



# BEXLEY'S 2023 UPDATE STRATEGIC PLAN

DRAFT Revision 2 | November 16, 2023



# BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

## Background

The Bexley Strategic Plan is drafted by the Mayor, reviewed and commented on by the public, and adopted, with input, by Bexley City Council.

## Bexley Charter & Codified Ordinance Regarding the Strategic Plan

The requirement, by City Charter, for the Mayor to submit a strategic plan was added to the Charter in the late 1990s, and also to Chapter 264 of the Bexley Codified Ordinances in April of 2000.

### From the Charter of the City of Bexley, Ohio:

"The Mayor shall cause to be prepared and submitted to Council a strategic plan for the City, which shall include, but not be limited to, issues of residential and commercial development, infrastructure, finances, safety and community quality of life. Following adoption of a plan by Council, with such changes, if any, as shall be authorized by it after providing the public the opportunity to comment on the plan, the Mayor shall annually issue a report of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The strategic plan shall be updated as needed by the Mayor, and such updates shall be submitted to Council for review, public comment and adoption."

### From the Codified Ordinances of the City of Bexley (Chapter 264):

#### 264.01 PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF PLAN.

The Mayor shall cause to be prepared and submitted to Council at or before its first meeting in June 2000 a strategic plan for the City, which shall include, but not be limited to, issues of residential and commercial development, infrastructure, finances, safety and community quality of life. (Ord. 19-00. Passed 4-11-00.)

#### 264.02 REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PLAN.

Following appropriate public comment and discussion, Council shall adopt a City strategic plan based upon the plan submitted by the Mayor, together with such changes as it shall deem necessary, desirable or appropriate. (Ord. 19-00. Passed 4-11-00.)

#### 264.03 ANNUAL REPORT; UPDATE OF PLAN.

The Mayor shall annually issue a report of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The strategic plan shall be updated as needed by the Mayor and such updates shall be submitted to Council for review, public comment and adoption. (Ord. 19-00. Passed 4-11-00.)

## Past Strategic Plans:

### 2003 Strategic Plan / Mayor David Madison

The 2003 Strategic Plan was the first strategic plan to be prepared for adoption by City Council. The plan was introduced in 2003.

### 2009 Strategic Plan / Mayor John Brennan

The 2009 Strategic Plan was presented in 2009 but was not adopted by Bexley City Council. This plan was modeled heavily after the 2003 plan, essentially updating it based upon current issues as of 2009.

### 2013 Strategic Plan (amended 2020) / Mayor Ben Kessler

The 2013 Strategic Plan was drafted by Mayor Kessler in early 2013 and adopted by City Council in November of 2013. The Strategic Plan was divided into sections based on city functions, and drew heavily from public surveys and workshops, as well as other strategic planning efforts that preceded it. The 2013 Strategic Plan's recommendations served as a blueprint for several years of city initiatives, and a 2020 formal amendment introduced a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy. With many of the objectives of the plan completed, the process to formally overhaul the Strategic Plan began in 2020, leading to the creation of the 2023 Strategic Plan.



# IN REVIEW: THE 2013 STRATEGIC PLAN

## Key Recommendations of the 2013 Bexley Strategic Plan

### Development

- ✓ Redevelop the Bexley City Hall site
- ✓ Launch and enable a productive and dynamic Community Improvement Corporation
- ⚙ Continue to work towards meaningful redevelopment of Livingston Avenue
- ⏸ Nurture Cassady Avenue redevelopment
- ✓ Refresh the Southwest Bexley Master Plan
- ✓ Create a forum for ongoing dialogue
- ✓ Complete the Bexley Zoning Code Modernization Project
- ⚙ Continue to develop historic preservation
- ⚙ Target high-demand uses when considering redevelopment opportunities
- ⚙ Increase available parking on Main Street

### Safety

- ⚙ Move towards more data-driven policing
- ✓ Focus on speed limit enforcement projects
- ⚙ Encourage Block Watch programs
- ✓ Create a Citizen's Police Academy program
- ✓ Expand use of community volunteers
- ⏸ Focus on drug interdiction opportunities
- ⚙ Implement Safe Routes to School travel plan

### Recreation

- ⏸ Create a strategic plan for the department
- ⏸ Create a park plan and forest management plan
- ⚙ Create the Alum Creek Park
- ✓ Unify SOCO and Latchkey programs
- ✓ Reductions in the General Fund to Rec Fund
- ✓ Improve Utilization of Social Media
- ⚙ Monitor for Recreation Center Opportunities

*Legend*

✓	⚙	⏸	N/A
COMPLETED	IN PROGRESS	ON HOLD	NO LONGER APPLICABLE

### Finance

- ✓ Continue annual balanced budget policy
- ⚙ Improve the presentation and accessibility of financial reporting
- ✓ Upgrade finance software
- ✓ Develop sources of alternative revenue

### Infrastructure

- ⚙ Create street infrastructure plan
- ✓ Create water and sewer infrastructure plan
- ⏸ Create street light infrastructure plan
- ⚙ Create signage design standards and maintenance plan
- ✓ Create sidewalk replacement plan
- ⚙ Continue to enhance infrastructure beautification efforts
- ⚙ Advocate for infrastructure projects in strategically appropriate adjacent areas
- ⚙ Power line and tree maintenance policies

### Communication

- ✓ Distribute New Resident Packets to all new residents of Bexley
- ⚙ Enhance non-Internet communications
- ✓ Create an effective community promotional presence on official City-channels
- ✓ Create a coordinated Main Street and Cassady Avenue pole banner program
- ⚙ Pursue permanent community events signage installation

### Technology

- ⚙ Review and modernize records retention
- ⏸ Create a Main Street WiFi Infrastructure
- ✓ Expand access to WiFi at City facilities
- ⚙ Audit and simplify technology infrastructure
- ✓ Provide online payment options for residents, contractors, and other users

### Community

- ⚙ Develop quality community-wide programming

My vision for the Bexley of the future is a community that is integrated from North to South and East to West through exciting and inclusive activities; abundant intellectual pursuits; and a landscape that provides security, a sense of well-being and roots, and outdoor behaviors."

