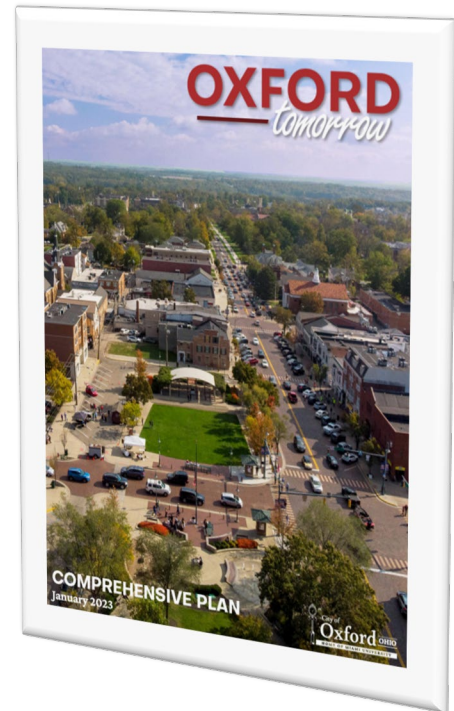


MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS:

The **Oxford Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan** was adopted by the Oxford City Council on January 17, 2023, and replaces the previous Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2008. The plan update process was facilitated by consulting firm MKSK, along with significant support from City staff. Envisioned as a more “living” document than its predecessor, the new Oxford Tomorrow plan serves as a blueprint for guiding the Oxford community toward a more economically and environmentally sustainable future over the next decade. Key goals expressed include increasing the supply of affordable housing, reducing carbon emissions, and embracing alternative modes of transportation including active transportation. The Community Development Department frequently references the Comprehensive Plan when formulating recommendations on legislative code amendments, development applications, and proposed zoning changes.



Improvements to Mapping Applications & Systems

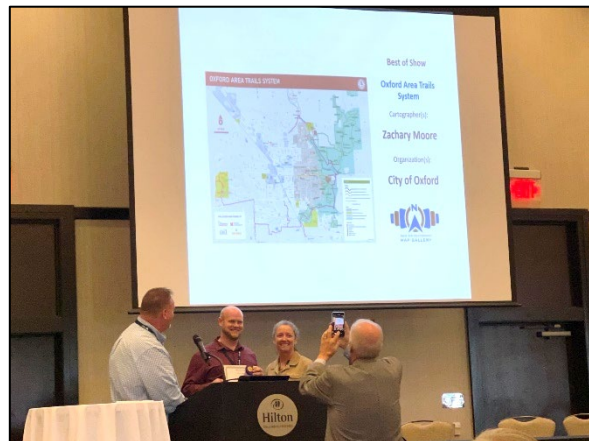
The City relies on geographic information system (GIS) technology to store and display data critical to City functions. Data is stored in the form of map “layers” which can be exhibited on any series of paper maps, or made available in a more interactive fashion through web-based mapping applications. A robust collection of GIS data has been generated and maintained for nearly two decades and includes such layers as address points, zoning district boundaries, and an inventory of infrastructure assets (e.g., utility lines, manholes, hydrants). Throughout most of this history, layers have been stored on the city’s local network server. 2023 saw a significant effort to migrate many of the City’s “authoritative” layers over to ArcGIS Online. The new cloud-based environment offers improvements to accessibility, as well as more robust analysis and presentation capabilities. A series of new web apps were launched online this year, including:

- [Active Transportation Viewer](#) – This app showcases progress on the Oxford Area Trails System (OATS) by displaying routes and nearby amenities, together with the Miami University Natural Areas network of hiking trails.

- [Address & Property Viewer](#) – Need to reference a specific property boundary or determine an officially assigned address? This information is conveniently packaged together and available in this app.
- [Future Land Use Viewer](#) – A critical component of the new Oxford Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) can be explored in an interactive fashion by using this app.
- [Planning & Zoning Case Viewer](#) – This is the newest themed app, produced for the purpose of acquainting users with sites and details pertaining to board & commission cases heard by the Planning Commission, BZA, and HAPC. Data supporting this app is still under development into 2024.
- [Zoning Viewer](#) – The Zoning Viewer offers a more immersive way of exploring zoning classifications of property within the Oxford municipal jurisdiction. This app may also be utilized in a manner similar to the Address & Property Viewer by turning off the zoning layer.

