

WE MAKE NASHVILLE

Mayor Megan Barry

Friday, September 25, 2015

Thank you, Nashville. We are here today as to celebrate the peaceful, amicable transfer of power from Mayor Karl Dean, just as he did with Mayor Bill Purcell, which I am honored to lead.

Today, we shatter a glass ceiling and this historic moment is not lost on me and I hope it's not lost on you. As I look out at the row of women in this room who are trailblazers who sit in front of me – I know it's not lost on them. I stand on the shoulders of every one of them – and today, I have been sworn in as the 7th mayor of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County and it's pretty incredible.

I'm also breaking another ceiling – one that matters to the 40 Metro Council people sitting here with me today – as I'm also the first Metro Councilmember to ever be sworn in as Mayor.

So - I have a very good idea of what I've gotten myself in to. With my former Council colleagues – many of whom are here today - we've been in the trenches for the last eight years. I've celebrated our many successes, but I also know where we've fallen short.

But's it's been worth it - because we took chances, because we did some things that weren't always the most popular at the time – like betting on the future of Nashville's tourism industry and building the very Convention Center we're in today – and let me tell you, while my first choice was to be on the Public Square today (and it better be raining right now!), there is something poetic about having to relocate to the Music City Center, because if it wasn't for the investment five years ago, we might not have had a place to go – so see - I was already thinking ahead.

When you get the chance to serve – it's truly a wonderful thing. People reach out to you and they tell you things.

Just the other day, I received an email from Richard, and he actually lives in Sparta, TN – he told me he was going to take his daughter out of school and he was going to bring her here today so she could see what is possible. I don't know if Richard and his daughter are here today – but I see other parents with their children – like Charles Robert Bone and his daughter, Margaret, and Howard Gentry and his daughter, Taylor, my brother-in-law, Matt, and my niece, Lilly.

For them, having a woman mayor won't be new or unusual – instead, they get to focus on something completely different, the kind of mayor I am and the legacy I will leave.

I am keenly aware that I did not get here alone.

Winning this election was the result of the hard-work, input and dedication of thousands of Nashvillians who believed in a bright future for our city. I'm told they're close to 4000 people in this room.

I won't govern alone either.

I look to Vice Mayor David Briley and the Metro council members as strong allies in our future progress. I will rely on all of you in the coming months and years as we work together on a common agenda for the city of Nashville.

I believe our community stands at the starting line of a new day.

A day where we will build on the successes of the past and the past is very important.

A day where we can, and will, create a bright future for all of our citizens.

I want to hear from you!

On how we can support and improve our public schools. I want to see a city where every parents sees our Metro Public Schools as the best option for their child, regardless of the zip code they live in. In order to do so, we don't need to stifle debate, but we do to start working together to find what works and to ensure a high-quality education for all.

I want to hear from you, Nashville, on how we can make our neighborhoods more affordable for all families. From the poor and homeless, to our young millennials, to our working families, and our seniors and for everyone who loves our community.

I want to hear from you, Nashville, on how we can improve our transit and transportation infrastructure so that you can get out of your cars if you want to, or so that you can spend less time in your cars and more time doing the things you love – like not sitting in traffic.

I want to hear from you, Nashville, on how we can grow our economy in a way that every community can share in the prosperity.

That means hiring and training more local workers.

It means supporting the entrepreneurial spirit that makes Nashville so unique – from artists to innovators to small-business owners.

That means supporting the industries that have put Nashville on the map: our entertainment and music industry which was built on country music but has expanded far beyond with Americana artists like Jason Isbell and Amanda Shires here today; our Health Care industry which seeks to heal the sick and offer hope to those in despair; to our colleges and universities that educate our future engineers, lawyers, doctors, dentist, civic and business leaders, and clergy.

I want to hear from you, Nashville, on how we can keep our city safe and we seek justice for victims of crime while also ensuring our criminal justice system is fair, is balanced, is compassionate, and just towards those who are looking for a second chance.

Nashville, in an era where our national politics is one of distrust and divisiveness, and a little

crazy, I want you to have confidence that your local leaders are here for you.

To listen to you. To engage you in the governing process.

Many of you, like me, come to Nashville from a different place. You bring with you new ideas, new cultures, new languages, new foods, and new music that help to enrich our lives.

Many of you work in different industries and fields in the public, private, and non-profit, and that diversity of options is what keeps us growing and expanding while other cities are shrinking and retreating.

Many of you have different beliefs and ways of viewing the world, but that can bring us new ideas and new approaches to how we approach the world we all share.

As mayor of Nashville, I have the great pleasure of getting to serve all of you who, each in your own way, strengthen the city we love.

While we are different as individuals, together, we make Nashville. We make Nashville a vibrant, exciting city that is the envy of the nation.

We make Nashville - each and every one of you in this room. We are Nashville

Thank you. Thank you for your support. Thank you for being here today.

Now, let's get to work!