"A make ahead meal place like Dream Dinners. A grocery store with prepared meals like at whole foods."  
- Andrea Easley

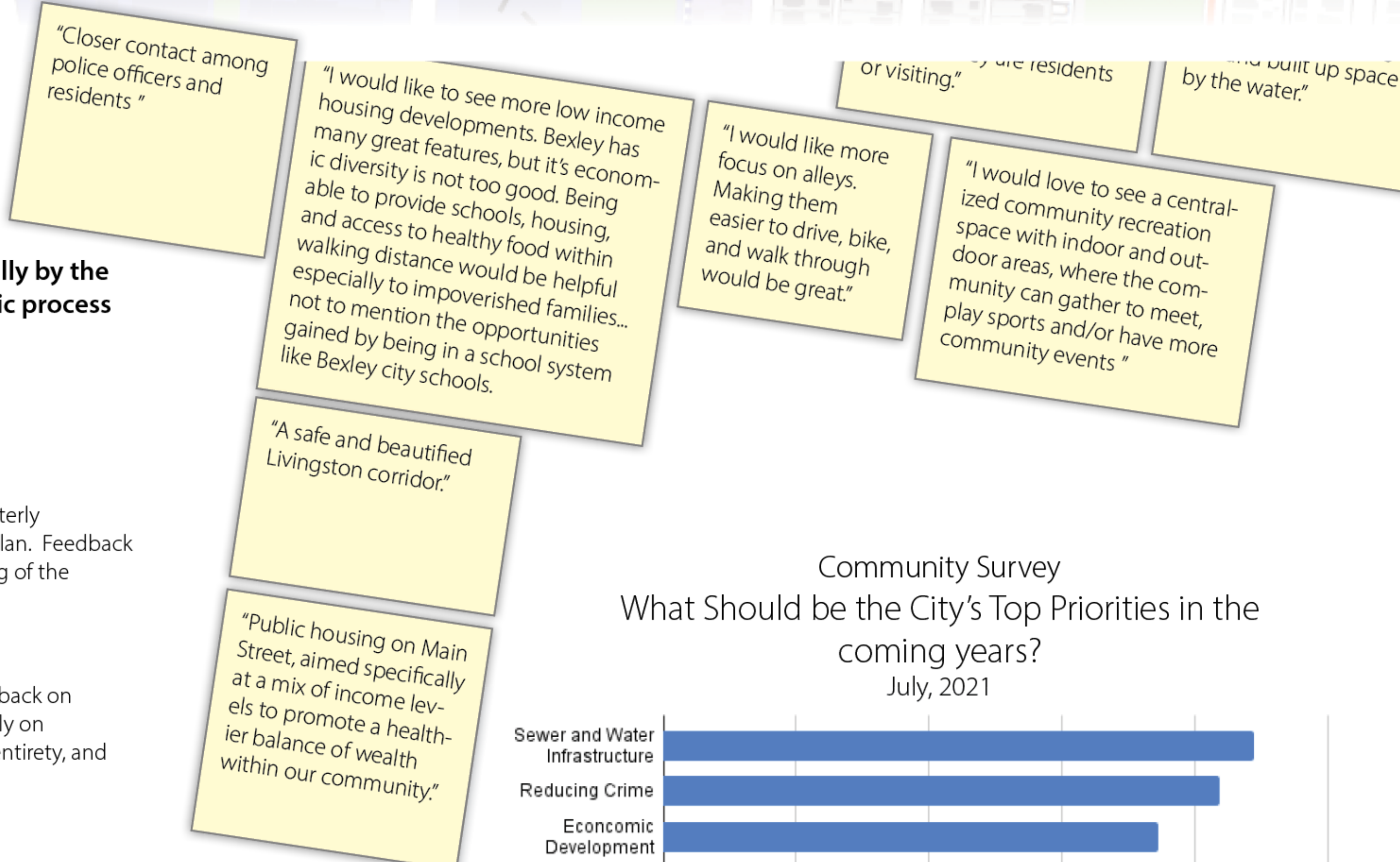
"Endeavors to make Bexley businesses a destination so they are healthy and flourishing. Maybe a Bexley Hop night?"

# CRAFTING THE 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

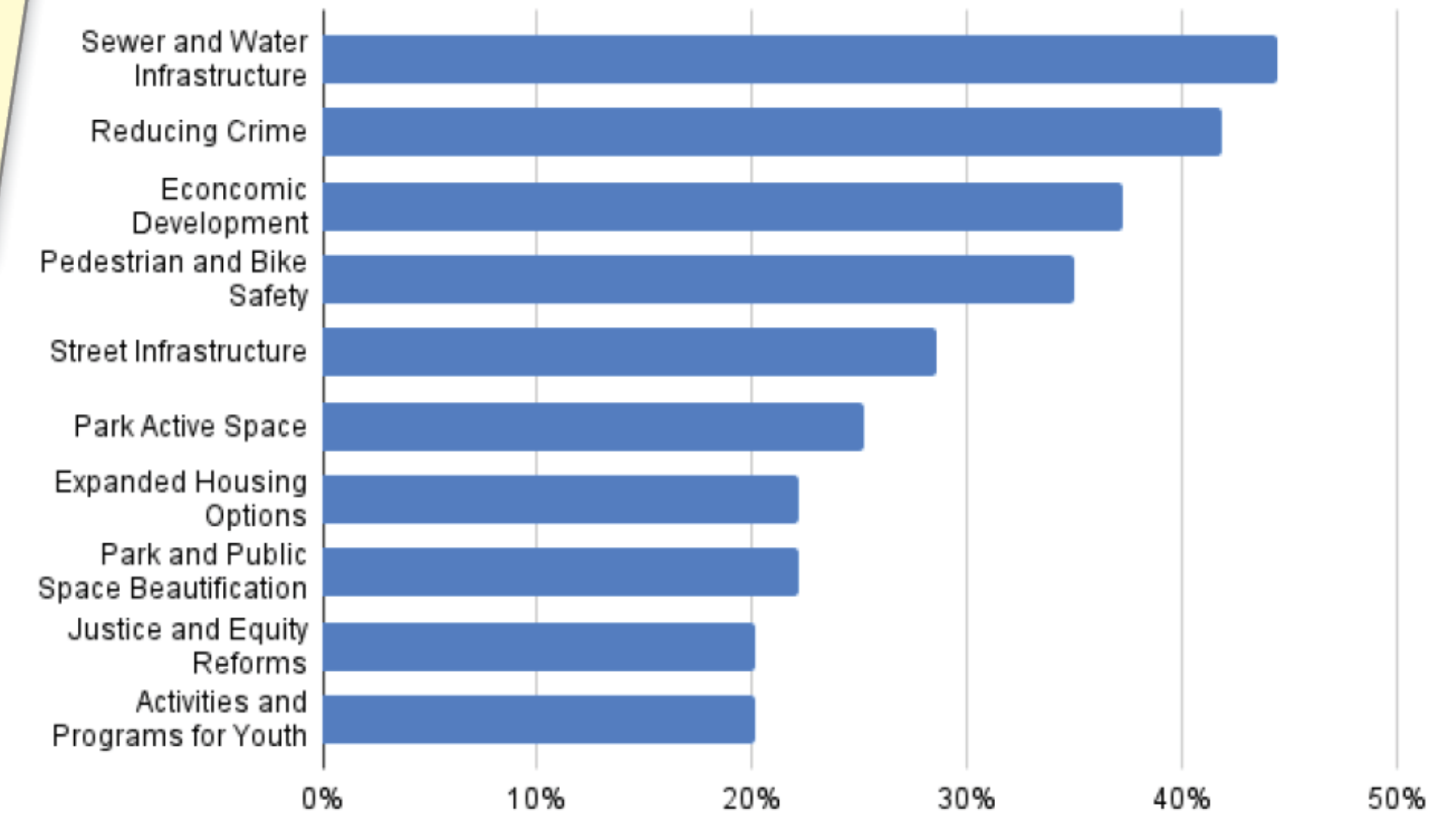
The 2023 Strategic Plan was crafted in the 2021-2023 timeframe, slowed partially by the ongoing management of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the intensive public process of creating the Joint Livingston Avenue Plan (2021-2022).

