BEXLEY TIMES

CITY OF BEXLEY NEWSLETTER

VOL. N° 60 - WINTER 2025



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Cover Photo: The Fairy Garden (sponsored by the Bexley Community Foundation) being enjoyed at the 2024 Earth and Arbor Month Celebration



New mural on Wes Banco facing Johnson's Real Ice Cream installed as part of Bexley's inaugural Mural Festival in September. Artist: Amy O'Donnell Lueth

From the Mayor's Desk

DURING TIMES OF DIVISION, COMMUNITY

"During times of division, we have a community to turn to and be grounded by, and the ability to shape our small corner of this planet with a model that can make sense when little else does."

—Mayor Kessler

It's hard to escape daily headlines that suggest a world in crisis. While there's no doubt that we are navigating some of the most difficult conditions that we've faced in generations, it's during times like this that local community is more important than ever. Our local community has the profound capacity to ground and center, and provide a refreshing reminder that the essence of our lives—the closeness of family, the support offered by friends and by neighbors—is secured in local community.

Bexley is resplendent with inspiring examples of community and hope in action. Here is just a small sample of a few of them...

In the midst of a difficult time for our Jewish community, Ellie Lieberman is distributing challah bread throughout the community for free, aided by the help of a small army of volunteers who knead and braid out of her kitchen. It's an act of love, and a moving example of sharing culture and tradition at the human scale of local community.

High Schooler Izzy Carleton learned about the damage excess leaf runoff can cause to our local waterways, and noticed that not every Bexley storm drain cover had a sign indicating the need to keep leaves away from stormwater routes. Last summer we worked to support her efforts to launch a public information campaign and get signage on all the storm drain covers—a project she completed prior to graduating from BHS.

2024 saw more community events than ever, including Fourth of July; the Main Event and Jazz in the Park series; the Labor Day Block Party; Smoke and Fire Festival; Harvest Fest; our first-ever Mural Festival, and more! And beyond these city-organized events, we've enjoyed the introduction of PorchFest, BrewFest, and Into the Woods Festival—events organized by passionate and super creative resident Tim Pitts to help raise funds for charitable causes. It's been so fun to support his efforts, as well as the overarching work of the Bexley Community Foundation (*www.bexleycommunityfoundation.org*) funded *Bexley Celebrations and Events Team,* all of whom work tirelessly to launch dynamic, enriching events that build community in Bexley and beyond.

Working out of his garage on College Avenue, Ken Grace is a passionate volunteer who for many years accepted donated bikes, repaired them for their next owners, and donated them to kids and families in need. When he moved out of Bexley, the program was picked up by DARN (*darncares.org*) in partnership with the City. It continues throughout the year, with a volunteer crew that meets the first Saturday of every month at the City service garage, fixing up bikes and pairing them with new owners. You can still drop donated bikes off to the College Avenue location 24/7, or you can drop them off during the workshops (hours and location on the city calendar at *bexley.org/events*).

These are just a few examples of small groups of individuals building up community and making a difference right outside our front doors. Collectively, they and so many others define what is the beautiful essence of our community.

Perhaps the most rewarding part of my job is getting to observe, first-hand, the tangible benefits of community in action. During one particularly hectic day this past summer I was helping tear down from an event at Schneider Park. It had been a tiring day, and it was super hot. Maybe it was the laughter or the shrieks of joy or the splashing water, but something drew my attention over to the splash pad, where kids from several families were cooling off and playing. Beyond them and in the distance I saw a handful of community gardeners working plots in the south gardens. Across the parking lot elementary age kids were holding soccer practice. Parents were scattered around, catching up. What was so profound about this moment and so many others like it was the casual, matter-of-factness of an energized community. While by no means an unusual sight in Bexley, I'm always inspired to witness the vibrance and authenticity of community in action.

During times of division, we have a community to turn to and be grounded by, and the ability to shape our small corner of this planet with a model that can make sense when little else does. At the end of the day, our humanity and our ability to connect with and support each other is so much bigger and more impactful than we sometimes realize. That is something to celebrate, be inspired by, and to embrace in the years to come.