Cross-Department & Town and Gown Collaboration

This year, GIS Coordinator Zachary Moore worked closely with ACM Jessica Greene, City Engineer Scott Otto, and representatives from Miami University to design a [brand new, all-inclusive map of community trails and amenities](#). Previously, the City and University maintained separate maps and kiosks for their trail networks. The new trails map is now posted at kiosks located at Howell Park and the DeWitt/SR 73 trailhead. The map was also recognized at this year’s Ohio GIS Conference, winning two awards for First Place in the Cartographic/Reference category as well as Best in Show.



BOARD & COMMISSION ACTIVITY:

The **Planning Commission** is charged with overseeing growth and development in Oxford. Responsibilities vary from reviewing zoning map changes, site plans and other major development applications, to serving as stewards for the city's local planning and zoning regulations.

Per the City Charter, the Commission consists of seven members, two of whom are members of Council, plus five volunteer members who reside in Oxford and are appointed by Council to serve.

In 2023, a total of 15 official cases were submitted by applicants (developers, architects, etc.) for Planning Commission consideration, excluding a Conditional Use for a new Waffle House restaurant that was submitted in 2022 but not recommended for approval by the Commission until February 2023. Another application that was submitted in 2022, but did not receive its Planning recommendation until 2023, was for the Heron Pond Preliminary Subdivision to enable the subdivision of 9 lots on Kehr Road.

Apart from Waffle House & Heron Pond, other significant cases heard in 2023 included:

- **PC-2023-02** – to allow for a garage to be converted to an accessory dwelling unit at 20 E Collins St
- **PC-2023-07** – to allow a Conditional Use for a new Fairfield by Marriott hotel at 525 N Campus Ave, which is now planned to be re-addressed as 5186 Morning Sun Rd.
- **PC-2023-08** – to rezone Merry Day Park from GB General Business to R-4 Multi-Family; denied by both Planning and Council
- **PC-2023-09** – to permit a Planned Development for the Oxford Cottage Community on Hester Road
- **PC-2023-15** – to rezone 101 E Chestnut Street from GB General Business to R-3 Multi-Family; denied by Planning and voluntarily withdrawn by the applicant
- **PC-2023-16** – to rezone 601-607 W Chestnut Street from R-1A to R-2A, for an anticipated affordable housing project

The **Historic & Architectural Preservation Commission** is charged with protecting and enhancing structures, sites, and areas that are reminders of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state, or national history. The HAPC oversees the City's historic and architectural preservation code, which is embedded within the Oxford Zoning Code. The HAPC frequently references its Uptown Historic District Building Inventory as well as Architectural Design Guidelines when reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs), which are required for any exterior change to structures falling within any one of the City's three historic districts. The bulk of applications considered usually center around the Uptown business core.

The HAPC consists of seven members, including one member of the Planning Commission and one Council representative.

In 2023, a total of 9 COA cases were submitted for HAPC consideration. Seven of these cases were devoted to considering new business signage in the Uptown area. Arguably one of the most significant decisions occurred in November, when the Commission voted to reclassify 110 E High Street (formerly Follett’s Bookstore) from “historic” to “historic non-contributing,” thus enabling a wider array of future (re)development possibilities with a greater potential scale of demolition.

The **Board of Zoning Appeals** is a quasi-judicial board charged with making case-by-case determinations on variances (i.e., official relief from code requirements), as well as to render decisions on appeals of administrator determinations. Per the City Charter, the BZA consists of five volunteer city residents who are appointed by Council to serve terms of three years.

2023 was a light year for BZA. The Board convened only four times to hear a total of four cases, all of which were for variance requests.

The **Board of Building Appeals** consists of five members appointed by City Council and hears appeals of any person affected by a decision of the Code Enforcement Officer with respect to Oxford’s local Property Maintenance Code, which is derived from the International Property Maintenance Code. The board convened on two occasions in 2023 to hear two appeals, one at 5252 College Corner Pike (bedroom access) and another at 204 N Main Street (insufficient ceiling height). In both cases, the decision of the Code Enforcement Officer was upheld.

The **Oxford Parking & Transportation Board** serves in an advisory capacity to City Council on matters regarding parking- or transportation-related projects and policies. The board consists of seven members, including one member of Council, one appointed by the Planning Commission, one appointed by the Environmental Commission, one Chamber of Commerce representative, and three citizen members appointed by Council. OPTAB convened on 6 occasions in 2023.

NOTABLE NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS:

48 E Park Place

A new four-story mixed use building was constructed along the east side of E Park Place, adjacent to Oxford Memorial Park. The new building includes ground floor commercial space as well as 6 residential apartment units on the upper three floors. A new tenant, OxVegas Chicken, plans to open soon on the ground floor.