## Development Timeline:

Strategic Plan Community Survey	July, 2021
The community survey (236 responses) was circulated via the Bexley Blast email and the City's quarterly newsletter, and asked a variety of future-forward questions aimed at helping to craft the strategic plan. Feedback from these surveys was reviewed in entirety, and incorporated as appropriate into the initial drafting of the strategic plan.	
Community Surveys	Spring, 2022
A survey conducted in partnership with Capital University (215 responses) monitored resident feedback on a variety of topics, and a survey conducted by Saunders Company (374 responses) focused primarily on policing and expectations for the next police chief. Feedback from these surveys was reviewed in entirety, and incorporated as appropriate into the initial drafting of the strategic plan.	
Draft Development	2021-2023
City Council Retreat	February, 2023
Circulation of Initial Draft Strategy	June, 2023
Public Workshops	Summer, 2023
Circulation of Revised Draft Strategy	Fall, 2023
Adoption by City Council	_____



Community Survey  
What Should be the City's Top Priorities in the coming years?  
July, 2021



# COMPONENT PLANS OF THE 2023 BEXLEY STRATEGIC PLAN

A central premise of the 2023 Strategic Plan is to serve as an umbrella over top a subset of key plans and strategies that have been developed, and that are scheduled to be and/or will be developed, to address core strategic priorities of the City. The 2023 Strategic Plan incorporates the following plans, synopsized in the following pages, and will incorporate future plans as they are crafted and adopted.

<b>Land Use Strategy (2011)</b>	Pages 16-17
<b>Zero Waste Plan (2017)</b>	Page 18
<b>Southwest Bexley Framework (2017)</b>	Page 19
<b>Commonwealth Park Master Plan (2018)</b>	Page 20
<b>Bike Friendly Bexley (2019)</b>	Page 21
<b>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy (2020)</b>	Page 22
<b>Joint Livingston Avenue Plan (2022)</b>	Page 23
<b>Climate Action / Sustainability Plan (2023-2024)</b>	Under Development
<b>Jeffrey Park Strategy (2023-2024)</b>	Under Development
<b>Land Use Strategy Refresh (2023-2024)</b>	Under Development
<b>Public Art &amp; Placemaking Plan (2024)</b>	Future Plan
<b>Main Street / Commercial Design Guidelines Update (2024-2025)</b>	Future Plan
<b>Recreation &amp; Parks Strategic Plan (2024-2025)</b>	Future Plan
<b>Holtzmann Landfill Redevelopment Plan (2024-2026)</b>	Future Plan

# NEW OBJECTIVES OF THE 2023 BEXLEY STRATEGIC PLAN

As well as the objectives of the active plans synopsized in the preceding pages, the 2023 Strategic Plan incorporates additional objectives, encompassing a variety of goals and City functions not otherwise covered in active specialized plans.

Community Health and Wellness

Pages 26 to 27

Development Goals

Pages 28 to 31

Infrastructure Goals

Pages 32 to 35

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Pages 36 to 39

Public Safety Goals

Pages 40 to 45

Recreation Goals

Pages 46 to 49

Sustainability Goals

Pages 50 to 53



2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# COMMUNITY HEALTH & CONNECTION

## **Craft and Institute Community Mental Health and Social Services Support Model**

Craft a social service and mental health support resource to be deployed in circumstances involving complex social support needs and/or where mental health concerns exist. Examples include assistance with death notifications and grief counseling; counseling in instances of housing insecurity; crisis intervention in situations requiring immediate assistance; court advocacy for Orders of Protection; providing victim/witness support and follow-up on incidents reported to the police that require further assistance, including potentially traumatic police interactions; counseling and/or referrals to residents dealing with financial and/or physical limitations; creation and maintenance of a directory of community resources for additional assistance and services.

## **Public Art and Place Making Plan**

Craft a public art and place making plan to more intentionally identify concepts and plan for public art installations throughout public and quasi-public spaces in the city.

## **Platform-Neutral Communications**

With the increasing fragmentation and politicization of social networks, social media communications have become more complicated and at times problematic. Additionally, research has shown that there are individuals and age groups for whom social media consumption can be harmful. The City has worked to “deplatform” - to ensure that critical information is always available outside of social media channels, and should continue to monitor social media and communication trends and consider de-platforming as circumstances and data indicates it appropriate to do so.

## **Volunteer Coordination**

The City has instituted several efforts over the years to connect volunteers with households in need, particularly due to physical disability. Although well-intentioned, efforts have been inconsistent in the past; the City should work to create a feasible and reliable long-term volunteer coordination effort to assist residents in need.

# DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## Assisting with the Development of Opportunity Sites

With fragmented ownership and a proliferation of small sites, commercial development can be difficult in Bexley. Opportunity sites are sites where the potential for effective assemblage and/or redevelopment exists. Key opportunity sites currently include the Gateway South site at Main and Parkview; the Trinity Apartment site at College and Main; the sites on the south side of Cassingham and Main; and the east gateway at Chelsea and Main. The City should work with the Community Improvement Corporation to agitate for and help spur redevelopment at these sites.

## Remediate & Redevelop Remainder of Holtzmann Landfill

Over the past decade, the City has invested significant bandwidth in understanding the environmental contamination present at the former Holtzmann landfill site south of Schneider Park. The landfill was never properly closed before becoming the site of apartment residential development. After years of studying, the City is now aware that development on the site is structurally compromised and environmentally unsafe for human habitation. The City should continue to take steps to assist with the remediation of the former landfill and should identify appropriate future development for the area.

## Expand Public Off-Street Parking for Main Street

As multi-modal transportation continues to develop within the region, finding alternatives to on-street parking for Main Street will become increasingly vital. The City should work to identify opportunities for infill off-street parking and shared parking facilities and programs in order to reduce reliance on parking on Main Street and create new opportunities for public and multi-modal transit.

## Support Redevelopment of Main Street E & W Gateways

Continue to encourage development of the Gateway South site. Work with the property owner of Chelsea and Main to remove all site improvements, remediate the site, and make it available for development.

## Expand Housing Options

Diverse housing options make for dynamic and culturally rich neighborhoods that allow residents across a spectrum of ages and backgrounds to thrive in Bexley. Economic development strategies should encourage a broad array of housing opportunities to accommodate aging-in-place, young professionals, and attainable housing options. The City should continue to examine its zoning code to ensure housing options exist across this spectrum, and should utilize the Community Improvement Corporation and economic development policy to continue to pursue diversified housing offerings.

## Development on North Cassady Avenue

Following the roadmap established by the Land Use Strategy, the City has made strides in helping to encourage a new generation of commercial uses on North Cassady. The City needs to continue to work with the Community Improvement Corporation to assist in the redevelopment of the corridor, with an emphasis on neighborhood-serving uses such as restaurants, gathering spaces, and housing.





## 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# DEVELOPMENT CONT'D

## Recruit High-Demand Commercial Uses to Bexley

Keeping commercial uses in the City fresh and relevant increases the quality of life for residents and helps to keep the City vibrant and relevant for new generations of residents and visitors. The City has had success in attracting and supporting desirable community uses such as the Giant Eagle Market District grocery store, Harvest Pizza, Brassica, and others. The City should continue to monitor survey data for uses in high demand from residents, and work to coordinate with developers, property owners, and potential users to encourage those high-demand uses and users to locate to Bexley.

## Refresh the Land Use Strategy

The original Land Use Strategy, completed in 2011, has led the City's development vision for over a decade. With many of the objectives in the strategy completed, it's time to revisit and refresh the Land Use Strategy. The City should reconvene the Land Use Strategy Commission with the support of board and commission members and talented development, design, and policy professionals in the city, with a goal to complete a refreshed strategy by the end of 2024.

## Refresh the Main Street / Commercial Design Guidelines

The Main Street Design Guidelines were crafted in the early 2000's, and help set expectations for development along the Main Street corridor. The City should work to refresh the Main Street Design Guidelines, and work to incorporate guidelines for all of Bexley's commercial corridors.

## Conform Code with Joint Livingston Avenue Plan

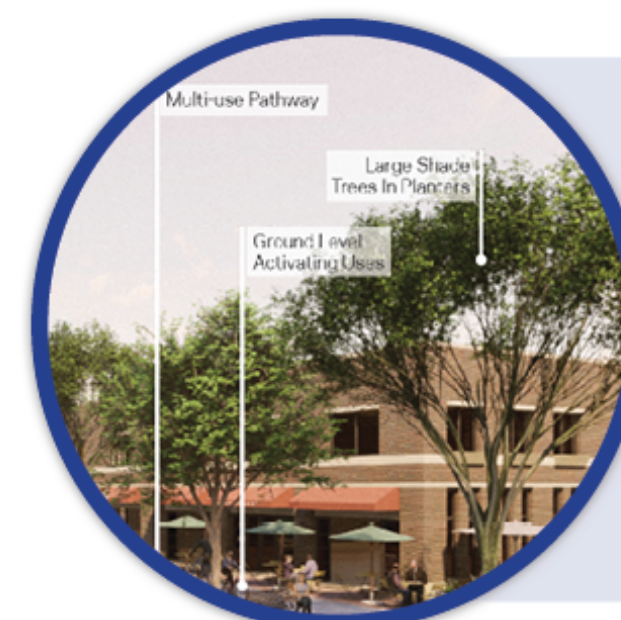
The Bexley and Columbus Joint Livingston Avenue Plan includes more specific development standards and concepts for Livingston Avenue than were previously envisioned by the zoning code. The City should update zoning along Livingston Avenue to conform to the vision of the Joint Livingston Avenue Plan.

## Historic Preservation Ordinance & Protections

As a historic first-ring suburb of Columbus, Bexley has architecturally and historically significant property that is worthy of celebration and preservation. Currently, there are controls in place for residential property but not for commercial property. The City has begun to develop, and should finalize and adopt, preservation standards for commercial property. Additionally, the City should explore preservation standards for residential property that extend beyond the question of demolition.

## Pursue Trail Town Designation

In the summer of 2022, the City worked on a Trail Town Plan, to craft a strategy for the City to build up its trail town amenities and obtain Trail Town status. The City is now working with MORPC to help develop a regional trail town framework, with the hope of pursuing Trail Town status in a regional context.



### *BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...*

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing plans and strategies contain active goals and objectives that are current and relevant components of development objectives:

- **Southwest Bexley Strategic Framework** (see page 19)
- **Joint Livingston Avenue Plan** (see page 23)
- **Land Use Strategy** (see pages 16-17; update under development)



## 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

## Continuously Update Key Infrastructure Plans

Investing in quality infrastructure is critical to the long-term viability of Bexley's neighborhoods. Bexley has adopted long-term water and sewer infrastructure plans that are in need of consistent updating. The City should continue to review and update water/sewer, road, and street lighting infrastructure plans and revisit annually as a component of the budget allocation process.

## Increase Sewer Capacity and Repair Broken Sewer Lines

The City is in the midst of a long-term program to repair sewer infrastructure and to increase sewer capacity. This work is essential to ensuring resilience, particularly in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather patterns. The City should continue to consistently invest in sewer repair and capacity projects into the future and encourage coordination with parallel City of Columbus efforts.

