

## Presentation to the Livingston Area Consortium



Mayor Ben Kessler  
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# Livingston Area Overview

The Livingston area bordering Berwick and Bexley encompass the north and south side of Livingston Avenue from Alum Creek to Chelsea Avenue. The primary area of concern involves the commercial and residential properties from Francis Avenue west to Alum Creek.

Current land use in the area includes parkland, service-oriented retail along Livingston Avenue, and multifamily residential.

In total, the Bexley portion of this area has 11.8 acres of land, 3.83 of which are currently controlled by the city of Bexley. The remaining commercial frontage on Livingston Avenue is 2.74 acres in area.

Bexley Portion of Livingston Area Quick Stats	
# of Parcels	46
Total Acreage	14.54 Acres
2011 Auditor's Valuation	\$5,646,000
2011 Property Taxes	\$190,552



# Challenges

A variety of challenges exist that make it difficult for substantial redevelopment and improvement to occur within the East Livingston Area of Bexley and Berwick.

## **Surrounding Uses**

Development along Livingston Avenue and within the Ferndale and Mayfield area is largely comprised of older improvements with little versatility and with limited desirability. New development is suppressed due to the low quality of existing commercial improvements both in Bexley as well as on the southern side of East Livingston.



## **Crime Statistics**

The Ferndale and Mayfield area has the highest density of crime in Bexley. This is due to the prevalence of absentee landlords and the low standard of maintenance and upkeep on rental housing, resulting in subpar living conditions.

## **Limited Control**

Redevelopment plans along East Livingston will always be complicated by the City's lack of control over the south side of East Livingston.

## **Accessibility**

Ferndale and Mayfield, a primarily multi-family residential area which is of particular concern to the City, is only accessible via East Livingston Avenue, and as such is isolated from the surrounding residential neighborhood. This lack of accessibility and structural integration makes it very difficult for the Ferndale/Mayfield loop to connect to the rest of the community physically and socially, and is seen as a major deterrent to the rejuvenation of this area.



# A Brief History of Bexley's Planning Efforts @ Livingston Avenue

## **The Southwest Bexley Master Plan (2003):**

- Partner with Columbus
- Create Livingston Avenue Overlay District
- Place Gateway Entry Features
- Examine Mayfield/Ferndale Redevelopment Area
- Market Redevelopment Potential

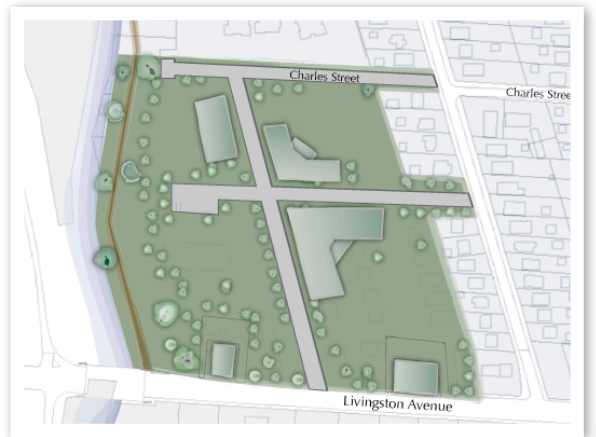
## **The Bexley Land Use Strategy (2011):**

- **Form a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)**... assemble properties along Ferndale and Mayfield in order to comprehensively redevelop this area. The goal of the CIC should be to assemble the land and sell the land to a developer whose development plan is congruous with the city's vision for a redeveloped Ferndale/Mayfield area.

- **Create a Ferndale/Mayfield Planned Use Zoning District**

A Ferndale/Mayfield PUD should be put in place, to help guide concerted, planned development in the corridor. The following uses have been identified as being possible uses for the area:

- Institutional senior housing (assisted living, independent living, nursing home)
  - Hotel development
  - Recreational uses, such as athletic fields or recreational facilities
  - Limited municipal facilities
  - Anchoring retail uses such as small neighborhood grocery uses
- **Ease Restrictions Against Drive-through Food Service Along Livingston**
  - **Explore the Use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) at Ferndale and Mayfield**  
The commission recommends that the city explore the use of Tax Increment Financing to fund the remediation and redevelopment of the Ferndale and Mayfield area. TIF funding could be used to clean environmentally impacted sites, provide new infrastructure to the area, and even possibly create site conditions that would make the redevelopment of the former landfill more financially feasible.
  - **Provide Neighborhood Connection to Ferndale/Mayfield**  
Connect the Ferndale and Mayfield area to Sheridan Avenue by connecting Charles Street through to Livingston Avenue.



# How Can This Area Be Rejuvenated?

A variety of challenges exist that make it difficult for substantial redevelopment and improvement to occur within the East Livingston Area of Berwick and Bexley.

The following observations are offered based upon the City's experience and study of this area and its challenges:

## **Area Stakeholders Cannot Afford to Ignore This Area**

Deteriorating conditions at Livingston/Ferndale/Mayfield have a negative impact on surrounding streets such as Sheridan and College. The risk of a continuing increase in crime in this area is too great. Allowing conditions to continue unabated in this area will have a long-term detrimental impact to southwest Bexley and the City of Bexley at large.

## **The Market On Its Own Will Not Rejuvenate Livingston**

Conditions in the area are such that the risks for a private developer are too great. The cost of assemblage is higher than the value of the underlying ground, and the uncertain risk profile of any full-scale redevelopment makes this an undesirable candidate for redevelopment.

## **Rejuvenation of the Area Will Require Public Investment and Community Partnership**

The City of Bexley requires an active partnership with the City of Columbus, Bexley City Schools, and Bexley and Columbus stakeholders in order to create a catalyst for meaningful change in this area. Investment in the city right-of-ways and in offsetting the cost of assemblage will be necessary to engage redevelopment. Policy initiatives with the City of Columbus will be necessary to ensure similar investment and standards of care on the south side of Livingston Avenue. The Jewish Community Center, the Berwick Civic Association, and other entities must play a meaningful part in working in tandem with area efforts to ensure that both sides of Livingston are being addressed.



# A Livingston Area Tax Increment Finance District (Bexley)

This area is a classic candidate for a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district. It is an impacted area with little economic viability that requires special investment in order to be turned around.

- **Without New Investment to the Area, Values Will Continue to Decrease**
  - From 2008 to 2011, values at Ferndale and Mayfield dropped 24% based on Franklin County Auditor Valuations. There will be no new tax dollars to the area without new investment
- **New Investment Will Not Occur Without Community Investment**

## What Could a TIF Be Used For?

A TIF could be used in multiple ways to help improve the Livingston Avenue corridor. Here are some ways a TIF might be used to improve the corridor:

- **Assemblage of property for redevelopment**
- **Improvements to the Livingston streetscape**
- **Grants to encourage reinvestment in Livingston properties**

## Some Possible TIF Structures:

### **Maximum Allowed Without School Board Approval**

10 Year TIF - 75% of the increment goes to the City

### **Middle of the Road TIF Requiring School Board Approval:**

30 Year TIF - 50% of the increment goes to the City, with 50% going to the Schools

### **Maximum TIF:**

30 Year TIF - 100% of the increment goes to the City

### *Some Notes:*

- Under all of these scenarios, the School Board retains current property tax income from the impacted parcels. Taxes are diverted only from new tax dollars created from future increases in value at the impacted parcels.
- Currently, about 26% of the land use in this area is tax exempt and owned by the City of Bexley. Returning this property to the market would result in an increase in the school district's tax base.
- The funds generated by the TIF can only be used for specific improvements to this area - these funds cannot be used for general fund or other purposes by the City.