

# MARYLAND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

Updated January 14, 2020

## Town of Oxford

*Founded 1688*

*Incorporated 1852*



PO BOX 339  
101 MARKET STREET  
OXFORD, MD 21654

Cheryl Lewis, Town Administrator  
oxfordclerk@goeaston.net  
410-226-5122

**CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**APPLICANT:** TOWN OF OXFORD

**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** TOWN OF OXFORD

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the application should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- Section A - Sustainable Community Renewal Applicant Information**
- Section B – Sustainable Community Renewal Report (Projects, Strategies and Partners)**
- Section C – Sustainable Community Renewal Action Plan Update (Matrix)**
- Section D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster**
- Section E – Signature Letter (acknowledging Disclosure Authorization and Certification)**
- Section F – CD-ROM:** The CD-ROM should include the following contents:
  - If requesting a boundary modification, map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Community
  - **GIS shapefiles of the modified Sustainable Community boundary (if requesting a modification) and other GIS related data**
  - Pictures (jpeg format) of your accomplished projects of the last five years (as indicated in Section B)
  - Digital copy of completed Sustainable Communities Renewal Application



**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information**

**A. Sustainable Community Boundary and Description**

- (1) Are you requesting any changes to your Sustainable Community boundary? Describe why or why not?

*No change is requested at this time, as the already designated areas consist of most of the commercially zoned properties within town and the town has virtually no room for growth beyond its current boundary.*

- (2) Include the following in as an attachment (if requesting a modification to your current boundary):

- a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map,
- b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

- (3) Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area: 162

- (4) Existing federal, state or local designations:

Main Street  Maple Street

**National Register Historic District**  Local Historic District  Arts & Entertainment District

State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District  BRAC  State Designated TOD

Other(s):

- (5) Describe the SC Area’s current demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, number of housing units, or other relevant factors). How have demographics changed in the last five years?

*The Demographics in the SC Area and the Town as a whole have changed very little in the last five years. As a small retirement community, the age, race, household size, and income see little variation over time. With some improvement in the economy, there has been a modest influx of younger residents, but only by a few residents.*

**B. Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:**

- (1) Describe any changes to the Applicant’s organizational structure. Specifically, how has membership of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup changed in the last five years? Who are/were the leaders, and how will/did the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?

*There has been no change to the Town’s organizational structure or Workgroup other than one elected official change and a few changes to board members.*

*Commissioners of Oxford*

*Gordon Graves, President*

*Gordon Fronk, Commissioner*

*John Pepe, Commissioner*

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

**Oxford Business Association**     *Ian Fleming- President (Robert Morris Inn)*  
*Phyllis Rambo - Administrator (Oxford Community Center)*  
*Joan Nubie-Miscall (Treasurer Chest Gift Shop)*  
*Wendy Palmer(Latitude 38 Restaurant)*  
*Judy Bixler (Oxford Bellevue Ferry)*  
*Graham Norbury (Brewers Boat Yard)*  
*Jane McCarthy (Benson Mangold Realty)*  
*Kathy Harig (Mystery Loves Company Bookstore)*  
*Ben Gibson (Sandaway Lodge)*

**Oxford Planning Commission**     *David Baker*  
*James Reed*  
*Stephen Mroczek*  
*Ed Miller*  
*Bruce Beglin*

**Oxford Historic District Commission**  
*Tom Costigan*  
*Suzanne Litty*  
*James Deerin*  
*Jennifer Stanley*  
*Patricia Ingram*

**Oxford Staff**     *Cheryl Lewis - Town Administrator*  
*Scott Delude - Public Works Superintendent*  
*Patrick Maxwell - Chief of Police*

**Talbot County Economic Development - Cassandra Vanhooser**  
*Samuel Shoge*

**Talbot County GIS Manager**     *Mark Cohoon*

**Citizens**     *Ray Stevens (Benson Mangold Real Estate)*  
*Tim Kearns (Architect)*  
*Suzanne Beyda (Parks n Rec)*

- (2) What have been the strengths and challenges of the capacity of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

*The most significant strength is the desire of all to see individual businesses succeed and the understanding that it takes the success of all to make our little community successful.*

*The biggest challenge, although we consider it a positive challenge, would be the staff requirements to acquire grant funding, manage and develop projects, promote opportunities, assist businesses through the improvement permitting process and to basically make sure all are aware of the Oxford Sustainability Plan and the advantages available because of the town's participation in the State sponsored program.*

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

- (3) How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to the Sustainable Communities Action Plan update? On which existing local plans (comprehensive plans, economic development plans, sector plans, etc.) is the Sustainable Communities Action Plan based?

*The Sustainable Communities Action Plan takes its guidance from the Oxford Comprehensive Plan, along with more recent planning documents, including the 2016 Oxford Historic Commercial District Plan and the 2017 Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan, along with the Oxford Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study, which influences green infrastructure and resilience planning. These studies are hereby incorporated into the Sustainable Communities Action Plan in their entirety. Administration communicates regularly with stakeholders on various action plan topics. The stakeholders are updated on accomplishments at Commissioner Meetings and special informative meetings held at the Community Center for this purpose. In addition, informal impromptu meetings are held to review and or gather information throughout the year, including a meeting prior to submittal of this plan to review the past five years and discuss community positives and negatives, some of which were incorporated into this plan prior to submittal.*

*The three more recent Oxford Plans mentioned above were all developed through processes involving public input and community meetings, keeping the town residents and business stakeholders actively involved in the Town's economic development and sustainability planning.*

- (4) Would you like any technical assistance from State agencies to help expand the capacity of your SC Workgroup or implement your SC plan? Please describe with which revitalization strategies you would like assistance.

*The Town feels confident in the ability to acquire support, assistance, and advice from State agencies whenever there is a need. We always receive excellent support from State Planning, Natural Resources and DHCD. For example, recent changes in processing project reviews at the MD DHCD for MHT approvals for our Mini Grant program has simplified our application process, allowing us to better serve our members.*

*We do rely on our County for GIS assistance and members of our Workgroup have a very good working relationship with our County Economic Development and Tourism Department currently. If this relationship was to change in the future, this could present areas of need for the town.*

# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT**

## **PART I: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT**

**Descriptive Narrative: Please list the most significant accomplishments that apply.**

### **Accomplishment 1:**

*Outcomes: **Maintain and enhance the economic viability of the Town of Oxford***

***Maintain and enhance small business opportunities serving citizens and tourist***

***Encourage private sector investment in the community, its history and commercial endeavors***

**Project #1** *Completion of the **Oxford Historic Commercial District Strategic Plan for Revitalization.***

*The citizens desired a comprehensive look at how the town intended to achieve the desires found in the SC and more specifically concerns regarding the dilapidated commercial structure known as the Oxford MEWS. Utilizing matching funds from the Maryland Department of Commerce MEDAAF Grant Program, the town was able to develop a revitalization plan with community participation that provides additional guidance on the economic development of the Historic Commercial District and preservation of the Historic Commercial Structures, an area of need identified in the SC plan.*

**Project #2** *Acquisition and Stabilization of the **Historic Oxford Mews.***

*This multiuse Historic Commercial Structure, the anchor of the Historic Commercial District, had fallen into disrepair after many years of vacancy and neglect by the property owner. The citizen concern for this specific structure was the main driving force behind the Town's desire to become a State Designated Sustainable Community. Following entry into the SC program the Town was successful in acquiring multiple grants, allowing for the acquisition and stabilization of the historic building. The Town is currently advertising for proposals from private entities for the purchase and final development of the structure as a mixed-use commercial building.*

**Project #3** *Established a **Mini-Grant Program for Interior/Exterior Improvements** that offers small matching funds to local businesses for necessary improvements. With grant funding from the MD DHCD Legacy Program, the town has successfully operated this program since its inception in 2016, having supported 8 local business owners with improvements to existing business establishments or off setting of startup cost for new businesses.*

**Partners:** *Maryland Department of Commerce MEDAAF Grant Program*

*Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development SD and Legacy Programs*

**Impact:** *This influx of funding and attention to the Historic Commercial District has prompted private investment in the community, with improvements to long vacant structures and opening of new businesses. The attention to economic development and availability of grant funding also influenced two Easton, MD restaurant owners to acquire and reopen closed waterfront restaurants in Oxford, revitalizing the 'waterfront dining' experience for locals and visitors.*

## **Accomplishment 2:**

*Outcomes:*

***Preserve the Town of Oxford and its 330-year history as one of Maryland's first Port Town  
Maintain and enhance the traditional Maritime Industries, including Boat Building and Maintenance  
Continue to support the historic tradition of Watermen who have made their living on the local waters***

***Project#1:*** Seeking answers to this very difficult problem, the town was successful in receiving assistance from the MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Service Grant Program for the **Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan**, which provides an extensive study of all the elements of the Port of Oxford, including its history as a working waterfront, the current economics of its waterfront, the threats climate change will pose to its viability, and possible strategies and implementations to support this initiative. This plan will be incorporated into Oxford Comprehensive Plan Upgrade and will be used as a guiding document going forward.

***Project#2:*** The Town continues to work with the MD DNR Waterway Improvement Program to enhance its areas of Public Access to the water, a State initiative. The successful relocation and construction of **a new boat launch at the historic Tilghman Street Docks** offers a greatly improved access to the water for local and visiting boaters, replacing a very old and difficult to use launch. As a bonus, it was necessary to close off the old town launch, which adjoined a private restaurant marina structure housing Oxford's nationally recognized Scottish Highland Creamery. Working with DNR it became evident the most inexpensive way to close the launch was the addition of a simple **dock style overhang allowing public access to visitors wishing to simply sit by the water** and enjoy the views of water and wildlife, which include watching the local watermen coming and going, sailboats leaving the nearby marinas and if you are lucky the launching of one of the local coast guard boats.

***Project#3: Improvements to the Oxford Customs House***, a simple historic replica of the original, which was established by a group of local citizens many years ago to provide an educational component near the original Port entrance to Oxford. Through the Oxford Mini Grant Program, the Town was able to rehabilitate the structure inside and out and is currently in the process of acquiring an HVAC system to better preserve the waterfront structure and adding a glass door to better provide visitors a glimpse inside the historic replica. The town is also in the process of refurbishing a vintage **Counting House** to be placed at the Tilghman Street Dock, and working with museum members to provide educational signage in support of the historic tradition of making a living on the local waters.