Caroline Harrison Building

A new three-story mixed use building was constructed at the southeast corner of W High Street and College Avenue, immediately north of the Oxford Municipal Building. The new building includes space for up to three commercial tenants on the ground floor, one of which is presently occupied by the Bolin & Troy law firm. The upper two floors are occupied by 22 residential apartment units.



Owls Landing Subdivision

2023 saw significant progress on construction of public and private infrastructure to support the new Owls Landing subdivision. Once completed, the subdivision will contain a total of 86 new single-family homes. Apart from the supportive infrastructure, homebuilder DR Horton has also purchased 12 lots and pulled permits to begin home construction.



Talawanda Bus Garage

The Talawanda School District completed construction of a new bus maintenance facility and storage lot on University Park Boulevard, next to Talawanda High School.



BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY:

The Community Development Department serves as a clearinghouse for most building-related permits, including those for new building construction, modifications to existing buildings, electrical work, mechanical/HVAC work, and many other types of projects. The Department contracts with National Inspection Corporation (NIC) for review of plans for consistency with State-level codes, as well as to perform on-site inspections.

In 2023, a total of 343 building permits were issued, for a total estimated construction value of \$17.7 million. The Department collected \$315,600 in fees for these permits.

A total of 17 permits were issued for new residential buildings, including: 1 new three-family dwelling on E Withrow Street; 2 new houses built by Habitat for Humanity on Fuller Way in the Reckford Woods subdivision; 1 new house on Savannah Drive in the Heritage Vineyard

subdivision; 1 new house on Autumn Drive in the Muskopf Farms subdivision; and 12 new houses to be built by homebuilder DR Horton in the Owls Landing subdivision.

RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM:

The Community Development Department conducts regular inspections of all rental units inside the city limits. Property owners are required to obtain a permit in order for any residential unit to be rented out for compensation.

To remain in good standing, owners must renew their permits annually and have units undergo an inspection every 18–24 months. During an inspection, both the interior and exterior of a structure are evaluated. Following a 2015 decision in U.S. District Court, the City of Oxford has required owners to consent to the interior portion of the inspection. When consent is not given, only an exterior evaluation is performed, unless the City obtains an administrative search warrant from a court.

Since 2010, approximately 5,100 units within the city have obtained a rental permit at least once. The number of units currently possessing a valid permit is approximately 3,500. In 2023, a total of 2,997 rental inspections were conducted, of which 161 were exterior-only. Of these 2,997 inspections, 2,578 inspections passed and 419 failed (86% pass rate).

OTHER DUTIES:

Department staff were also busy this year working on the following:

- Scheduling of rental inspections, as well as invoicing and acceptance of payment for rental permit fees
- Preparation of meeting minutes, including “action minutes” for Planning Commission and BZA and “summary minutes” for HAPC
- Migration of electronic files to Microsoft 365
- Fulfilling public records requests, sometimes in response to appeals and/or litigation
- Monthly reporting on issued & finalized permits, inspections, and parcel transfers

STAFF:

Sam Perry, AICP is the **Community Development Director**. Sam provides executive oversight over all Department affairs. He also serves as the primary staff liaison to the Historic & Architectural Preservation Commission, and represents the overall City organization at committee meetings for the Ohio Kentucky Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments.



Zachary Moore, AICP is the **City Planner & GIS Coordinator**. Zachary takes a leading role in fulfilling the duties of Zoning Administrator with respect to the Oxford Zoning Code. Zach is the primary staff liaison to the Board of Zoning Appeals. He also oversees the City's ESRI ArcGIS systems and data, coordinating with other staff and departments as needed.



Derick Snodderly is the **Code Enforcement Officer**. Derick's primary duties include conducting annual inspections of fraternity houses as well as biennial inspections of all other rental units registered with the City. He also follows up on complaints from the public on issues involving property maintenance or zoning. Derick is certified by the International Code Council as an enforcement officer and inspector.



Eunike “Eni” Miller and Rebecca “Becky” Kolb are **Administrative Assistants**. They are responsible for a variety of tasks, including processing of applications, communication with applicants, attending board & commission meetings for the purpose of preparing minutes, and front desk coverage including fielding general inquiries from the public.



Reena Murphy is the **Sustainability Coordinator**. Though Reena’s position is housed under the umbrella of the City’s Manager’s Office, her work station is located inside the Community Development office; therefore, she will further assist front line staff while performing citywide functions for her role.