## Improved Stormwater Regulation

Better treatment and regulation of stormwater runoff will lead to a decrease in surge flooding of our sewer system, and will help improve the water quality in our regional waterways. The City should craft stronger protections for existing greenspace, and require more robust on-site stormwater storage and/or treatment for projects with building envelope and hardscape expansion.

## Pedestrian & Cyclist-Focused Infrastructure

Bexley is a walkable and bikeable City that strives to continuously improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The City should continue its increasing focus on pedestrian and bike safety by expanding on traffic calming infrastructure and bike-friendly infrastructure; developing safer, pedestrian and cyclist first roadways; and exploring policies and infrastructure that re-imagine right-of-ways to prioritize active public spaces and to de-prioritize vehicles. Primary points of focus should be on safe connections to schools and realizing the Southwest Bexley Strategic Framework's recommendation to complete bike/ped connection along Astor from Schneider Park east to Euclaire and beyond. Examples of harmonious programs that are under way or under consideration include the Drexel Avenue road narrowing / traffic calming project; the Bike Friendly Bexley Plan; the Trail Town project; the "Alley of the Future" and "Love Your Alley" programs; the Calm Corridors effort; and numerous traffic calming infrastructure installations under plan throughout the City.

## Continue to Enhance Infrastructure Beautification Throughout the Community

Helping to curate an abundant and attractive natural and built environment shows care for our resources and intentionality of purpose, and helps to fortify a sense of place and community. The City should continue to build out public and park infrastructure, and should increasingly work alongside neighboring communities to advocate for and participate in the improvement of surrounding areas.

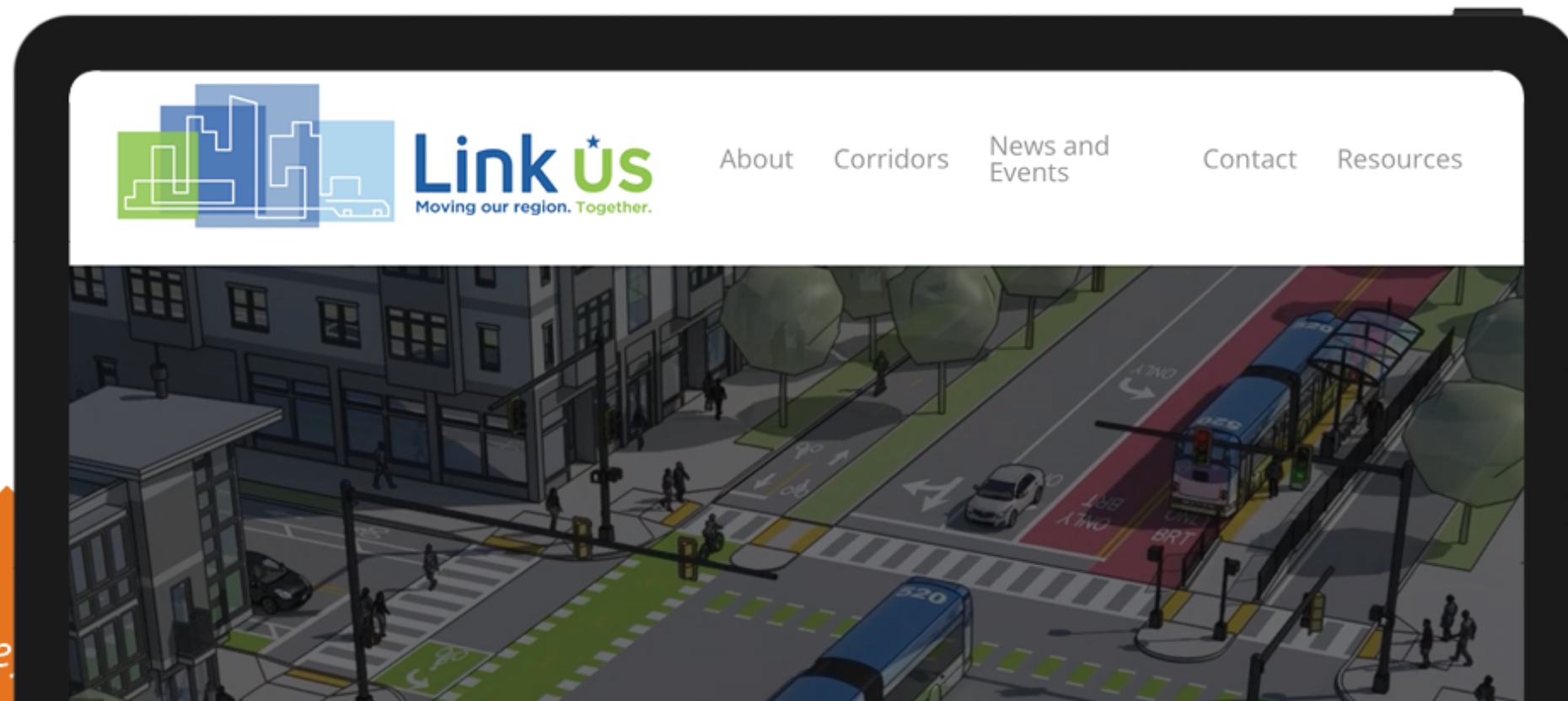
# INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

## Facilitate Quality Public Transportation Options and Infrastructure

Access to quality public transportation is a pillar of a healthy City, and Bexley has a role to play as a regional partner in ensuring the improvement of public transit in the Columbus region. Public transportation has a reduced environmental footprint compared to single-occupant vehicles, and provides vital access to mobility across a variety of economic strata. The City should continue to partner with COTA and central Ohio partners to facilitate quality public transportation options and infrastructure, including supporting the development of Bus Rapid Transit and pedestrian rail options.