*Partners: Maryland DNR Chesapeake & Coastal Services  
NOAA US Department of Commerce  
Oxford Museum*

*Impact: There is a continual need to address the economic viability of the Oxford Waterfront and continuing to investigate the best ways to attract visitors and future residents, along with providing public access to the water and areas of interest for visitors is a high priority.*



### **Accomplishment 3:**

*Outcome:*

***Maintain and improve the environmental stability of the community, through policies, programs, and infrastructure improvements, including public education and outreach***

***Plan and Prepare for future infrastructure needs of the community with regards to Climate Change***

***Project#1:*** *The upgrade of Oxford's Wastewater Treatment Plant to Enhanced Nutrient Removal, which will provide the highest level of nutrient reduction possible, is well underway with a completion anticipated April 2020. This project was a huge undertaking both physically and financially for this small community of 565 homes, but an improvement that will have a positive impact to the waters of the Town Creek and provide a long-term asset for the citizens. The large financial investment in this infrastructure has the added stability of being located outside of the mapped Oxford Floodplain and is located on elevated land, thereby assuring the ability to continue this necessary service well into the future.*

*Partners:*

*MD Department of the Environment*

*USDA Rural Development*

***Project#2:*** *Following the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funded **Oxford Stormwater and Flood Management Study** completed in 2013, there were several identified areas for potential stormwater retention that could assist the Town with the nuisance flooding experienced during heavy precipitation including a large County owned property to the east of Oxford. The Town was offered the opportunity in 2014 to participate on the County's initial Work Group for the development of what was designated to be a conservation park on this 86-acre parcel. The end result of this planning was the passive **Oxford Conservation Park** that not only provides a recreational amenity to the Town and surrounding community, and an unprecedented attraction in Talbot County, but also includes a very large pond which receives all the stormwater runoff from the 86 acre formally agricultural parcel, thereby reducing the impacts from precipitation to the Oxford drainage system, which had been negatively impacted by over run ditches from this area prior to the construction of the pond.*

*Management Study Partners:*

*National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*

*Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

*Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Easton MD*

*Preservation Green, Oxford MD*

*GMB Architects/Engineers, Salisbury MD*

*University of Maryland Extension - Talbot County Master Gardeners*

*University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center*

*Conservation Park Partners:*

*Talbot County Council, Public Works, Parks and Recreation*

*Oxford staff and citizens*

***Project#3:*** *A second area of potential stormwater retention identified in the study was the Causeway Park located at the intersection of the State Road 333 and the Town's South Morris Street. The town worked diligently over a three-year period to successfully submit a project to MD DNR Coastal & Chesapeake Services Program for the construction of a substantial stormwater retention system that would assist in nuisance flooding and protect the waters of Town Creek from the extensive sediment runoff being received during heavy rainfalls. Through a 2016 Watershed Assistance Grant funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust the town was able to acquire engineering **Design for the Causeway Stormwater Retention** project. Following up with an application to the MD DNR Coastal & Chesapeake Services Program and award in 2018 for the **Oxford Causeway Stormwater Bioretention Construction**, the Town was able to integrate two new substantial retention areas, and expand and improve existing retention swales in order to increase stormwater retention capacity, improve water quality at final discharge to local waters, and increase coastal resiliency for a critical area of the community. This completed*

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

*project has greatly improved nuisance flooding from heavy precipitation.*

*Partners:*

*Chesapeake Bay Trust - Watershed Assistance Grant Program*

*MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Services*

*Impact: All of the projects addressed above directly impact Oxford's ability to be a leader in addressing the sustainability of a single community facing the future through both planning and action.*

*It is also worthy to note the contributions of the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Easton MD and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for their efforts in assisting eastern shore communities with Resilience and Sustainability Education and Planning Initiatives. The Town of Oxford is an active member in ESCAP (Eastern Shore Climate Adaption Program) and the Healthy Waters Initiative and benefits greatly from this participation.*

**Descriptive Narrative: Please use this section to describe any major outcomes or projects from your last Sustainable Communities Action Plan that have NOT been accomplished and why.**

*Outcome:*

***Preserve and encourage more diverse housing stock to provide affordable housing opportunities  
Encourage and attract year around homeowners and year around business***

*Narrative:*

*The Town is still working towards achieving these outcomes, and although there have been a few successes in these areas, acknowledges that there is still work to be done. The attention to the Historic Commercial District has prompted one historic structure owner to complete renovations to his vacant building, which now provides two new rental apartments and a rental unit for a local artist. A second historic mixed-use structure changed has changed hands twice over the last few years, received a major renovation to the residential rental apartments, opened a season coffee shop, and is currently in the permitting phase for a small café. One of the newly located waterfront restaurants has been successful in staying open 10 to 11 months out of the year, which has provided an additional winter dining location for local residents.*

*Outcome:*

***Maintain and enhance the traditional Maritime Industries, including Boat Building and Maintenance***

*Narrative:*

*Again, an outcome the Town is still working on. The successful completion of the Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan is certainly a huge step in the right direction, as have been the improvements to public infrastructure, but there is still much work to be done to secure the long term success of this valuable component of Oxford's economy.*

*Outcome:*

***Preservation and rehabilitation of historic residential and commercial structures***

*Narrative:*

*The town has had several successes with preservation and rehabilitation of historic commercial structures, but has yet to establish a means to assist private home owners to maintain their historic homes. Many of the historic homes do have owners who are financially able to keep their homes in good condition, but with an aging population we also have retired homeowners on fixed budgets who also struggle to keep up with the exterior maintenance required for large historic homes. The Town will continue to encourage the preservation of commercial structures and continue to seek opportunities to assist residential homeowners.*

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT

## PART II: COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Has there been an improvement in water quality?	X			Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade - Enhanced Nutrient Removal prior to discharge in to Town Creek  Causeway Stormwater Biorention Ponds - series of biorention ponds that remove nutrients from stormwater runoff prior to final discharge into Town Creek
2. Has the amount of impervious surface in your Community been reduced? (Amount in SF)		X		Not by a quantifiable amount as the community already mandates a minimum of 40 % impervious on residential property and 50% on commercial property and also does not have a significant amount of paved property. New parking required for town amenities was addressed with a grass parking lot as opposed to paving.
3. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your park and/ or recreational green space?		X		Aside from the addition of the 86-acre conservation park in the County adjoining the town, there has been no additional green space added. There have been improvements, including the addition of a Dog Park, reconstruction of the Community Gardens, creation of grass parking for these recreational areas, tree planting and new slide for the Town Park, and improvements to the walking tract at the Causeway Park.
4. Did the Sustainable Community implement any recycling or waste reduction programs?		X		The Town has implemented a single stream curbside recycle program as part of its normal trash pickup. The Town implemented improvements to the location of the County recycle dumpsters to allow better use of the facility. The Town acquired a commercial shredder to allow citizens regular access to a shredder.
5. Do all residents have access to healthy food options (i.e. fresh food grocery stores, farmers markets etc.) within the Sustainable Community?			N/A	The Town is not large enough to support an actual grocery store. The local market does offer locally raised/caught products and the Oxford Community Center offers a weekly farmers market in the summer.
<b>OTHER:</b>				

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>ECONOMY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>
1. Has there been an increase in the number of new businesses in your Main Street/ Commercial District?	X			The local Treasure Chest Gift shop relocated into a larger location in the Historic Commercial District and the owner also rented a newly refurbished commercial space for a workshop. A Vintage Furniture Store opened in the prior gift shop location. Two vacant waterfront restaurant locations were reopened by new owners, Doc's Sunset Grill and Capsize. One new coffee shop opened, the Oxford Social. A former boat rental location opened a Bike and Kayak rental shop at the waterfront. Coastal Retreat a wellness studio in Easton MD added a location in Oxford in a historic building located on Tilghman Street, offering yoga, pilates, massages, etc. Prior to these changes, business had been stagnant in Oxford.
2. Did the Municipality/ Sustainable Community area receive any designations that support local economic development?		X		The Town has not applied for any further designations but is certainly considering the option to seek opportunities that support economic development.
3. Has there been an increase in foot traffic in the Main Street/commercial district?	X			The Historic Commercial Area supported the Oxford Market, Bookstore, and Museum and is the location of Town Park, so foot traffic gravitated to the area, but tourists were often disappointed with the lack of offerings. The relocation of the Gift Shop and the opening of the Coffee Shop, along with the promise of development of the MEWS and the proposed Town Park Café, has revitalized the area into a more lively and active location. The addition of the oceanfront style Bike and Kayak rent shack at the Ferry Dock waterfront has increased recreational use in this area.
4. Have the number of commercial vacancies decreased?	X			Of the four under-utilized historic mixed-use buildings in the Historic Commercial District, one has been completely rehabilitated and is occupied, one has opened its previously closed doors to house the Gift Shop, one has rehabilitated the residential rental units, opened a small coffee shop and is in the process of rehabilitating the main space for a café, and the last, the Town owned MEWS, is currently seeking a purchaser for final development of the downstairs storefronts and upstairs housing. On the waterfront, two vacant restaurants reopened under new ownership.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

5. Has there been an increase in local jobs within the Sustainable Community for its residents?	X			Although most of the new small businesses are owner operated, some provide seasonal employment opportunities. The two reopened restaurants on the other hand do provide multiple employment opportunities locally, employing 20 to 30 people each during prime season. The largest marina also reports that they have increased their employment but 3 or 4 over the last few years with an improving economy.
<b>OTHER:</b>				

<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>
1. Has the amount of bike trails/paths increased? How many linear feet do the trails cover?	X			The Town of Oxford remains a completely bike able/walkable town. The addition of the adjoining County Park offers a new destination with an estimated mile of new bike/walking tract.
2. Have there been improvements to the public transit infrastructure?			N/A	The Town has no transit infrastructure or the need for one. It is worthy to note that the Town has been in coordination with the State funded Electric Charging Station initiative and is currently awaiting installation of charging stations at the far east and west sides of town.
3. Has there been an increase in sidewalks? (Amount in linear feet)		X		Again, the Town is currently a completely walkable community. The historic brick sidewalks are surveyed annually and spot relaying of the historic bricks is completed every spring.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