In community,

Mayor Ben Kessler

THROUGH THE LENS: BEXLEY IN 2024

Please take a minute to enjoy these smiles from some of our favorite sunshine-filled days of 2024! Days in which we came together as a community to celebrate, learn, and grow. We hope that even if you don't see yourself in an image below, you see yourself in our community and know that you are welcome here. *Want to know what event each picture is from? Quiz yourself to see if you can match each image to the special event (2025 event information are on page 6 and quiz answers on page 9).*


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COMMUNITY CALENDAR PREVIEW

2025

JANUARY

20 MLK Jr Day
22 One Bexley Story Slam
31 BCF Poker Tournament



FEBRUARY

22 Tree Tapping
23 New Resident Open House



MARCH

01 Jeffrey Woods Fest
04 State of the Community

ARPIL

01 Earth & Arbor Month
19 Egg Dash
30 COSI Super Science Fair



MAY

15 Bexley Farmers Market*
16 AAPI Festival
26 Memorial Day Service
30 Main Event
31 Porch Fest



JUNE

01 BWC House & Garden Tour
14 Smoke & Fire Festival Pedal for Pancakes
19 Juneteenth
22 Jazz in the Park



JULY

04 Independence Day
27 Jazz in the Park



AUGUST

05 National Night Out
15 Main Event
16 Splish, Splash, & Dash
17 Jazz in the Park
31 Labor Day Block Party; BrewFest



SEPTEMBER

01 Labor Day
12 Main Event
14 Jazz in the Park
19 Community Camp Out



OCTOBER

04 Into the Woods Fest
10 Harvest Fest
13 Taste of Bexley
25 Halloween Bash
30 Trick-or-Treat



NOVEMBER

11 Veteran's Day
27 Turkey Trot



DECEMBER

06 Pancake Breakfast
07 Christmas Tree Lighting

Preliminary dates only. Please stay tuned to the City's website, social media, and the Bexley Blast to confirm details.
**Bexley Farmers Market continues each Thursday through October 23.*

A BIG BEXLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION THANK YOU

Help BCF Fund the Fun Again in 2025

In 2024, the City received a $350,000 check from the Bexley Community Foundation (BCF)—a portion of their incredibly generous contribution to the Year of the Parks projects, which included the splash pad at Schneider, the natural dog park, Tad Jeffrey natural trail and the Main Street trail head, the arboretum walk at Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth Park field renovations and new restroom facilities. Bexley Community Foundation makes these and so many other projects and special events possible throughout our community and we are so thankful for their support. ***Want to get involved? Help fund the fun using the donation form at right!***



CUT ME OUT AND MAIL ME BACK TO THE BCF!

Thank you for your tax-deductible gift to the Bexley Community Foundation

Mail completed forms and checks to Bexley Community Foundation, 552 South Drexel Avenue, Bexley, Ohio 43209.

BEXLEY community foundation

Help BCF Fund the Fun in Bexley!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

◯ Please keep my gift anonymous.

◯ This gift is in _____ honor _____ memory of: _____

◯ This gift is for the BCF General Fund -OR- ◯ Deposit to (fund name): _____

Enclosed is my check payable to Bexley Community Foundation for $ _____

◯ $250 ◯ $100 ◯ $75 ◯ $50 ◯ $ _____

Scan to Make Online Donation and to View a Full List of BCF Funds

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REBUILDS PROCESSES

New Leadership Updates, Simplifies Department

From minor code violations to massive construction projects, our Building Department works with the Board of Zoning and Planning, the Architectural Review Board, and Mayor Kessler to ensure compliance with Bexley's building and zoning laws. This complex code is critical to maintaining the safety, beauty, and orderliness of our community, but it can also be downright confusing! That's why Bexley's Building Department, under the new leadership of Director Matt Klingler, is working to simplify and improve processes and resources for residents. Here are a few things we're particularly excited to share with you:

- **Online Inspection Requests:** If you are working on a project that requires an inspection, you can now request an inspection online! Visit *bexley.org/building*. Simply click on the Schedule an Inspection button and your request will be added to our inspector's schedule.

