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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Protecting Equal Rights to Housing Opportunity in Bexley

BEXLEY, OHIO September 23, 2020 – At the September 22nd meeting, Bexley City Council passed Ordinance 28-20, further protecting citizens' rights to equal housing opportunities in Bexley. Veterans, recipients of disability payments, households with rental assistance vouchers, and anyone with other types of public or private sources of payment are protected from discrimination on the basis of source of payment when seeking rental housing. Landlords can apply screening criteria regarding tenant history, credit scores, and can charge security deposits as personal finance protection. Chapter 637.01 of Bexley's codified ordinances now defines "Source of Income" as "lawful income derived from wages, social security, supplemental security income, all forms of federal, state, or local assistance payments or subsidies, including rent vouchers, child support, spousal support, and public assistance which can be verified and substantiated."

Bexley code section 637.02 now states that it is an unlawful discriminatory practice for any person to refuse to sell, transfer, assign, rent, lease, sublease, finance or otherwise deny or withhold housing accommodations from any person because of the race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, source of income, familial status or military status of any prospective owner, occupant, or user of such housing accommodations.

Bexley City Council President and Ordinance sponsor Lori Ann Feibel stated, "This historic piece of legislation will help Bexley in our steadfast efforts to become an increasingly welcoming community. We may be a landlocked city with little potential for new builds, but we pride ourselves in the progressive problem solving that drives our policy making. This addition to our fair housing laws is a reflection of Bexley's passion for equity and desire to provide more opportunities for everyone to join our community." Mayor Ben Kessler stated

"we're dedicated to supporting safe, quality housing across all income abilities, and this is one of several meaningful steps we're taking towards that goal. Bexley is a historic, walkable community that has a passion for education and lifelong learning, and we want our city to be within reach to all who wish to call Bexley home."

While the City of Bexley is the first to pass source of income legislation in central Ohio, there are at least six other cities in Ohio that have adopted source of income protection legislation, including Cincinnati, Lindale, South Euclid, University Heights, Warrensville Heights, and Wickliffe. The City of Bexley reaffirms its commitment to being a welcoming community for all, and will continue to explore and enact policy reforms to expand the quality and availability of affordable housing to all residents and individuals.

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A first-ring suburb of Columbus, Bexley is known for its historic and close-knit neighborhoods, its highly ranked public school system, its classic and walkable Main Street environment, and the prestigious private school system located within its borders.