4. Have there been any roadway improvements that support “Complete” or “Green” streets?		X		With the historically narrow streets, this would be difficult to accomplish. There have been infrastructure improvements to street drainage at the Causeway, which will improve water quality.
5. Has traffic congestion along major roads decreased? (Amount in percent)			N/A	There is one State road entering Town that dead-ends at the opposite end of Town at the Ferry Dock. Congestion is not an issue in this small community.
<b>OTHER:</b>				
<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan’s desired outcomes?</b>
1. Have any residential facades been improved?	X			As detailed earlier in the report, the Town has yet to establish a mechanism for assisting with residential facades, but it is an identified area for consideration. Even without this type of assistance, private investment in residential facades has been substantial with numerous historic home refurbishing projects haven taken place.
2. Has the home ownership rate increased?			N/A	Most homes in Oxford are either owner occupied or are second homes; there are not a lot of rental homes. The demographics of the community do not support a need to increase home ownership, although there is a need for affordable homes. There are many properties on the market, but the real estate values found in a waterfront community do not support entry-level home ownership.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>3. Has there been an increase in the number of housing units in the Sustainable Community area? What number and/or percent are affordable?</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>Although it is a minor increase, the completion of the private owned Fowler Building in the Historic Commercial District has provided two new reasonable rental apartments. The rehabilitation of the rental units at the Town Park Building has improved the quality of three reasonable priced rental units in the same area. In addition, there have been a few mid-priced priced home infill projects.</p>
<p>4. Has there been demolition of blighted properties?</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The acquisition of the blighted Historic MEWS by the Town, strategic demolition of the non-historic appendages, stabilization of the structure and refurbishing of the façade, has removed the most noticeable blighted property in the Town. The second building on the same block, known as the Fowler Building, had been gutted, partially renovated and vacant for many years when the owner ran into permitting issues for the structure. With renewed interest in the Historic Area, the property owner reached out to the Town and was assisted through the permitting process in order to complete the interior and create useable spaces for both the owner and renters.</p>
<p>5. Has the residential vacancy rate decreased?</p>			<p>N/A</p>	<p>This is a difficult question to answer, as the types of vacancies found in Oxford differed from most communities. The improved commercial structures mentioned have added opportunities for rental tenants, but the bulk of actual residential vacancies/for sale properties are second homes for owners that rarely visit, creating a lack of year around residents to contribute to the functions of the community. There have been a few second homes purchased by new year around residents, but the number is less than a handful. As the economy improves and the revitalization of the Town into a vibrant year around location continues, there is hope that more second homes will be converted into year around residences.</p>
<p><b>OTHER:</b></p>				
<p><b>QUALITY OF LIFE</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p><b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b></p>
<p>1. Has there been a decrease in crime rate?</p>			<p>N/A</p>	<p>The Town of Oxford has very little crime to speak of and the Town's small Police Department provides ample support for such a small area to continue this pattern.</p>



Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>2. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your public spaces (i.e. museums, community centers, public plazas)?</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The Oxford Museum recently underwent a revitalization of their interior space offering a new look at the History of Oxford. The Museum was also successful in soliciting the Smithsonian Water/Ways Exhibit, which although temporary, provided a unique demonstration for the summer of 2019. The soon to be constructed Oxford Central Park will provide new public space and will include ‘Central Park’ like activities, outdoor chess, bocce ball, table tennis and walking and dining amenities.</p>
<p>3. Has there been an increase in public art/ arts &amp; entertainment programs/venues (i.e. murals, movie theatre, music events)?</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The Oxford Community Center (OCC) has continually expanded their offerings to the Oxford Citizens over the last few years. The Tred Avon Players have been long-time residents of the Community Center, performing four classic plays each year. In addition, the OCC has implemented seasonal showings of classic Movies in the summer and winter, has increased the number of Musical performances offered throughout the year, and has increased their educational offerings, with programs from Wooden Boat Building to International Cooking Classes available. The Inns have also begun offering professional cooking lessons in the off-season to promote activity at their businesses.</p>
<p>4. How many historic properties were renovated/improved?</p>	<p>X</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The vacant/blighted Oxford MEWS (historically a commercial storefront and anchor of the Historic Commercial District) has been acquired by the Town, completely stabilized, the façade has been refurbished, and it is ready for interior finish by a potential developer.</li> <li>- The vacant/gutted Fowler Building (original home of the Oxford Bank) has been completely finished and the apartments and office space is rented or in use.</li> <li>- The Town Park Building (originally home of the Naval Academy) has a new owner, the residential apartments are completely rented, the smaller commercial space houses the season Oxford Social coffee shop and plans are underway to renovate the larger commercial space.</li> <li>- The Mystery Loves Company Bookstore (originally the Oxford Post Office) has benefitted from the Mini Grant Program in doing minor improvements to its historic entrance and its side access ramp offering better/safer access to its customers.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Are there any residential health and wellness opportunities in place (i.e. athletic facilities, recreational indoor/ outdoor courses or groups)?</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>The Oxford Community Center offers multiple health and wellness opportunities throughout the year, including Tai Chi, Core and Muscle Strength Training, and Fitness Training and Nutrition Tips from a professional Instructor. The Town refurbished its Tennis Courts and Basketball Courts in 2017, adding the ability to play Pickle Ball on the Basketball Courts, which has prompted a citizen “Pickle Ball Group” that plays every Monday morning. The new Coastal Retreat Studio and Wellness Center offers Yoga and Pilates several times a week. The new Oxford Conservation Park offers a large walking tract in an outdoor setting.</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>LAND USE/ LOCAL PLANNING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>
1. Have there been any infill developments?	X			The Town of Oxford is virtually completely developed with very little room for expansion, but there have been three new residential homes built on small infill building lots within developed neighborhoods.
2. Has there been an increase in the amount of preserved/protected land?	X			Although not within the Oxford Sustainable Community, the new County owned Oxford Conservation Park, permanently preserves 86 acres that had been slated for development at one time. This large conservation of agricultural land on the west side of Oxford actually protects the historic community from unfettered growth, as it is surrounded by water on the other three sides.
3. Have there been any developments hindered by growth constraints?		X		A single undeveloped parcel lies outside of the Oxford municipal boundary with an owner who has expressed a desire to be annexed in the past, and the parcel is designated as a potential growth area for the town, but there has been no interest expressed by the property owner in recent times. The lack of expansion for the commercial marinas is also continuing concern, as it becomes difficult to increase storage and production areas within parcels surrounded by residential properties.
4. Have there been any zoning or any policy changes that have fostered growth in your Sustainable Community?	X	X		There has not been any significant zoning changes in the last few years, other than changing some developed parcels from the Critical Area designation of LDA (limited) to IDA (intense) allowing a little more freedom for improvements and expansions on these already developed properties. The Strategic Planning for Historic Commercial and Working Waterfront provided information that although not actually policy, are documents that will foster infill growth.
5. Have there been any significant improvements to the municipal infrastructure within the Sustainable Community (i.e. street lighting, water/sewer lines)?	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Oxford Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgraded to an Enhanced Nutrient Removal System is near completion.</li> <li>- The Town constructed a new boat launch and repaved the parking lot at the Tilghman Docks.</li> <li>- The Town finished its incremental replacement of pilings at its town docks and has incorporated electric service for the use of the licensed watermen who rent slips.</li> <li>- The Town has continued its every two year street improvement program, replacing water lines and repaving a few streets each time.</li> <li>- The Town has continued its annual improvements to the historic brick sidewalks.</li> <li>- The Town constructed multiple large stormwater retention areas to reduce nuisance flooding.</li> </ul>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>COMPETITIVE FUNDING:</b> Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.	<b>Source                      (federal, state,                      foundation, etc.)</b>	<b>Amount                      Received</b>	<b>If no funding was received, what                      technical or other assistance from                      the state would help with future                      applications?</b>	<b>Other Notes</b>
<b>Community Legacy (CL):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oxford Façade Mini Grant Program</b></li> <li>• <b>Oxford Interior Exterior Mini Grant</b></li> <li>• <b>Oxford Interior Exterior Mini Grant</b></li> </ul>	DHCD	\$50,000 \$50,000 \$40,000		Initial Façade Program began in 2016, was incorporated into the Interior/Exterior Program in 2017, and has recently been awarded continuing funding.
<b>Strategic Demolition Fund (SDF):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Historic Mews Acquisition</b></li> <li>• <b>Mews Design</b></li> <li>• <b>Mews Stabilization</b></li> </ul>	DHCD	\$300,000 \$ 75,000 \$175,000		Multiple funding requests over a three-year period have allowed the town to reach its goal of preserving the historic structure and getting it into a condition that would attractive to a developer.
<b>Community Safety &amp; Enhancement Program:</b>	MDOT			
<b>Maryland Bikeways Program:</b>	MDOT			
<b>Sidewalk Retrofit Program:</b>	MDOT			
<b>Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund:</b> <b>Water Quality Loan Forgiveness:</b>    <b>Bay Restoration Funding Program:</b>	MDE MDE    MDE	1.3 Million 1.3 Million    65% of cost @ \$12,000,000		This has been awarded for the future Morris Street Water Main rehabilitation work scheduled for 2020.     The upgraded to the Wastewater Treatment Plant is at an estimated total coast of 18 million currently, the BRF funding awarded covers approximately 65% of cost.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>Other Funding Programs:</b> <i>examples are U.S. HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or grants from USDA, EPA, Appalachian Regional Commission, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Maryland Heritage Areas Association, Preservation Maryland, Safe Routes to School, Maryland Rural Development Corporation, Maryland Energy Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, etc.</i>				
<b>USDA Rural Development Loan</b>	Federal	\$ 1,964,000		USDA provided matching funds in the way of grants and loans for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade
<b>USDA Rural Development Grant</b>	Federal	\$ 1,935,000		
<b>USDA Rural Development Loan</b>	Federal	\$ 1,735,000		
<b>USDA Rural Development Grant</b>	Federal	\$ 500,000		
<b>National Fish and Wildlife Technical Assistance</b>	Federal/State		Provided technical assistance to develop the Oxford Stormwater and Flood Mgmt Financing Study	The assistance involved multiple entities as mentioned in the prior project discussion.
<b>Watershed Assistance Grant Program/CBT</b>	State/Trust	40,000		Engineering to allow the town to seek construction funds.
<b>MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Services</b>	State	650,000		Construction of a series of stormwater bioretention ponds.
<b>MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Services</b>	State	52,000		Stormwater and Shoreline Infrastructure Master Plan
<b>MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Services</b>	State	35,000		Working Waterfront Strategic Planning Study
<b>MD DNR Community Resilience Grant Program</b>	State	25,000		Prepare application to FEMA's Community Rating System
<b>Maryland Department of Commerce / MEDAAF</b>	State	20,000		Historic Commercial District Strategic Planning
<b>Maryland Energy</b>	State	25,000		Replace HVAC in Municipal Building
<b>MD Parks and Playgrounds</b>	State State	50,000		Resurface Tennis Courts New Central Park 2020
<b>MD Waterway Improvement Program</b>	State	312,000		New Boat Launch and Viewing Dock

**COMPETITIVE FUNDING:** Are there any types of projects/needs for which your Sustainable Community needs funding; however, there isn't a funding source?