- **Code Enforcement:** From unshoveled sidewalks to abandoned cars, our Code Enforcement Officer works each day to ensure compliance with City Code. Bexley City Council recently approved an increased budget for code enforcement for 2025, which will allow for a more focused, resident-centered approach to addressing complaints and resolving issues. If you'd like to report a code violation, you can do so through the *Bexley Base* app (info below). This app also allows you to track the status of your complaint from the convenience of your phone or tablet. Code violations are also accepted by email at *codeenforcement@bexley.org*.

- **Web Page Reboot:** Looking for more information? Recent refinements to the Building Department web page are focused on creating clarity and expanding resources. Check out *bexley.org/building* for code enforcement information, frequently asked questions, and step-by-step guides to some common building projects and improvements.



THE **BEXLEY BASE** APP

Available on iPhone, Android, and the web.

Download Bexley Base app to report and track issues

Visit *bexley.org/building* to schedule inspections and apply for permits



2024 CONSTRUCTION SEASON RECAP

As excavators and asphalt pavers are replaced with snow plows for the season, we wanted to take a step back to acknowledge the many infrastructure improvements coordinated by the City's Service Department in 2024. Throughout the year, the Service Department works diligently to monitor the condition of streets, alleys, sidewalks, water lines, and sewers. Before each construction season starts, this information is integrated into a comprehensive capital improvement plan to ensure the efficient replacement, repair, and maintenance and our infrastructure.

Here are some highlights from some of the larger projects accomplished in 2024. Stay ahead of projects in 2025 by visiting *bexley.org/street-projects*.

- New water mains were installed on Chelsea Avenue from Livingston to Main and Stanbery Avenue from Broad to Maryland

- Portions of the following streets were repaved: Pleasant Ridge Avenue; College Avenue; North Ardmore; North Cassingham; North Roosevelt; Grandon Avenue; Chelsea Avenue; North Drexel; Maryland Avenue; Denver Avenue; Columbia Place; Euclaire Avenue; Charles Street; South Drexel; and Broad Street

- Portions of the following brick streets were repaired in 2024: Dawson Avenue; Bryden Road; Bexley Park Road; and North Roosevelt Avenue

Through the Lens Photo Hunt Answers *(See Quiz on Page 4)*
Earth and Arbor Day Celebration: 6, 14, 19, and 20
4th of July Parade: 2, 4, 11, 13, 17, and 21
Jazz in the Park: 10
Bexley Farmers Market: 5, 8
The Main Event: 9
Splish, Splash, & Dash: 12
National Night Out: 1 and 15
Bexley Mural Festival (and Inside Scoop): 3, 7, 16, 18, and 22

CODE ENFORCEMENT CORNER

Snow Days Ahead

Winter is upon us and there's more snow ahead!

Remember, while our Service Department work hard to keep the streets treated and plowed during snow events, home and business owners in Bexley are required to clear the sidewalks adjacent to their property. Play your part in maintaining safe walk ways in Bexley by keeping your sidewalks clear for winter wonderland walking.

Please also take special care to keep our streets and gutters clear when snow plows will be clearing our roadways. Leaves, yard waste, or any other objects are hazardous when snow plowing.

Pro-tip: Avoid the "second shovel!" For heavier snowfall events, shovel snow to the right side of your driveway (facing the street). That way, when our plows pass your street, they won't push your shoveled snow back over your driveway.





Preliminary exterior elevation for the proposed redevelopment at 420 N. Cassady Avenue. Note that plans are subject to approval and components are likely to change based on board and community feedback. Graphic by RDL Architects.

