



# March 11, 2025 MAYOR'S UPDATE



## Coming up in Bexley:

March 13, 6:00 pm:	Architectural Review Board
March 18, 4:00 pm:	Citizen Review Board
March 23, 1:30 & 3:30 pm:	Bexley Historical Society Bus and Walking Tours
March 23, 3:00 pm:	Bigger Than Me: My Story, My Culture (at Bexley Public Library)
March 26, 4:00 pm:	Tree and Public Gardens Commission
March 26, 5:30 pm:	Land Use Strategy
March 27, 6:00 pm:	Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning
March 30, 3:00 pm:	Safe Biking in Bexley (at Bexley Public Library)
April 2, 5:30 pm:	Recreation Board
April 19, 12:00 pm:	Annual Egg Dash!
April 23, 6:00 pm:	Earth Month Keynote - Jeff Speck: Building a more Walkable Bexley

## Some of What I've Been Up To:

- Quarterly Meeting with schools and library
- Extensive work preparing for State of Community Presentation
- MORPC Meeting
- Planning and prep work for Jeffrey Woods and staffed event
- OEC Programs and Communications Board Meeting
- Meeting with Rebecca Ness on Love Your Alley
- Landscape design meetings and follow up
- Bexley Celebrations and Events meeting and follow up meetings for various events
- Planning for Jeff Speck event
- Attended Mary Ritter Garden Club meeting
- Board of Health Processes Meeting
- One Bexley agenda planning and follow up work
- Community Gardens leadership meeting
- Meeting with BCF for sponsorship packet and fundraising strategy
- Prepared grant accounting reconciliation for BCE
- East Main BRT follow up meeting
- Meetings and calls with residents and potential developers
- MORPC Executive Board Meeting and follow up call
- COMMA Meeting and Membership report prep
- Meeting with school board member, Pat King
- Commission Chairs Meeting
- Review and follow up on ODOT Drexel Avenue matter
- OEC Working Meeting and communications
- Follow up on various parks projects

Keep in touch! To sign up for weekly email updates from the City of Bexley, including information on community events and timely notifications and reminders, visit: [www.bexley.org/blast](http://www.bexley.org/blast)



## Commercial Design Guidelines RFP and Kickoff

As called for in the City's Strategic Plan and budgeted for in this and last year's budgets, we're getting ready to kick off the Commercial Design Guidelines update process. This new guidelines will re-envision the current Main Street Design Guidelines by establishing overarching guidelines for core commercial areas in Bexley and providing specific standards tailored to the unique contexts of East Main Street, North Cassady Avenue, and East Livingston Avenue. These guidelines will establish standards for future redevelopment, and collaborate with a steering committee to ensure that the updated guidelines are contextually appropriate and align with the city's long-term vision. The first step is to identify a planner to assist with the effort; see the attached RFP for more info!

## Public AED Update

The first public AED station is up and running at Cassady and Main. Now that the prototype unit is successfully installed and operational we have ordered the remaining units, which will be installed at the following locations:

- Main at Kindness Park
- Main at Parkview
- Schneider athletic fields
- Commonwealth athletic fields
- Jeffrey tennis courts

## Aggregation Update

The energy market continues to be volatile. Recent AEP auction rates were elevated as expected, but the market is too unstable to indicate a clear path to ensure savings for residents. Our Board of Control met with Aspen Energy on March 7 to discuss the rates and after some robust conversation about options, the Board ultimately decided to hold off on signing an agreement to continue the aggregation program with plans to revisit the matter in a month or so when hopefully the market outlook will be clearer. We will continue to keep Council informed as this develops. We'll also be working on robust communications to keep our community informed as we draw closer to the program end date at the end of May.

## Jeffrey Woods Festival recap

Another Jeffrey Woods Fest is in the books and this year was better than ever. Lots of folks braved the brisk, windy weather to enjoy the wood chop, maple syrup boiling (yielding more than 150 bottles!), and other Woods Fest favorites. This year, we added to the program with a selection of Arboretum events to kick off Earth and Arbor Month, including tree climbing, nature displays, and a super popular falconry program. A huge thanks to the Service and Recreation Departments, especially Grant, Ron, Mike, and Elizabeth for their help in pulling this event together.