As mentioned previously the Town is still seeking a means to provide assistance to historic homeowners for façade improvements, especially for those that struggle with the cost of the upkeep of large historic homes.

The Town has also made multiple attempts at securing tourism funding from the Heritage Program to support a unique guided tour of our Historic Town. The size of the community and the limited funding make it difficult to provide visitors the necessary personal interaction that will prompt them to come back and to tell others of their adventures, hence the concept of an interactive tour. There is currently a plan for a complete tour of the community utilizing outdoor solar powered boxes with recorded messages similar to what you might find in a museum or a remote park. The idea is to provide a visitor the ability to wander the Town and listen to messages of history and heritage and also sustainability efforts. It has been recommended by grantors that the Town should instead utilize the latest technology and produce a walking tour for cell phone use, which although certainly less expensive, the Town feels diminishes the charm of Oxford. We feel that stepping back in time and turning off electronics to experience the history is a more rewarding approach to telling our story. Economic Development dollars that would entertain such a venture would be welcomed.

**INSERT**

**“ACCOMPLISHMENTS”**

**Attached in separate folder**

# OXFORD'S SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

## UPDATED 2020

*To be incorporated into the renewal application for Maryland Sustainable Communities Designation*

### SUPPORTING EXISTING COMMUNITIES & REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

#### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPALS

**The guiding principal for the Town of Oxford as defined in their Comprehensive Plan is as follows:**

Preserve the current unique small town character of Oxford, strictly regulating and controlling future expansion, while maintaining its historic neighborhoods, its commercial areas, its recreational facilities, its environmentally sensitive areas, its economic stability, and its diversity.

Additional goals within our Comprehensive Plan include the following:

**POPULATION** - Preferred growth should be focused within the existing corporate boundaries of the Town so that both public facilities and approved land uses remain adequate to support a diverse population.

**NATURAL RESOURCES** - Protect the natural resources and sensitive environmental features in and around Oxford and to encourage their proper utilization.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** - *Encourage and preserve a sound economy, including the hospitality industry, maritime-based services and boatyards, to maintain an economic base that is responsive to the needs of Oxford's population and provides a strong tax base for the town.*

**PUBLIC SERVICES** - Provide, in an efficient and professional manner, an adequate level of those services, facilities, and utilities, which are normally provided by local governments of similar scale for the safety, health, and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

**HOUSING** Maintain Oxford's tradition of neighborhoods containing well-maintained, single-family owner occupied residential properties and preserve the integrity of the historically significant structures. *Provide the opportunity for affordable housing to support the delivery of public services.*

**TRANSPORTATION** - Endeavor to keep Oxford free of all types of vehicular congestion and to *provide safe and easy pedestrian and bicycle access to all parts of the community.*

**LAND USE** - Maintain a planned pattern of development within the Town's existing corporate boundaries and in any land that may be annexed that is compatible with both the efficient utilization of land and water and the Town's traditional neighborhood character.

**CULTURAL** - Support, protect and enhance Oxford's cultural and historic heritage and maintain a balance of cultural activities and resources appropriate to residents of all ages, national origins, and economic levels.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION** - Work cooperatively with Talbot County, the State of Maryland and other entities, including neighboring communities, to provide Oxford residents with cost-effective services including police and fire protection, emergency medical services and road maintenance and repair.

**FISCAL** - Conservatively and responsibly manage the Town's revenues and expenditures to maintain a favorable balance between those revenues and the expenditures necessary to meet the community's needs.

**RECREATION** - Enhance the public open space and existing parks to encourage their continued use by members of the community.

The Town of Oxford does not expect to experience significant growth over the next 20 years as detailed within their Comprehensive Plan. The plan identifies approximately 64 infill lots with potential for development, but clearly states this is an aggressive number as it anticipates subdivision of privately held large landscaped residential lots, which is very unlikely to happen. The mapped growth area, as identified in the Town and County Comprehensive Plans, includes areas that are constrained by wetlands and critical areas regulations, with the largest portion of this area having recently been placed in an easement by the County and currently under design as an 86-acre passive park. This park area, along with the wetland component on the opposite side of State Road 333, creates a virtually impassable greenbelt, presenting a natural boundary for the town. Per the Comprehensive Plan, there is one remaining 12-acre parcel that could be developed in the future, but with Maryland Critical Areas LDA designation, it would still be limited to 50 or less homes.

As a waterfront community almost completely within the Critical Areas, the limited infill and new growth allowing for a small amount of expansion, while preserving and protecting our fragile environment, emphasizes the need for focus on redevelopment within the town to strengthen the sustainability of our community.

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that Oxford should strive to encourage the continued economic viability of its downtown merchants and its boating and marine uses that have been in existence since the 1600's. Oxford's maritime and water-based history should be preserved.

The following objectives have been identified as important for economic development:

- Encourage and maintain a level of commercial activity primarily oriented towards meeting the needs of Oxford's population and secondarily towards serving the needs of persons from areas outside the Town's corporate boundaries. Easton and Cambridge are to be regarded as the providers of the major shopping and employment centers for Oxford's population, *but Oxford employment opportunities are to be encouraged.*
- Encourage the moderate expansion of the town's hospitality industry, such as restaurants and tourism related commercial uses, as well as boat building and marine maintenance and repair industries and other water oriented commercial activity.
- Encourage the flexible use of existing residential buildings and accessory structures to facilitate home occupations and home offices that are compatible with adjacent residential uses.
- Encourage high tech, computer-based businesses and related employment opportunities.
- Within the framework of this Plan, the Town should maintain a flexible attitude toward potential new businesses locating in the Town. *In that regard, the Town should consider implementing flexible public parking standards, such as waivers, shared parking arrangements, etc., where appropriate.*



## INFRASTRUCTURE

The Town of Oxford supports its infrastructure with a small yet creative Public Works Department that monitors and maintains all town infrastructure, including annual inspection and maintenance and a long term Capital Improvement Plan to identify and address future infrastructure needs. Recent infrastructure investments and planned investments include the following:

**Streets** - The town implemented a rolling street improvement plan as part of its Capital Improvement Plan, setting aside funding in each budget year to resurface roads and replace water mains at the same time with the goal of systematically improve the aged infrastructure. Over the past 5 years, the town has been doing a series of streets/waterlines every other year.

**Sidewalks** - Throughout the town, historic brick sidewalks line many of the streets, in a variety of designs and conditions. Previous efforts at replacing the sidewalks have produced very costly project initiatives that have failed at some point in the process. In 2014 it was determined that maintaining the historic sidewalks on an annual basis of spot repairs reusing whatever bricks are in place would make it possible to preserve this unique historic element, while also improving the usability of the sidewalks. Additional designated funding is now included in the annual budget to address a prioritized block of sidewalk each year, with the intention of having a rolling sidewalk improvement plan like the streets.

**Water** - Along with maintaining the water main infrastructure as mentioned previously, the town has recently incorporated an Arsenic Reduction System into its water service facilities, per recent EPA mandates. The requirements for this improvement have been and will continue to be a burden on the citizens as the debt for the improvement, along with the extensive cost of the replacement filter media are substantial. The town is currently working with engineers to investigate possible alternative filter media to reduce this cost along with producing a Preliminary Engineering Report covering the whole Oxford Water Delivery System, in order to identify and prioritize the future infrastructure needs of the system. The town has secured loan/grant funding from the MDE to upgrade the historic Water Main servicing the Oxford Historic District and is soliciting for construction at the beginning of 2020.

**Wastewater** - The town's lagoon-based water treatment plant, originally constructed in 1963 and upgraded in 1981 will cease to exist April 2020, having been replaced by the upgraded Enhanced Nutrient Removal Wastewater Treatment System. Funding for this major undertaking of approximately 18 million dollars was achieved through percentage-based MD Bay Restoration Funding and matching funds from USDA Rural Development. The end result will be additional debt of an estimated \$ 2.5 million for users. In anticipation of this upgrade, annual rate increases were implemented beginning in 2012 to offset the final cost.

These infrastructure improvements absolutely create additional cost for the individual users, but through responsible actions of the Commissioners and the successes in receiving substantial grant funding for the projects, the impacted has certainly been lessened from what could have potentially been considerably more costly to the residential and business community had the town waited for a State mandate to prompt an upgrade.

