near campus, UK has given the city 250 acres for economic development. There are 50 shovel-ready acres in Coldstream Research campus, and another 200 acres fronting on I-75.

- Again, that's a great first step ... this property can be a **game-changer**, but we need a strong development plan.

- And we must help local businesses grow by working as a **region**.
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In the next few weeks, I will be putting together my first speech about the state of our City and County.

- It will be an opportunity to review the significant progress we've made over the last year.
- And it will also be an opportunity to talk about a vision for the future and the promise it holds for our community.

**I see the promise of progress** in every corner of Lexington ... from our neighborhoods, where we can improve quality of life; to the rural area, where we can develop a center for innovation in agriculture; to our downtown, where a new signature park can redefine our city ... *and thank you to Dr. Mary Lynne Capilouto and Ann Bakhaus for your work on Town Branch Park.*

**I see the promise of progress** in a comprehensive program for those who suffer from addiction; in new safeguards for those who live in danger; in outreach to those who become involved in gun violence before they enter adulthood ...

**I see the promise of progress** in better land use planning; support for small business; working closely with our schools; strengthening inclusion; and much more.

So let's keep those promises of progress by dreaming big  
Lexington. We know our city has long been in the business of  
making big dreams come true.

**Let's dream big, Lexington!** Thank you.

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