*LinkUS Proposes Rapid Bus Transit Through Main Street*

learn more at [linkuscolumbus.com](https://linkuscolumbus.com)



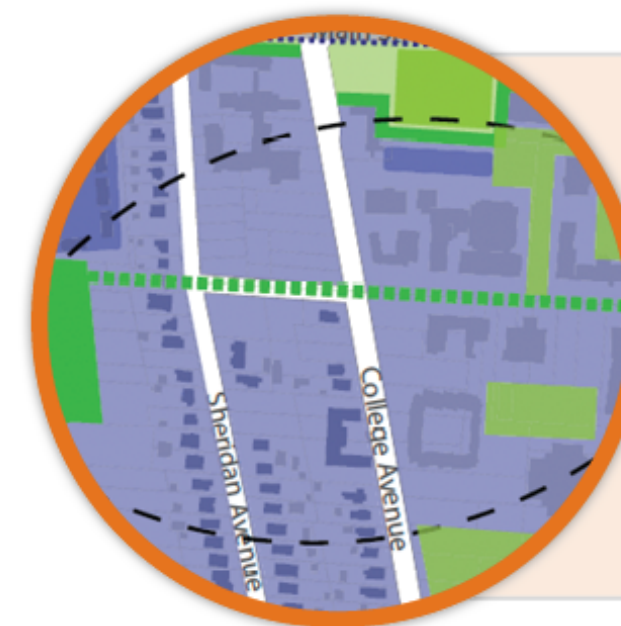
## Complete Infill Sidewalk and Curb Program

In 2017, the administration began a program to identify and complete block sections missing sidewalks and/or curbs. Since that program began, over a mile of new sidewalk and curb have been installed, and the field of remaining blocks without curb or sidewalk is narrowing. The City should continue this program, with a goal to complete remaining gaps in coverage\* by 2030.

*\* Note that some sidewalk sections are on hold due to the existence of mature trees or site conditions that prohibit the installation of sidewalks.*

## Complete Joint Livingston Avenue Plan Projects

In 2023, Bexley and Columbus were awarded federal funds for an \$18m+ project to install the traffic calming and bike/pedestrian infrastructure recommendations of the Livingston Avenue Plan. Seeing this project through to completion will be a top priority in the coming years.



### *BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...*

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing strategies contain additional active goals and objectives that are current and relevant to the City's infrastructure efforts:

- **The Southwest Bexley Strategic Framework** (see page 19)
- **The Joint Livingston Avenue Plan** (see page 23)
- **The Bike Friendly Bexley Plan** (see page 21)



*2023 STRATEGIC PLAN*

# JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## **Continue to Pursue Innovative Mayor’s Court Programs**

Bexley’s Mayor’s Court provides a meaningful platform for addressing justice reforms within Bexley’s systems. Recent programs have included providing public defenders to defendants in need of support; creating a license restoration program for Driving Under Suspension (DUS) offenders; and promoting a fine-free court for indigent defendants. The Court is currently in the process of promulgating rules to allow for income-scaled minor misdemeanors. The Mayor and the Mayor’s Court Magistrate and staff should continue to monitor concepts focused on diversion, restorative justice, proportionality, and equitable outcomes.

## **Continue to Monitor Hiring & Appointments Processes to Ensure Equitable and Diverse Outcomes**

In 2018 the City began to work with outside consultants to provide recommendations to the City’s hiring processes to encourage recruitment through diversified channels and a broad diversity of applicants. The City should continue to monitor hiring and appointment practices and results to ensure equitable and diverse outcomes in hiring and board appointment processes.

## **Procurement Policies**

The City should build upon its EDGE requirements for infrastructure projects, with continuous purchasing review to ensure open access to a diverse array of suppliers and service providers.

## **Support & Encourage Affordable Housing Opportunities**

Bexley has long offered affordable housing opportunities, but with changing market conditions affordability is becoming increasingly scarce. Additionally, the quality of the most affordable housing in the City has declined over the years, as properties have deteriorated due to landlord underinvestment. The City, in partnership with the CIC, should continue to support a wide array of housing options, by upgrading current affordable housing options with safe, quality developments. By leveraging incentives and CIC resources, the City can positively impact the quality of life of Bexley residents and provide elevated standards for affordable housing.

## **Events & Resources to Welcome New Residents**

The City should continue to build upon New Resident welcome packets and welcome events, providing new residents with community information and quick connections to city leadership and resident ambassadors.



2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# JUSTICE & DEI CONT'D

## Cross-Advertise and Participate in Events with Surrounding Communities

The City should continue to broaden awareness of events in surrounding communities, and to help advertise Bexley community events to neighboring communities, in the interest of increasing cross-community awareness and enhancing Bexley's welcoming culture. Additionally, the City should emphasize cross-jurisdiction and cross-community training, networking, and interactions across a spectrum of official and unofficial activities.

## Develop & Support Staff and Community Education and Awareness Programming Around JEDI Issues

Staff, board, and commission training should continue to incorporate implicit bias training to include core curriculum relative to a variety of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion training.



*BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...*

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing strategy contain additional active goals and objectives that are current and relevant to the City's JEDI efforts:

- **The Bexley Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan** (see page 22)

## Enable and Support the One Bexley Project

The One Bexley Project is a collaborative initiative of the City, the Bexley City School District, and the Bexley Public Library. It's a multi-faceted program that acknowledges the role of racism in Bexley's history and structural systems, and is designed to deliberately and comprehensively bolster a community culture that ensures that Bexley is welcoming and provides a sense of belonging for all community members and visitors. As the program launches in 2023, the City should support the program logistically and financially and support its ongoing, long-term success.

*Follow the One Bexley Project*

[www.bexley.org/onebexley](http://www.bexley.org/onebexley)





## 2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS

### **Equitable Policing**

All programs and initiatives of the Bexley Police Department are rooted in the department's key principles of Fairness, Integrity, Respect, and Empathy. As new programs and initiatives are developed, and as existing practices are examined, practices and policies will ensure that the enforcement of the law and the investigation of crimes is conducted in a fair and equitable manner, while continuing to prioritize the safety of all.

### **Focus on Relationships Between Police and Businesses**

Business checks and resources for businesses will be prioritized by building upon the daily business check program that was initiated in the fall of 2022, and continuing to develop enhanced interaction with business stakeholders.

### **Continue to Expand Project Taillight Pilot Program**

Operation Taillight is a program that provides motorists who have equipment failure with assistance to correct issues with their vehicles. Events and programs to date have included providing motorists with free inspection and assistance, and also providing motorists with referrals as a part of traffic stop interactions where equipment violations are observed. The department will continue to develop Bexley's Operation Taillight Program, and institute successful components of the program as permanent programs of the City.

### **Create Community Liaison Officer Position**

The department will create a Community Liaison Officer position to support a variety of community programs, including Citizen's Academy, special duty assignments, community engagement, etc. Additionally, the liaison officer will craft new programs to focus on the business and school communities.