**Stormwater/Shoreline** - In 2012 the Oxford took on the huge initiative of identifying its vulnerabilities to increasing high water risks with an application to Maryland DNR for a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation supported technical assistance grant. This award kicked started the communities efforts to identify issues, prioritize improvements and plan for future impacts. The initial findings are available in the EFC Oxford Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study of 2013. Following the study Oxford following study recommendations adopted the Stormwater Management Shoreline Protection Utility Ordinance, thereby establishing a utility and the ability to collect fees. The annual fee revenue for the

utility is \$100,000 which is used towards infrastructure improvements and capital expenditures, especially as matching funds when applying for grants. The Town has continued its resilience efforts with successful grant applications for a Stormwater and Shoreline Master Plan, and for the engineering and construction of a series of Bioretention Ponds to reduce stormwater nuisance flooding. Most recently, the Town has been awarded grant funding to design Green Infrastructure for Coastal Resilience along the northern end of Oxford including the Strand Beach and Parking Lot, and two privately owned parcels.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

*All local codes have been updated within the last few years to support environmentally sound construction including:*

- Oxford Stormwater Management Ordinance 2011
- Oxford Flood Plain Management Ordinance 2013
- Oxford Stormwater Management and Shoreline Protection Utility and Fund 2014
- Oxford Critical Area Amendment to include green stormwater infrastructure 2017

*The following initiatives were implemented in support of reducing environmental impacts and continue as ongoing projects within the town:*

- Living Shorelines, Waterfront Pocket Parks and Soft Recreational Landings
- Rain Barrel and Stormwater Retention education and implementation for both public and private properties
- Curbside Recycling program coordinated through the locally owned long time trash collectors
- Government provided land for Community Gardens
- Utilization of Grassy areas for overflow parking
- Support of private initiatives and improvements on both private and public property

Additionally, as recommended in the 2013 EFC Stormwater and Flood Management Financing Study, Oxford has completed a comprehensive study of its Stormwater and Shoreline Infrastructure to assist in the prioritizing of capital improvements to support the Sustainability of the Community in reference to Stormwater and Tidal Water impacts. The Town has also worked closely with MD Critical Area staff to develop regulations within the Critical Area Zoning that uniquely support Oxford's needs, addressing Shoreline Protection and Stormwater Management, incorporating small development mitigation requiring rain barrels and stormwater ponds for all but the smallest footprint.

Stakeholders who will be key to the implementation of the initiatives identified

### **Oxford Local Government:**

The Commissioners of Oxford  
The Oxford Planning Commission  
The Oxford Historic District Commission  
The Oxford Parks and Recreation Committee  
The Oxford Policy Department

### **Oxford Local Non-Profit Organizations:**

The Oxford Business Association  
The Oxford Community Center  
The Oxford Museum  
The Oxford Library  
The Oxford Fire Department

### **County Government:**

The Talbot County Department of Economic Development/Tourism

# VALUING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

## KEY ASSETS THAT EXIST IN THE COMMUNITY

**Oxford Historic District** - unique mix of homes spanning a 200-year period

### **Oxford's Waterfront Parks and Amenities**

The recently renovated **Oxford Community Center**

The Port of Oxford's 330-year history, including its **Maritime Industries**: Marinas, Boat Building, Watermen

**Oxford's Unique Historic Business Community**, Oxford-Bellevue Ferry, Oxford Market and Shops, Inns and Taverns

Oxford's Federal Employers: **US Coast Guard** and the **Oxford Cooperative Lab**, a collaboration between MD DNR and NOAA

**Oxford Day Celebration**, **Oxford Christmas on the Creek**, **Oxford's Kids Summer Camp** and other annual events celebrating Arts, Food and History

**Oxford's Resilience Initiatives** which have been recognized both locally and nationally.

## **INITIATIVES THAT WILL ENHANCE THE HISTORIC ASSETS, TRADITIONAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY**

The Comprehensive Plan encourages the continued economic viability of its downtown merchants and its boating and marine uses that have been in existence since the 1600's, stating that Oxford's maritime and water-based history should be preserved. With this guiding principal the following examples or areas of need were previously identified, including any updates from the last five years.

**Upon request from the community to identify the needs and direction going forward, the Town completed the Oxford Historic Commercial District Strategic Plan for Revitalization through a community planning effort, which will be attached in its entirety to this plan.**

### ***Improvements and or acquisition of historic buildings within the Town's Historic Commercial Center:***

**The Mews** - potential uses include multiple storefronts, rental apartments and condominium units upstairs. This unique historic structure, which has been privately held and vacant for many years, is the central focal point of the historic commercial center and is a crucial element of the history of Oxford. Following public support to take action and acquire this building to save the façade, while also strengthening the commercial center with a multiuse venture, *the Town was successful in securing a contract to purchase the property and with grant assistance from the DHCD has acquired the building, developed a design and a strategic partial demolition plan and has brought the building back to its historic footprint with a newly stabilized solid foundation and walls and ceilings that have been completely shored up.* The Town is currently soliciting for purchase and development proposals that will meet the Town's desires. Finding the right developer and negotiating a purchase agreement that assures the appropriate use of this property is crucial. If the process is unsuccessful, the Town will look at other development opportunity in order to preserve and utilize this important asset.

**Barnaby House** - built in 1770, this is the oldest Private Residence on its original foundation in Oxford. This home has been vacant and for sale for many years and public acquisition to prevent the decline of the structure, that is so evident in other vacant buildings, is under consideration. Uses could include meeting or rental space, historic tours, or bed and breakfast. The Town will work with other community non-profits to seek potential buyers and consideration of a public/private venture.

**The Oxford Yacht Agency/Marina** - operating marina with a need for façade and infrastructure improvements. This historic marina location at the entry to the Historic District is a visitor's first representation of a marina and maintaining this location as an operational marina is of cultural importance to the town. This structure is in great need of assistance and the Town will continue to monitor for opportunities to save this asset.

**The Oxford Market & Deli** - the only year around operating market providing necessities to the citizens and tourist. Support to continue this crucial operation, along with support for façade and infrastructure improvements is a priority for the town.

**The Fowler Building** - potential uses include storefront, rental apartments, condominium units. This is a privately held, partially renovated structure, which has been vacant for many years. It had been noted that funding support might help with the completion of renovations that would put this historic structure back in use. *With the new interest following Oxford's Sustainable Community Designation and visible efforts at the neighboring MEWS structure, the property owner approached the Town for assistance in securing the necessary permitting to complete the interior of this structure. This building is now completed and offers both storefront and residential apartment rental in the center of the Historic Commercial District.* Continued efforts to assist the owner in maintaining occupancy are warranted.

***Examples of successful reuses of historic buildings within the Historic Commercial Center:***

**The Oxford Book Store** - example of good reuse of a historic bank building

**The Oxford Market** - example of quaint traditional use

**The Oxford Museum** - a former grocery/confectionary

**The Rissmiller Building (Vintage Store)** - historic mixed use residential building with small windowed storefront

**The Treasure Chest (now in Americana Bldg)** – example of a new building designed to mimic the historic storefronts

**Benson Mangold Real Estate** - example of reuse of old storefront as a walk-in office

***Support and assistance to the many Inn and B&B operations:***

**The Robert Morris Inn** - operating as an inn, restaurant, and tavern, is a historic structure with portions of the building dating back to 1710. Support of this year around operation, sitting on a prominent waterfront corner located near the town dock is a priority for the town. Continued assistance to support the annual painting and restoration needs of this prominent structure is a high priority.

**Nichols House, Ruffle Duck, Oxford Inn, and Sandaway Lodge** are several historic structures that support accommodations within the town. Supporting the tourism industry and attracting guest to these locations is crucial to the economic survival of these businesses.

***Support for all privately-owned historic structures:***

The town would like to assist current and future owners of historic homes, as a liaison, with loan and grant funding for the restoration and preservation of their structures.

***Continued support and improvements to our Waterfront Businesses:***

**Many of the needs of the Waterfront Businesses have been identified in greater detail within the recent completed Working Waterfronts Strategic Plan, in coordination with Town citizens and Business Owners and which will be attached in its entirety to this Plan.**

**All Marinas and Waterfront operations** - support and financial assistance is necessary with the many State and Federal mandatory regulations in order to reduce the financial burdens that endanger the continued operation of these cultural uses, along with funding support for the substantial infrastructure cost these facilities are faced with.

There are **eight (8) full service Marinas**, along with several supporting Maritime businesses, within a substantial number for such a small community. These businesses contribute to the economy of the town, while also representing the historic waterfront operations dating back hundreds of years. Supporting the continuation of these operations is a priority.

**Oxford Bellevue Ferry** - America's oldest privately run ferry, carries people, bicycles, and automobiles across the Tred Avon. The ferry is a historic and cultural feature that is central to the town and support of continued operations is a priority. As a privately owned amenity, it behooves the Town to find a means of providing financial assistance to offset the high cost of annual maintenance to keep this valuable asset operating. As a note, most 'historic' ferry operations are government owned or financially subsidized, as the operation is generally not an income producer, but an amenity that draws visitors to a community.

**Doc's Sunset Grill**, formerly the **Pier Street Marina and Restaurant** – under new ownership this restaurant was renovated and has become a very popular summer boat destination. The waterfront hardened infrastructure on which the restaurant is located, along with the marina slips, rental apartment, and parking lot are all part of a privately owned commercial lot. The need for bulkhead improvements and foundation stabilization remains a high priority for the continued use of this unique waterfront property. The location is one of the absolute best on the eastern shore for waterfront dining in the summer months, but is also subject to the harsh conditions found on an exposed waterfront point in the winter. Shoreline protection for this private location needs to be investigated.

***The Oxford Industrial Park initiative and future***

The Commissioners of Oxford took the initiative to provide land for a small industrial park in the '80's, allowing for small industrial opportunities to support the marine industry. Continued support of this operation is necessary to avoid vacancies and to provide local employment opportunities, as is assurance that the units are kept as commercial industrial uses.

***Continued Support of and collaboration with these federal facilities:***

US Coast Guard Small Boat Station and Cooperative Oxford Laboratory (COL), NOAA/Maryland DNR

## **INITIATIVES THAT WILL INCREASE COMMUNITY ACCESS TO GREEN SPACES, PARKS AND OTHER AMENITIES**

Oxford prides itself on its Green Spaces, many of which have existed as designated open space since the town was laid out in the 1600's, including the Town Park and the Strand Beach. The town has possession of every street ending that touches water and maintains beach or grassy shorelines for public use in all of these areas.