THE COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Two Affordable Housing Developments, New Senior Center Proposed

In late 2024, The Community Builders (TCB) hosted several focus groups and community meetings to gather feedback on proposed plans for two affordable housing developments at 420 N. Cassady Avenue and 2300 E. Livingston Avenue. From the meetings, TCB took community feedback and incorporated ideas into a revised set of plans which were submitted to the City on December 12. Both sets of plans had preliminary Architectural Review Board (ARB) review on January 9 and are scheduled for preliminary Board of Zoning and Planning (BZAP) review on January 23. Subsequent appearances are likely at these boards and others. All meetings are open to the public and more information about the proposals is available on the City's website at *bexley.org/TCB*.

420 N. Cassady Avenue Proposal Overview

Mixed-use building including for-rent housing units and a +/- 3,500 square foot commercial space; If approved, commercial space likely to be built out by the City of Bexley as a new senior center (replacing temporary +/- 1,900 square foot space on same site).

- **Proposed Use:** 3,500 square feet of commercial and 16 apartment units
- **Proposed Stories:** 3 stories
- **Parking Count:** 24 off-street spots (plus 7 on-street)

2300 E. Livingston Avenue Proposal Overview

Multi-family residential building with a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units; Redesign incorporates wider set back from Livingston Avenue and other adjustments in line with the new Livingston Avenue design overlay requirements.

- **Proposed Use:** 27 apartment units
- **Proposed Stories:** 3 stories
- **Parking Count:** 27 off-street spots

CITY LAUNCHES VOLUNTEER PORTAL

Register to Help Your Neighbors This Winter

The City is piloting a new volunteer registration portal! Sign up to volunteer for specific events or to indicate your interest in our newly launched *Good Neighbor Program* which supports local neighbors in need. Get started as a volunteer at *bexley.org/recreation.*

Looking to receive assistance with leaf and snow removal? Contact Kristin Schweitzer at (614) 559-4310 or *kschweitzer@bexley.org.*

BEXLEY, IT'S ELECTRIC

Public EV Chargers 100% Grant Funded

Bexley's electric aggregation program is the gift that keeps on giving, and this time, we leveraged the program to expand our public electric vehicle chargers! Our electric aggregation program (which has saved Bexley households over $1.176 million since it started last October, by the way) provided 100% of the funds needed for four new dual-port EV chargers for public use throughout Bexley.

The new chargers are up and running at Schneider and Jeffrey parks, and at on-street spots along Drexel and Cassady Avenues near Main Street.

Charging was free last fall, but starting early this year, we'll use ParkMobile to charge for parking in the designated spots. More information on the switch to paid parking is coming soon.

Public Charging Locations

- Meadow Parking Lot, Jeffrey Mansion
- Bexley Square Parking Lot, Bexley City Hall
- On-street: Drexel Avenue, north of Main Street
- On-street: Cassady Avenue, north of Main Street
- Schneider Park Parking Lot, Near South Community Gardens







CLAMSHELL CALAMITY NO MORE

Did you know that the largest recycling center in North America is up and running right here in Columbus?! Rumpke's new Materials Recovery Facility presents new opportunities for Central Ohio recycling-fanatics. Optic scanners and AI allow the new Rumpke Materials Recovery Facility to accept additional items.

Since fall, residents are now able to include clear plastic carry-out containers, clear plastic egg containers, and clear plastic fruit, berry and lettuce containers in their recycling toters for curbside pickup and processing (wahoo!).

Once sorted, these containers are be sent to partners, downcycled into plastic pellets, and then processed into other products. So that these materials get sorted appropriately, it is important that recycling is placed loose in the toter. Exceptions to this "loose in your toter" rule only include shredded paper which should be placed in a clear plastic bag, or those specialty items now accepted by the Hefty ReNew™ program which should be placed inside your orange Hefty ReNew™ bags before the bag is tied closed and placed inside your toter.

City of Bexley
2242 East Main Street
Bexley, Ohio 43209

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2025 STATE OF THE BEXLEY OHIO COMMUNITY



SAVE THE DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025

ANNUAL UPDATE FROM THE CITY, SCHOOLS, LIBRARY, AND OTHER BEXLEY ORGANIZATIONS
MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION COMING SOON TO BEXLEY.ORG/SOC

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