### **Deploy and Support Bomb Detection K9 Unit**

The Department is launching a Bomb Detection K9 Unit, with training occurring in the summer of 2023. The Bomb Detection Handler will work towards proactive and reactive policing efforts which will increase safety and security in community e.g. places of worship, synagogues, schools, executive protection, special events, mutual aid, etc.

### **Ensure Positive Engagement with Youth**

The department will continue to study and implement new opportunities for positive engagement with youth, in and out of school environments. Examples of engagement goals include:

- Work to increase the presence of command team during special events e.g. high school sports, etc.
- Launch a successful Student Citizen's Academy – geared towards high school students
- Create after school programs and initiatives
- Jeffrey Mansion Preschool initiatives
- Public Safety initiatives with students, faculty and staff in Bexley School District
- Columbus School for Girls (CSG) initiatives
- Enhance and Increased Law Enforcement presence on foot and at Crosswalks during peak school hours
- Continue to support the successful School Resource Officer program with St Charles Preparatory, and to be ready to support an SRO program at other schools in the City as requested
- Bexley and adjacent communities e.g. Ferndale and Mayfield increase positive engagement



2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# PUBLIC SAFETY CONT'D

## Broaden Leadership Structure and Provide for Continuity

The department has recently created additional leadership positions in order to provide more opportunities for leadership and career advancement. The department will continue to support officers with specialized training, development, inter-agency opportunities, etc. The department will reinforce leadership models to support internal succession strategies.

## Enhance Technology and Infrastructure

The department will deploy the following enhancements to its technology and equipment infrastructure:

- Evidence collection software
- Traffic data collection software
- Next generation CAD/RMS system

## Prioritize Wellness Programs and Mental Health

Mental health awareness and resources are particularly vital for law enforcement officers as well as victims of crime and police-involved trauma. The department will continue to explore mental health support resources for the police department and the community, to be deployed for additional support to incidents involving mental health concerns, for victim support, and to follow up on potentially traumatizing incidents.

1. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) national, state and local models are being reviewed.
2. Mental Health support at the local level through City of Bexley City social services

## Modernize Emergency Management Program

The department has recently created a leadership role for Emergency Management, with an emphasis on organization and management of resources focused on prevention, preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery pre or post a critical incident. The department will continue to evaluate existing emergency management plans and infrastructure and provide updates to plans as appropriate, as well as help guide city departments which would be involved in the preparation for or response to emergency situations.

## Refresh Recruitment Strategies

The department will develop new marketing strategies and campaigns for new recruits in order to work towards the next generation of successful, diverse law enforcement officers.

## Obtain CALEA Accreditation

The "Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies" (CALEA) Accreditation program is a credentialing authority through the joint efforts of law enforcement's major executive associations from around the country. The will prepare for and obtain CALEA Accreditation in the coming years.



2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# PUBLIC SAFETY CONT'D

## Enhance Communications Efforts

The department will continue to expand communication efforts, including through the following initiatives:

- **“Chiefs Community Connection”** forums with community stakeholders to communicate and exchange ideas; tabletop conversations geared towards enabling citizens with a platform to meet with the police department and share ideas e.g. Cookies with the Chief, New Resident Event, etc
- **Annual reporting** to align with the City’s annual report
- **Newsletter communications** in conjunction with the City’s newsletters
- **Routine community meetings** with stakeholders groups interested in policing and public safety
- **Get to Know Your Officer** efforts and programs



### BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing strategy contains additional active goals and objectives that are current and relevant to the City’s public safety plan:

- **The Bexley Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan** (see page 22)





2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

# RECREATION GOALS

## Complete the 2023 Year of the Parks Projects

The *Year of the Parks* is a series of parks projects throughout Bexley that will radically transform our parks experiences and offerings, providing a canvas to nurture and grow community and to strengthen the connections within and around our neighborhoods. Several years in the making, this project is a culmination of park planning, fundraising, dreaming, and saving. Some of the highlights of the Year of the Park include the Commonwealth pond and arboretum installation, athletic field rehabilitation, and Columbia connector at Commonwealth Park. Schneider Park will see the completion of the path from the athletic fields on the south end to the connection at Main Street, the natural dog park, a splash pad, and a pedestrian bridge that connects to the greenways trails system across Alum Creek. Main Street will be furnished with the outdoor reading room park at the Bexley Public Library / Torat Emet Synagogue, the revamped DGB Kindness Park, and the Schneider Park trailhead.

## Increase Recreational Field and Facility Opportunities

As a very active but landlocked community, recreation fields and facilities continue to fall short of meeting the needs of our residents. While the past couple of years has seen field improvements with the new field at Schneider Park and the field rehabilitation at Commonwealth, continuing to evaluate opportunities to expand athletic fields will be an ongoing priority for the department. Facility improvements, including improvements to existing facilities such as baseball/softball fields and creation of new facilities such as a recreation center and four season shelter facility, will continue to be evaluated. Additionally, the City should remain committed to supporting and encouraging field rejuvenation and expansion efforts at school campuses and on land leased from surrounding recreational districts.

## Prioritize Creation of Active Spaces for Young Adult and Senior Citizen Populations

The Recreation Department is intentional about continued self evaluation of services that are provided to our community. Through that process, we have identified two distinct demographics - young adults and senior citizens - for whom we want to focus expansion of our services. We will work to develop spaces where these groups can be active, gather, and where the department can offer programming that appeals to these age groups. For seniors this starts with the development of a permanent senior center, but also includes parks opportunities and expanded programming opportunities. For young adults, we will continue to evaluate facility opportunities including active park installations such as pickleball, sand volleyball, skate park, etc. as well as indoor spaces such as a future recreation center.

## Create a Permanent Senior Center

The temporary senior center on North Cassady opened in early 2022. While access to the space is temporary, this has been an opportunity to evaluate the need for a senior center as we continue to work to improve services for our older adults. Based on usage and feedback, it is clear that a dedicated senior space is needed, supported, and vital to best serve this population. There is an opportunity to continue on the North Cassady site on the first floor of a proposed development that is still under review. Regardless of the final location, we will continue to evaluate all opportunities as we transition from the current temporary space to a permanent center.