The town has utilized grant funding to create two living shorelines and will be seeking additional assistance to continue to convert areas to living shorelines in the future, with the next identified locations being the Strand Beach and Strand Parking Lot, which abuts Town Creek sitting between two private bulkheads. The living shorelines will be designed to allow for a soft, natural kayak launch area, while preventing erosion in the areas that meet the private bulkheads.

The town works with the citizens to encourage tree plantings on all building plans, even those that do not have a requirement for such, along with supporting citizen efforts with tree plantings on both private and public lands.

As part of the recent Stormwater initiative the town has begun the process of converting park and street ditches into bio-retention swales where possible to improve stormwater runoff while also providing additional 'retention' areas during major rain events.

Of special interest is the former Little League Field, which due to the aging population, has remained unused for 15 or more years. Conversion of this under-utilized green space to a "Central Park" type location will provide useable access to the surrounding residents and provide age appropriate activities allowing residents to spend more time out of doors. The Town has contracted design of this park, which will include a hill (our first and remnants of our pond project), additional stormwater ponds, trees, and outdoor population appropriate activities including bocce ball, table tennis and chess. Some grant funding from the Parks and Playgrounds program is secured, but additional funding is needed for the extensive groundwork required. Completing this project is a high priority.

Stakeholders who will be key to the implementation of the initiatives identified

### **Oxford Local Government:**

- The Commissioners of Oxford
- The Oxford Planning Commission
- The Oxford Historic District Commission
- The Oxford Parks and Recreation Committee

### **Oxford Local Non-Profit Organizations:**

- The Oxford Business Association
- The Oxford Community Center
- The Oxford Garden Club



## **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

### **INITIATIVES THAT WILL IMPROVE THE ECONOMY**

Over the past six years Oxford Commissioners, Staff, Citizens and Business owners have worked together on three different strategic planning efforts to identify the needs of the community. Sustainability is a large undertaking of efforts with one singular goal of building sufficient community resilience, emotionally, economically, and environmentally. The Oxford Historic Commercial District Strategic Plan and the Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan collectively identify initiatives intended to maintain and improve the economy for the sustainability of the town; providing short term and long term goals and objectives, recommendations and steps for implementation.

### **INITIATIVES THAT WILL INCREASE EMPLOYMENT**

Oxford small commercial businesses do provide employment opportunities within the town, as do the marinas and many of the private citizenry. With virtually no ability to draw large employers and no available land for the same, the success of the previously identified businesses is vital to the economy of the community and it is crucial that there be support in place to maintain these businesses in order to continue to provide employment opportunities. Oxford's efforts continued to be directed at supporting and maintaining its current maritime and small commercial businesses, while promoting opportunities for new small-scale businesses within the historic mixed-use buildings scattered throughout. The previously identified strategic plans provide economic recommendations with the intent to maintain current employment and also address future needs in a changing employment environment

### **COORDINATING AND LEVERAGING**

With this application for renewal of Oxford's designation as a Sustainable Community, the Oxford Commissioners hope to continue access to opportunities for both public and private assistance. Oxford has consistently over the last five years leveraged grant funding to assist business owners, improve blighted property and increase environmental sustainability through green infrastructure improvements. The next five years will build on these early successes and expand coordination to seek out some of the new opportunities for leveraging funds found within the Working Waterfront Plan.

Local government administration will continue coordination with state and federal government agencies to identify ongoing opportunities and to assist local stakeholders in the necessary processes to obtain the available assistance.

Hereby attached, as components of the Oxford Sustainability Plan 2020, are the following:

- **Oxford Sustainable Community Action Plan**
- **Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan 2017**
- **Oxford Historic Commercial District Plan 2016**
- **Oxford Stormwater and Flood Management Report 2013**

# Sustainable Community Action Plan



TOWN OF OXFORD

1/10/2020

The Sustainable Community Action Plan Matrix to follow is prepared based on information found within the Oxford Working Waterfront Strategic Plan 2017, the Oxford Historic Commercial District Strategic Plan 2016, and the Oxford Stormwater and Flood Management Finance Study 2013, which are hereby incorporated into the Oxford Sustainable Community Action Plan in their entirety. Additional strengths and weaknesses were received from stakeholders during the review of this submittal and some additional identified concerns were incorporated into this plan.

# Environment

(Environmental strengths and weaknesses can include but are not limited to quality of land, water, air, watersheds, tree canopy, risk of sea level rise, carbon footprint, energy conservation, access to local foods, green infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure/management, parks, trails and recreation, recycling, water and sewer capacity, etc)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desirable Waterfront Community</li> <li>Extensive Tree Canopy</li> <li>Increase in green infrastructure for both Stormwater Mgmt and Shoreline Protection</li> <li>Plentiful Parks and Passive Outdoor Recreation</li> <li>Newest Technology Wastewater Nutrient Removal System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current Nuisance Flooding</li> <li>Long term threat of Sea Level Rise</li> <li>Stormwater Infrastructure to address increased precipitation</li> <li>Aging sidewalks</li> <li>Aging Water Distribution Infrastructure</li> </ul>

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen? </p> <p>Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.</p>	<p>Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes. </p>	<p>Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.</p>
<p>Outcome 1: Green Infrastructure for Sustainability</p> <p>Progress Measures: Infrastructure Improvements Completed</p>	<p>Strategy A: Utilizing currently developed plans, prioritize the next improvements Strategy B: Continue to seek outside funding assistance in constructing Strategy C: Continue to influence similar improvements on Private Property</p>	<p>Administration Public Works Dept. MD Dept. of Natural Resources Citizens</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Improve Water Delivery System</p> <p>Progress Measures: Development of Prioritized Projects Plan Identification of Funding Mechanisms Infrastructure Improvements Completed</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue working on the Preliminary Engineering Report for Water Strategy B: Prioritize the necessary improvements Strategy C: Seek funding mechanism for implementation</p>	<p>Administration Town Engineers Public Works Dept. Maryland Dept. of Environment</p>

# Economy

(Economic strengths and weaknesses can include but are not limited to regional accessibility, business attraction/retention, health of the business district and commercial vacancies, workforce/employment and economic drivers, local policies/regulations, marketing, tourism, cultural and historic assets)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Community of tree lined streets with sidewalks and homes throughout</li> <li>• Park amenities in every neighborhood</li> <li>• Small scale commercial, bookstore, market, gift shop, coffee shop</li> <li>• Citizen supported Museum, Library and Community Center</li> <li>• Restaurants – Historic and Waterfront</li> <li>• Public access to waterfront parks, beaches, docks</li> <li>• Historic Maritime and Boat Building Heritage</li> <li>• Sense of Community and Active Citizenry</li> <li>• Active Business Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still struggling with commercial vacancies</li> <li>• Cost of maintaining historic structures</li> <li>• Limited activities for visitors</li> <li>• Limited year around restaurant and shopping offerings</li> <li>• Lack of substantial joint marketing opportunities</li> <li>• Limitations of the Business Association</li> <li>• Lack of skilled employees and entry level for apprenticeships</li> <li>• Small aging population</li> <li>• Changing Waterfront Economics</li> </ul>

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u> →	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u> →	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>Outcome 1: Reduce Commercial Vacancies and Improve the Historic Commercial District</p> <p>Progress Measures: Decrease in Commercial Vacancies and Increase in Commercial offerings – “Open Doors”</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to seek private investment in vacant structures</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to seek financial assistance for commercial ventures</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to market the Commercial District opportunities</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Realtors Business Association Talbot County Economic/Tourism MD DHCD</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Strengthen Waterfront Commerce</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in Marina occupancy Increase in employment New Waterfront Economic Opportunities</p>	<p>Strategy A: Support existing businesses and increase opportunities for new</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek methods to attract the next generation of Maritime users</p> <p>Strategy C: Expand educational and research opportunities</p> <p>Strategy D: Identify adaptations needed to maintain existing waterfront assets</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Public Works Realtors Business Association Talbot County Economic/Tourism Marina Owners MD Dept. of Natural Resources</p>

# Transportation

(Transportation strengths and weaknesses can include access to transit corridors, pedestrian safety and accessibility/sidewalks, alternative modes of transportation, such as bikeways and trails, public transit, such as bus and rail, carpooling, proximity to transportation centers, parking, road conditions)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkable/Bike able Community</li> <li>• Ample opportunity for Visitors coming by Water</li> <li>• Desire of population to be outside and to be physically active</li> <li>• Vehicular travel is not required to travel around town</li> <li>• Located at the end of a State Highway (no through traffic)</li> <li>• Historic Oxford Bellevue Ferry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging narrow sidewalks and streets designed before today's vehicles and other needs</li> <li>• Dilapidated historic drainage system along State Road</li> <li>• Distanced from the next populated community and necessary amenities like grocery, hardware, medical, legal, financial, etc.</li> <li>• Located at the end of a State Highway (no feasible transit)</li> <li>• High cost of privately owned and maintained ferry boat</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Stabilize and Improve the Sidewalks and Streets where feasible</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in 'improved' infrastructure</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue the rolling Sidewalk spot repairs, budget to refurbish historic brick sidewalks one block at a time, repair or replace aging cement and slap sidewalks as part of capital improvement program</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with homeowners to improve sidewalks located on residential property, consider matching funds to influence improvements</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Public Works SHA Home Owners</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Stabilize and Improve the conditions found along the State Road in the Historic District</p> <p>Progress Measures: Improved Infrastructure</p>	<p>Strategy A: Identify possible solutions to correct the historic stormwater drainage system found in the State right of way, without impacting the streetscape or the front of historic properties</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek funding mechanisms to improve infrastructure as identified</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Public Works SHA Home Owners</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Sustainable Oxford/Bellevue Ferry Boat</p> <p>Progress Measures: Continued operations at same volume</p>	<p>Strategy A: Seek Historic Designation for the Oxford/Bellevue Ferry Crossing</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek help in designating the boat as infrastructure worthy of grant assistance for the long-term maintenance needs of the current ferry</p> <p>Strategy C: Increase promotion of this amenity</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration SHA MHT MD DHCD Ferry Owner</p>