## MORPC State of the Region

MORPC's 2025 State of the Region will be held on Friday, March 21, 2025, at the Hilton Columbus Downtown. During the State of the Region, MORPC will highlight community accomplishments along with providing information on upcoming plans for the region. While the event is sold out, Bexley has a table and we'd love to include you. If you're able to attend, please email Natalie so we can get you on the list.

## Trash Talk Dates

I'll be holding a series of Trash Talks this spring and I'd love to have you join me if you're able to make one of the events. We offer sign ups for these events to give residents the opportunity to ask questions or pitch ideas while we clean up litter in our community. Some great conversations have started at these events and they're always a ton of fun. If you're interested in stopping by - or better yet being a featured guest - reach out to Natalie.



## Senate Bill 104 Update - Short Term Rentals

State Senator Andrew Brenner has introduced Senate Bill 104 to outlaw local controls of short term rentals, including limitations, zoning controls, outright bans, or requirements that the properties be owner-occupied. COMMA has moved to formally oppose the bill, and we are working on a coordinated campaign of testimony and outreach to legislators (my testimony is attached to this update in PDF format).

- **As drafted, the bill would prohibit all degrees of regulation trying to limit the number and impact of short-term rentals**—from zoning restrictions in residential areas, limiting numbers by lottery, or prohibiting them altogether. When residents come to our offices and city council meetings seeking relief from the disruption of short-term rentals in their neighborhoods, we will have few if any effective tools and will have to direct them to the Statehouse.
- **In communities facing shortages of permanent housing, the proliferation of short-term rentals in residential areas only exacerbates the problem**—reducing supply and driving up demand. It should remain a local decision whether to discourage existing housing stock being devoted to short-term rental business rather than permanent housing for workers who will contribute to the local economy and community.
- **As drafted, the bill would prohibit owner-occupation requirements.** These regulations, however, are among the most effective local means of preventing absentee owners from profiting from the rental at the expense of their neighbors' quality of life.
- **As drafted, the bill would prohibit restricting the number of rentals an owner may operate.** But regulating the number of rentals an owner may operate is a critical local tool to avoid proliferation of short-term rentals that are either owned by outside investment groups (who have no community investment) or that are poorly kept up by overwhelmed proprietors.
- **Finally, as drafted, the bill would artificially cap registration fees at \$20 per property.** This undermines registration itself, as these fees would not come close to cost recovery.

## Other Items We're Tracking:

- **Police Pension funding:** As the House Public Safety Committee held a hearing on the HB96, the state operating budget, this week the topic of inserting language from previous legislation to increase employer contributions to the Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund as an amendment was raised by union representatives. Rep. Cindy Abrams (R-Harrison) said she intends to introduce the measure as both a budget amendment and a standalone bill.
- **HB154 - School District approval - CRA Exemptions** (Rep. David Thomas, Rep. Chris Glassburn)  
To require school district approval of residential community reinvestment area property tax exemptions.
- **SB114 - Law Enforcement Quotas** (Patton, T)  
To prohibit law enforcement agencies from using quotas for arrests and citations (For the record, Bexley does not. But it does use statistics to track officer productivity). Senate Judiciary, (First Hearing)
- **HB28 - Eliminate Replacement Property Tax Levy Authority** (Mathews, A; Hall, T)  
To eliminate the authority to levy replacement property tax levies. House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
- **SB63 - Prohibit Ranked Choice Voting** (Gavarone, T; DeMora, W)  
To generally prohibit the use of ranked choice voting and to withhold Local Government Fund distributions from a municipality or chartered county that uses ranked choice voting. Senate General Government, (Second Hearing)





*Grant Archer firing up the maple syrup arches at dawn*



*Finance Department visit to Woods Fest*



*A future arborist learns the ropes at Woods Fest*





*A no-zoom photo of a friend along the Tad Jeffrey Trail at Schneider Park*



*This month's COMMA meeting, hosted by the Columbus Zoo. Topics included updates from Powell and the zoo; from Columbus Health and Franklin County Public Health; as well as a detailed discussion of recent and pending state and federal regulatory and legislative changes and proposals.*