### *BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...*

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing plans and strategies contain active goals and objectives that are current and relevant components of the Recreation and Parks strategic objectives:

- **The Commonwealth Park Master Plan** (see page 20)
- **The Southwest Bexley Strategic Framework** (see page 19)
- **The Bexley Land Use Strategy** (see pages 16-17)

# RECREATION CONT'D

## **Continue Monitoring Recreation Center Opportunities**

The Recreation and Parks Department will continue to keep a pulse on the viability of a recreation center for our community. Although there are a number of obstacles to the creation of a recreation center, including financial feasibility and availability of appropriate space, the benefits that one can bring to our community makes it essential that we continue to monitor opportunities.

## **Create a Strategic Plan for Department**

Strategic Planning will be a focal point for the upcoming years. The development of a Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan will help shape the vision for the future of Recreation and Parks Services. Through a public process we will develop a Strategic Plan that will identify tangible goals and objectives as well as a plan for implementation as we work to improve services and adapt to the wants and needs of our community.

## **Create a Master Plan for Jeffrey Park**

In 2023, the Jeffrey Park Preservation and Enhancement Committee was formed to begin work on a Jeffrey Park Plan that will provide a road map to both preserve the park for generations to come and develop ways to improve this unique community asset. The committee will work with facilitators and expert consultants to develop base mapping, inventory park assets, evaluate best practices for items such as woodland and wildlife management, and to identify opportunities for park and playground improvements. The process will include a public workshop and board and council approvals and is expected to be completed in late 2023 to early 2024.

## **Modernize Park Rules and Recreation Board Code**

The Recreation and Parks Department is working to modernize dated park rules and Recreation Board code. While Recreation and Parks Department services have evolved greatly over the past decades, legislation has not kept pace with the ever changing ways in which these services are provided to our community. The administration should work with Council, in partnership with the Recreation Board, to modernize both the park rules and the way in which the Recreation Board helps to facilitate the services provided through the Department.

## **Continue Developing Arboretum Features Within Parks**

As the first municipality to be designated an arboretum, we continue to develop opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about and enjoy the wide array of amazing tree specimens that are found throughout Bexley. We continue to be intentional about expanding arboretum features in our parks including the installation of the Commonwealth Arboretum and Botanical Garden feature on the west side of Commonwealth. The City should continue to evaluate additional installations that enhance our arboretum including future installations at Commonwealth as outlined by the master plan, as well as opportunities in Jeffrey Park, Schneider Park, Havenwood Park, and beyond.

## **Four-Season Shelter House at Jeffrey Park**

The Department has identified the need for a four season shelter house to provide space for additional programming, additional rental/gathering spaces, and to meet the needs of summer campers. The City should work through a design and budgeting process to meet this community need.

# SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

## **Create a Climate Action / Sustainability Plan**

Over the past several years, the City has implemented numerous programs and policies geared towards reducing the City and community carbon footprint, and positively contributing to climate change mitigation. A Climate Action / Sustainability Plan will define overarching goals for continuing to advance the City's climate action and sustainability objectives. This process has begun via a Greenhouse Gas Inventory conducted with the support of Power a Clean Future Ohio, with continuing partnerships with The Ohio State University student body, and with continuing leadership through the City's Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee to assist in the creation of a Climate Action Plan.

## **Support Clean Energy Through Aggregation and On-site Solar**

Community Choice aggregation is a powerful way to bring renewable energy to Bexley households. The City's efforts to use aggregation to purchase clean energy continue and should move forward at the appropriate time. On-site solar should be encouraged by ensuring the zoning process is straightforward and by connecting residents with programs, such as residential Property Assessed Clean Energy and solar co-ops, that make solar more accessible.

## **Continue City's EV Fleet Transition**

Electrifying vehicles are imperative to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since 2021, City administration has adopted a policy that places a moratorium on the purchase of internal combustion vehicles in instances where mainstream electric alternatives are available in the marketplace. This practice should continue, and the policy should be formalized through legislative affirmation.

## **Support EV Infrastructure in Underserved Areas**

As energy prices climb, electric vehicle options expand, and the secondary market for EVs increases, there will be an increasing economic diversity among electric vehicle owners. The City should help to develop, and encourage the development of, Level II charging options in areas with a higher concentration of tenant populations, and to expand charging infrastructure along commercial corridors.

## **Small Engine Phase-Out**

Clean air and quiet environments are imperative components of a healthy community. Gasoline powered two-stroke engines produce significant emissions which are harmful to air quality and human health. In an effort to promote the use of electric lawnpower equipment, reduce noise, and decrease air pollution, the City will work with Council to advance a zero emissions landscaping incentive ordinance which will increase the hours during which electric lawn equipment can be used.

# SUSTAINABILITY CONT'D

## Update Building Codes for Green Infrastructure

Solutions to decrease energy usage in Bexley's home are important to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions in the City. Bexley's building codes need to be updated to ensure that new development is equipped with or ready for on-site power generation and electric vehicle charging. Codes should be updated to encourage or require solar infrastructure on new builds; ensure EV readiness; and create standards for common EV infrastructure for multifamily residential development.

## Continue to Implement the Zero Waste Plan

Near-term focus areas from the Zero Waste Plan should include: Deployment of universal recycling program, to ensure the availability of recycling services at all addresses in Bexley, including at apartments and businesses; Expanding the City's curbside food waste program; Moving to less frequent solid waste pickup; and continuing to phase-in waste sorting and use of reusables and compostables at community events.

## Building Efficiency and Decarbonization

The City's leadership in Property Assessed Clean Energy should continue to be leveraged to encourage retrofitting of commercial and institutional buildings with energy efficient improvements. Policies and programs should be put in place to encourage efficiency improvements for residential properties; the City should explore facilitating energy audits for residential properties and helping to promote accessible and affordable financing for energy efficient improvements.

## Continue to Explore Residential PACE

Bexley has been an early advocate for Residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (RPACE) in Ohio. RPACE is potentially a powerful tool to help make energy efficient improvements to home more affordable and accessible. While recent legislative action at the statehouse has stifled the market for RPACE in Ohio, the City should continue to advocate for and explore RPACE and similar programs.



### *BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...*

In addition to the goals and objectives outlined in this section, the following existing plans and strategies contain active goals and objectives that are current and relevant components of Sustainability strategic objectives:

- **Zero Waste Plan** (see page 18)
- **Bike Friendly Bexley Plan** (see page 21)
- **Climate Action / Sustainability Plan** (under development)