# Housing

(Housing strengths and weaknesses can include affordability, homeownership vs rental, housing stock diversity, housing condition and value, housing programs, foreclosures, residential vacancies, property values, home sale values)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desirable Waterfront Community</li> <li>• Existing housing stock is in better than average condition</li> <li>• Residential homes maintain a higher than average value</li> <li>• The many community amenities are attractive to retirees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The higher home values discourage first time and young buyers</li> <li>• The lack of a variety of employment also discourages young buyers</li> <li>• Generationally owned homes have become vacant and dilapidated</li> <li>• Generational home owners on fixed incomes struggle to maintain homes</li> <li>• The proximity to water tends to weather structures faster than normal</li> <li>• Lower to average valued homes are located within the floodplain, adding financial hardships and vulnerability to this population</li> <li>• With a near completely built community and no room for expansion it is difficult to incorporate housing stock diversity</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Address “abandoned” vacant and dilapidated residential properties</p> <p>Progress Measures: Reduction in such properties</p>	<p>Strategy A: Attempt to work with property owners to improve, sell or demolish</p> <p>Strategy B: Address legally if no other efforts are successful</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Public Works Legal</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Assist property owners with limited incomes to keep properties in good condition and to incorporate flood protections</p> <p>Progress Measures: Individual improvements</p>	<p>Strategy A: Seek funding that could assist homeowners, energy, façade, etc.</p> <p>Strategy B: Educate owners on inexpensive things they can do to better protect their properties from stormwater and tidal water flooding.</p>	<p>Administration Public Works MD DHCD</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Continue to encourage improvement to older mixed-use commercial structures to incorporate reasonable rental housing for maritime workers</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in available rental apartments</p>	<p>Strategy A: Assist viable locations with Interior Improvement grants to revitalize rental apartments.</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek out additional under-utilized spaces where rental apartments might be appropriate</p> <p>Strategy C: Coordinate property availability with potential renters/employers</p>	<p>Administration Planning Oxford Business Assoc MD DHCD</p>

# Quality of Life

(Strengths and weaknesses can include crime, socio-economic demographics, educational opportunities, museums, libraries, historic and cultural assets, civic amenities, faith-based organizations, economic health of households, sense of place, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Community with authentic charm and a unique sense of place</li> <li>• Population is composed of accomplished people who are well traveled and bring vast personal and professional experiences to their participation in the community</li> <li>• Financially stable retired citizenry who spend a good deal of their time volunteering and participating in community functions</li> <li>• Museum, Library, Community Center, Churches, Parks</li> <li>• Little to no criminal activity</li> <li>• Higher municipal employee to resident ration than most towns of the same size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% of homeowners are part time residents</li> <li>• Lower income residents and generational residents struggle amongst the higher income population</li> <li>• Aging population somewhat distanced from medical care and dependent on volunteer first responders</li> <li>• Aging out of volunteer firefighters without younger replacements</li> <li>• Cost of housing prohibitive to most young families</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Reduction in vacant second homes</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in primary home occupancy</p>	<p>Strategy A: Develop opportunities for more year around commerce, keeping the lights on in the winter to promote a residential living environment as opposed to summertime activities and winter dormancy</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with realtors to understand what full time resident home buyers in the area are looking for and emphasis the positive</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Planning Oxford Business Assoc Real Estate Agents MD DHCD</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Opportunity for young families</p> <p>Progress Measures: Lowering of median age of citizens</p>	<p>Strategy A: Determine best opportunities for reasonably priced easily maintained housing stock. Assist sellers in marketing to families.</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek a means to assist younger home purchasers</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with real estate agents to market homes for other than summer homes or summer rentals</p>	<p>Administration Oxford Business Assoc Talbot County Economics Real Estate Agents MD DHCD</p>

# Local Planning and Land Use

(Strengths and weaknesses in the local planning and land use subject area include but are not limited to zoning, land use, policies, taxes and fees, historical patterns of development, lot sizes and shapes, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notoriously low property taxes</li> <li>• Well established neighborhoods with appealing street front housing</li> <li>• Zoning allows for infill while maintaining historic appeal</li> <li>• Zoning gives consideration to historic smaller lots reducing requirements</li> <li>• With little room for growth, there is assurance that the historic charm and uniqueness of the community will remain in the future</li> <li>• Virtually no threat of unwelcomed growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low taxes, but high cost of water and sewer due to community size</li> <li>• Zoning was written for historic and current uses without much thought for evolution and future uses</li> <li>• Lack of room for expansion of commercial properties or increases in residential opportunities</li> <li>• Due to waterfront location, extensive and complicated permitting and regulations for many properties, which can include costly mitigation requirements to develop or redevelop</li> <li>• With a largely historic housing inventory, it is difficult to adapt to changing residential patterns for next generations. Ex: smaller homes or loft living</li> <li>• Years of giving direction by signs has created a very negative image that is not regulated by zoning</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Zoning Codes that address future uses</p> <p>Progress Measures: Adoption of updated zoning for residential and commercial uses</p>	<p>Strategy A: Review the uses permitted in each zoning classification, considering the current uses, possible reuses and historic uses that are no longer viable. Ex: print shops, shoe repair, etc.</p> <p>Strategy B: Utilize Historic and Working Waterfront for potential new uses</p> <p>Strategy C: Recommend revised zoning for adoption</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Planning Port Wardens Historic Commission</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Change Signage approach for the Town</p> <p>Progress Measures: Reduction in street signage throughout</p>	<p>Strategy A: Inventory all street signage in detail, identifying ownership</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek student volunteers for the project</p> <p>Strategy C: Review 'Sign' regulations in Zoning Code</p> <p>Strategy D: Create recommendations for sign reduction and code changes</p>	<p>Commissioners Administration Public Works SHA Planning Historic Commission Volunteers Oxford Business Assoc</p>



**INSERT**

**“STRATEGIC PLANS”**

**OXFORD HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

**OXFORD WORKING WATERFRONT**

**OXFORD STORMWATER & FLOOD MGMT**

**Attached in separate folder**

## **OXFORD'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ROSTER 2020**

### ***Commissioners of Oxford***

***Gordon Graves, President  
Gordon Fronk, Commissioner  
John Pepe, Commissioner***

### ***Oxford Business Association***

***Ian Fleming- President (Robert Morris Inn)  
Phyllis Rambo - Administrator (Oxford  
Community Center)  
Joan Nubie-Miscall (Treasurer Chest Gift Shop)  
Wendy Palmer(Latitude 38 Restaurant)  
Judy Bixler (Oxford Bellevue Ferry)  
Graham Norbury (Brewers Boat Yard)  
Jane McCarthy (Benson Mangold Realty)  
Kathy Harig (Mystery Loves Company Bookstore)  
Ben Gibson (Sandaway Lodge)***

### ***Oxford Planning Commission***

***David Baker  
James Reed  
Stephen Mroczek  
Ed Miller  
Bruce Beglin***

### ***Oxford Historic District Commission***

***Tom Costigan  
Suzanne Litty  
James Deerin  
Jennifer Stanley  
Patricia Ingram***

### ***Oxford Staff***

***Cheryl Lewis - Town Administrator  
Scott Delude - Public Works Superintendent  
Patrick Maxwell - Chief of Police***

***Talbot County Economic Development - Cassandra Vanhooser  
Samuel Shoge***

### ***Talbot County GIS Manager***

***Mark Cohoon***

### ***Citizens***

***Ray Stevens (Benson Mangold Real Estate)  
Tim Kearns (Architect)  
Suzanne Beyda (Parks n Rec)***

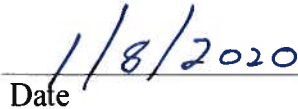
## SIGNATURE LETTER

On behalf of the Town of Oxford, MD, I hereby approve the application for renewal of the Sustainable Communities designation for Oxford. I understand that the Disclosure Authorization and Certification from the original Sustainable Communities application continues to apply to the applicant local government, and as such the applicant agrees that not attaching an objection constitutes consent to the information being made available to the public, and a waiver of any rights the applicant may have regarding this information under Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

I also confirm that I am named or a former holder of my current title is named as an authorized official for the Sustainable Communities designation for my local government in the Local Government Authorization submitted with the original application.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Graves, President of the Oxford Commissioners



\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**JANUARY 2020 STAKEHOLDER MEETING FOR REVIEWING OF LAST FIVE YEARS AND NEXT FIVE YEARS**

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Summarized</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Summarized</b>
Structures left to deteriorate. I know the town has addressed some of these; others are more problematic because of property owners' rights. And I'm not looking for Stepford and like a little funk in the town... It's not that bad either but you did ask.	Blighted properties	Hard to choose but Public Works and Town Park are both fabulous! Then there's Lisa and you. And, and, and...	Parks and Staff
I am concerned about the increase in summer traffic in Oxford and think there should be an increase in patrolling the town during that period. Maybe one extra policeman during summer. We have so many children here then and I worry about their safety.	Summer Traffic and need more officers	I failed to mention how important you and Lisa are. You have been so good for this town. Getting grants for projects, like the Mews, etc. You are sooo on top of things. Don't know how we would manage without you!	Staff
My negative is the seasonality of Oxford. As a business owner it's always a struggle to set aside money for expenses for the 4-5 months that are leaner and always hoping to make it through ok. It's cyclical, I hope for business more year round but most businesses in oxford reduce hours or close in winter which brings less people which means less business, and so on. I wish we could break the cycle.	Year Around Businesses	One positive for me is the other businesses in town. Originally I was going to say the Robert Morris Inn. They bring people to town for their restaurant and food, people come back year after year for them. They are more consistently open of all the inns. When I speak to tourists in my store about where they are staying the answer is usually the Robert Morris Inn. But the Sandaway is a big draw too as well as Capsize and the bookstore. I think you get the idea.	Businesses
The lack of an economic development commission that would focus on bringing new businesses to the Town. Other Eastern shore Towns such as Centreville has such a body. Chestertown has one full time paid employee whose job is economic development. Our Town has a wealth of talented persons who could be on the commission. The first item of business would be to search out those businesses to occupy the Mews. The second item would be a professional survey of visitors to the Town to find out why they came, what they did and did not like, why they would or would not come back and what they thought Oxford should have that it does not have currently.	Need for economic development commission and professional surveys	The Town offers amenities that appeal to prospective residents; a bank, a library, a general store a post office and a recreational Town Park all within reasonable walking distance of residential neighborhoods. Every effort should be made to retain these valuable resources.	Bank, library, po and market.
I have always objected to the numerous signs that seem overkill and in my opinion detract from the beauty of the village. I've brought this subject up several times with other commissioners and nothing was ever done so I guess they didn't feel the signage issue was as much of a blight as I feel it is. In that same vein, many of our street signs are cooked, need painting and in general freshening up. Along the shoulders of Rt 333 (Morris St) many people have added stone in the areas they park. There is no consistency and I suspect that's a State Road issue but in front of the market and the Book 'store, the shoulders (parking area) is really bad. The same in front of the Benson & Mangold office at the corner of Tilghman St.	Too Many Signs and Street signs need attention. Shoulders along Rt 333 especially commercial areas especially	I think the new park at the edge of town is a huge success! It also aids me as a Realtor to say, "no further development or expansion of the town". People like that. I think the Town has done a very appropriate thing with the Mews and eventually the Town will be out of that "real estate" deal. You had to do it and you've done it well.	New Park, Limited expansion and MEWs
I have an issue with parts of the Morris Street streetscape. If you walk between Caroline Street and Division Street, you will see a beautiful brick sidewalk that was just repaired last year. Go a few blocks towards the ferry dock ( especially in front of the Market and bookstore) and the sidewalk and roadway look rather third world-ish. Seems like this would be an easy fix. I've attached two photos to illustrate my point. Perhaps this could be worked on in conjunction with the water main project mentioned in the newsletter?	Addressing - Brick Sidewalks	Wow, are you ever brave!  What I like most about Oxford is its small town feel and lifestyle. Our location insulates us from SOME of the craziness that exists once you drive past Latitude 38. I hope that "insulation" never wears away.	Small town and insulated
As you know the Strand issue, beach erosion and flooding, more traffic, but this is slowly being addressed. The speed enforcement and pedestrian crosswalks...acknowledged and hopefully addressed soon. The one way narrow streets with parking on both sides...parking only on one side, please...difficult for emergency vehicles.	Beach Traffic, Crosswalks, Narrow Streets	Conservation Park.....Town Park beach and sustaining shoreline...maintenance and enhancements of Town Park, the Mews	Parks and Stormwater and Shoreline improvements, MEWs
Abandoned boats. the former Sammy Taylor's (RIP) duly registered and still abandoned vehicles on Market Street; and 2) the rapidly "aging out" of the OVFD.	Abandoned Boats and Vehicles, Aging out of Fire Dept	Trees on the Creek, Oxford Day - any/all activities that brings the Town out at its best!	Trees on the Creek and Town activities
Increasingly frequent flood events throughout town, including Rt 333 at south end of town, Banks Street, etc.	Increasingly frequent flooding	Town has retained its atmosphere of historic homes and other buildings, calm and peaceful streetscapes, beautiful trees, the Town Park, the marinas, etc.	Historic atmosphere, streetscapes, trees, parks and marinas
No room for Maritime Commerical expansion / Available water pressure	Maritime Expansion, water pressure		
Move designated stop line on Wilson St. & N. Morris back to behind sidewalk running along N. Morris St. I always worry about someone walking along the sidewalk, maybe distracted, and stepping out into the street while I am approach the designated stop line. It is a blind corner due to the bushes and it just seems like a bad opportunity for pedestrians. There could be more intersections similar, just haven't recognized any.		: Jody and I are extremely pleased with the success of the Oxford Conservation Park. It has created a wonderful natural habitat that can easily be enjoyed either exercising or just looking to see mother nature at her best. I might also add we appreciate your talents and skills you have shared with the Oxford community and its governance.	
Biggest long term concern is flooding – which can't be prevented. Second biggest concern is that it is harder and harder to get help – especially that could afford to live in our community	Flooding and difficulty in finding employees and employee housing	We love being in Oxford – and hope it can continue to thrive!	
Empty commerical buildings on Morris Street. There is progress but it is slow. The promise of patio seating outside the MEWS and a vibrant "downtown" is very enticing as is the idea of folks interacting with each other informally, not just at planned meetings and gatherings.	Vacant Commerical and slow progress to change	HANDS down the Dock Trees and the Star of Bethlehem on Town Creek and all the volunteers it takes to anomously place them	Extensive all volunteer Lighted Christmas Tree display on Town Creek

**TARGETED PROJECTS FROM PRIOR  
OXFORD SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN  
THAT ARE STILL RECOGNIZED AS  
AREAS OF NEED IN THE  
2020 UPDATED  
OXFORD SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN**

# SOME FORM OF ACQUISITION OR INTERVENTION NEEDED



The Barnaby House  
Oxford oldest  
existing structure  
still on its original  
foundation.  
1770



# ASSISTANCE FOR LONG TERM MAINTENANCE OF FERRY BOAT



Oxford Strand

Transient Dock

Oxford Bellevue Ferry

Living Shore line



## OXFORD-BELLEVUE FERRY

NOVEMBER 1683

BELIEVED TO BE NATION'S OLDEST PRIVATELY OPERATED FERRY SERVICE, FERRY HAS CALLED ACROSS TREP AVON RIVER SINCE TALBOTH COUNTY COURT "PUT UP JOHN AND RICHARD HOUSTON TO KEEP A FERRY" NOVEMBER 20, 1683. SERVICE HAS BEEN CONTINUOUS SINCE 1836.

ERECTED BY THE STAR-BENDELL TARRANT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND HARRISBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY



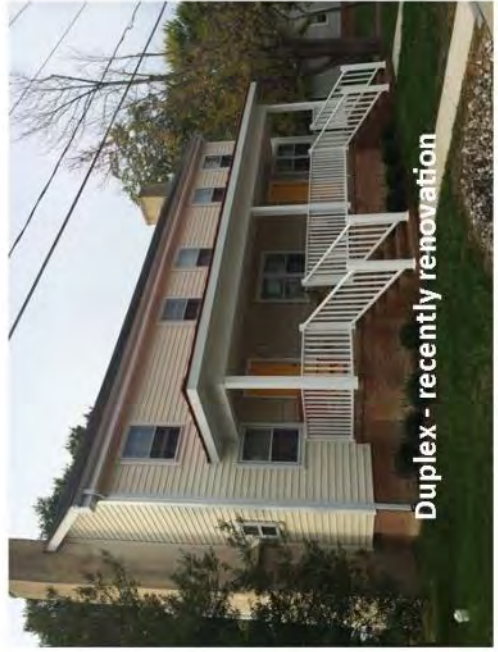
# NEED FOR FACADE/INTERIOR/INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS



Route 333 / Oxford Rd  
Town Gateway



Historic Inn & Tavern



Duplex - recently renovation



Year Around Restaurant & Gas Pump



# FACADE/STRUCTURAL NEEDS AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT NEEDED



Apartments



Condos/Rentals

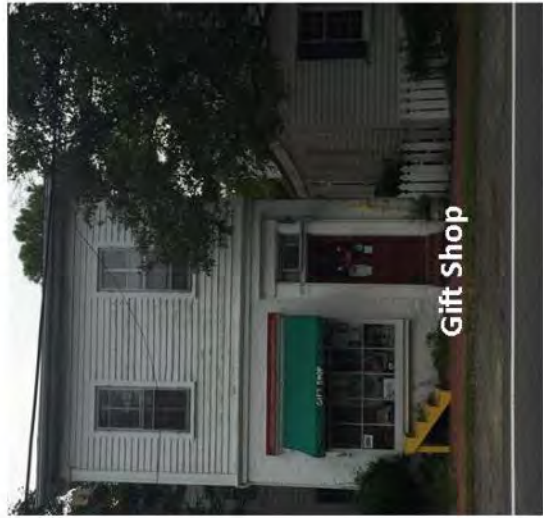


Apartments



Charters

Historic District  
Commercial



Gift Shop



Book Store



Apartments

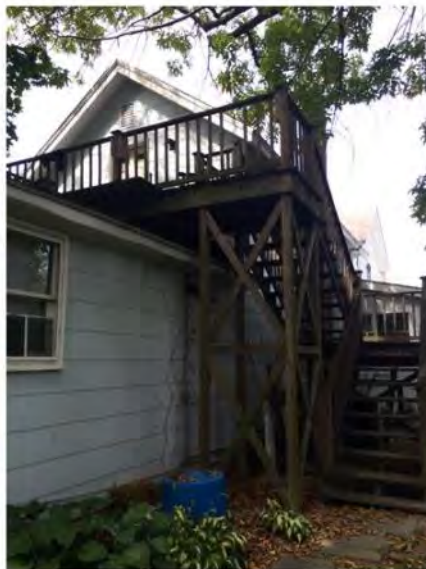
# SUPPORT FOR THE ONLY MARKET



The Oxford Market

Traditional one stop market ~ The only market in town

2 rental apartments with a desire to have a 3rd unit



# INTERIOR/EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

# EXTERIOR AND STRUCTURAL NEEDS



Campbell's Bachelor Pt. Yacht Co.



Campbell's Boatyard @ Jack's Pt.



Campbell's Town Creek Boatyard



Oxford Yacht Agency



Brewer Oxford Boat Yard & Marina



Hinckley Yacht Services



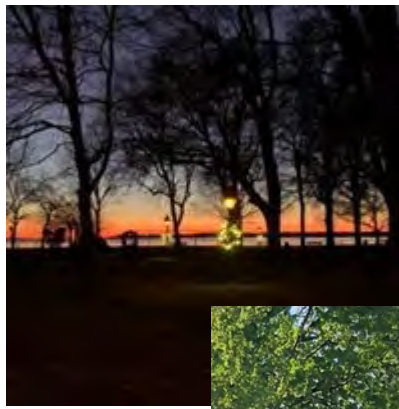
Cutts & Case Shipyard



Pier Street Marina

Privately Owned  
Marinas and  
Maritime Industries

**CONTINUED  
SUPPORT FOR  
MARITIME  
INDUSTRY**



# OXFORD, MD

PHOTO CREDIT JOAN NUBIE-MISCALL  
THE TREASURE CHEST IN OXFORD

