



Future Transportation Plan



VILLAGE OF OXFORD, MICHIGAN

DRAFT FOR PRESENTATION TO
PLANNING COMMISSION

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Future Transportation Plan

Village of Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Village of Oxford's 2016 Future Transportation Plan. This Plan reflects the Village's strategies for improving pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile circulation efficiency and safety, as well as implementing its Complete Streets philosophy.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to determine the improvements necessary to:

- Improve pedestrian safety, and comfort, in order to encourage Village residents to walk
- Provide improved infrastructure for bicycles to further complement the Polly Ann Trail
- Reduce automobile congestion
- Promote safe driving and reduce automobile accidents
- Reduce noise, fumes, and dust from pass-through traffic, especially truck traffic in the downtown

This plan should be used as a guide for the Village, the Road Commission for Oakland County, MDOT, the Polly Ann Trail Board, and other entities that control and operate transportation infrastructure in and around Oxford.

Relationship to Master Plan

This Plan is an addendum to the Village's Master Plan, which was last updated in 2011. The Plan does not deviate substantially from the Master Plan's vision. Instead, it dives down deeper, articulating the planned transportation improvements with more specificity. This plan also includes specific implementation actions which the Village will carry out to support the envisioned improvements.

In some instances, this plan conflicts with the 2011 Master Plan. In all such instances, this Plan shall take priority.

Impact on Non-Village Infrastructure

In addition to describing a vision for Village-owned infrastructure, this plan serves to articulate the Village's vision for infrastructure that passes through its boundaries but is controlled by other entities. The most notable non-village infrastructure is M-24/Washington Street, which is planned to be rebuilt within 5 years of the adoption of this plan, according to MDOT's plans as of 2016. While final design decisions will be made by MDOT and its consultants, this plan articulates the Village's vision, and the Village requests that MDOT respect its priorities and implement them to the extent possible.

2. Background

Existing Transportation System

Oxford's existing transportation system was developed over the Village's history without a consistent plan. Unlike many towns of its size in Michigan, the Village does not have a grid system, except for a small area on the west side. Instead, the road network is a web of streets jutting off M-24/Washington Street at various angles.

The Village's street network is also impacted by the historic rail lines that served Oxford. While the rails no longer exist, their rights-of-way still impact the map in the form of the Polly Ann Trail and the line of skinny parcels running between Pearl and Glaspie Streets.

The Village is also impacted by regional transportation patterns. Growth in Northern Oakland county, combined with a lack of public transportation and few viable north-south corridors, has created a congestion problem on M-24 that is felt acutely in Oxford's core.

Despite the challenges, Oxford's transportation system has some positive aspects. First, its streets are generally well connected and feature sidewalks, making it a walkable community. Second, other than M-24 its streets are narrow and designed for slow speed traffic and pedestrian safety. Finally, the irregular pattern of streets creates interesting intersections that have the potential to be vibrant public spaces.

Transportation Challenges and Goals

This plan seeks to address the following specific challenges facing Oxford:

- Congestion and safety concerns on M-24/Washington Street.
- Excessive driveways and left-turn movements on Washington, contributing to safety and congestion issues.
- An unpleasant pedestrian environment in the downtown core and elsewhere on Washington.
- Speeding cut-through traffic on residential streets.
- A lack of east-west connectivity other than Burdick Street.
- Poor cycling connections between the Polly Ann Trail and Village attractions like the downtown and Scripser Park.
- Inefficient parking allocation, leading to packed lots in some places and empty lots in others.

The following are the Village of Oxford's transportation goals:

- Improve the pedestrian and bicycling atmosphere throughout the Village, especially in the following ways:

- Make downtown more pleasant to walk around.
- Improve the pedestrian environment along the entire length of Washington.
- Better connect the Polly Ann Trail to Downtown Oxford, Scripter Park, and other parts of the Village.
- Improve automobile safety and efficiency along Washington, including channelizing left turning movements and adding traffic lights.
- Improve east-west connectivity across Washington.
- Provide sufficient, but not excessive parking

Parking Study

On October 2, 2015 a parking study was undertaken to develop a sense of the parking demand in and around downtown Oxford. The study was conducted from 8 AM to 6 PM on a warm, sunny Friday. The Oxford High School Homecoming parade stepped off from the corner of Mill and Burdick at 6 pm that evening, which impacted parking demand, but also showed how many spaces are used in the Village during a high-traffic event.

The parking lots included in the parking study are shown on Map 1.

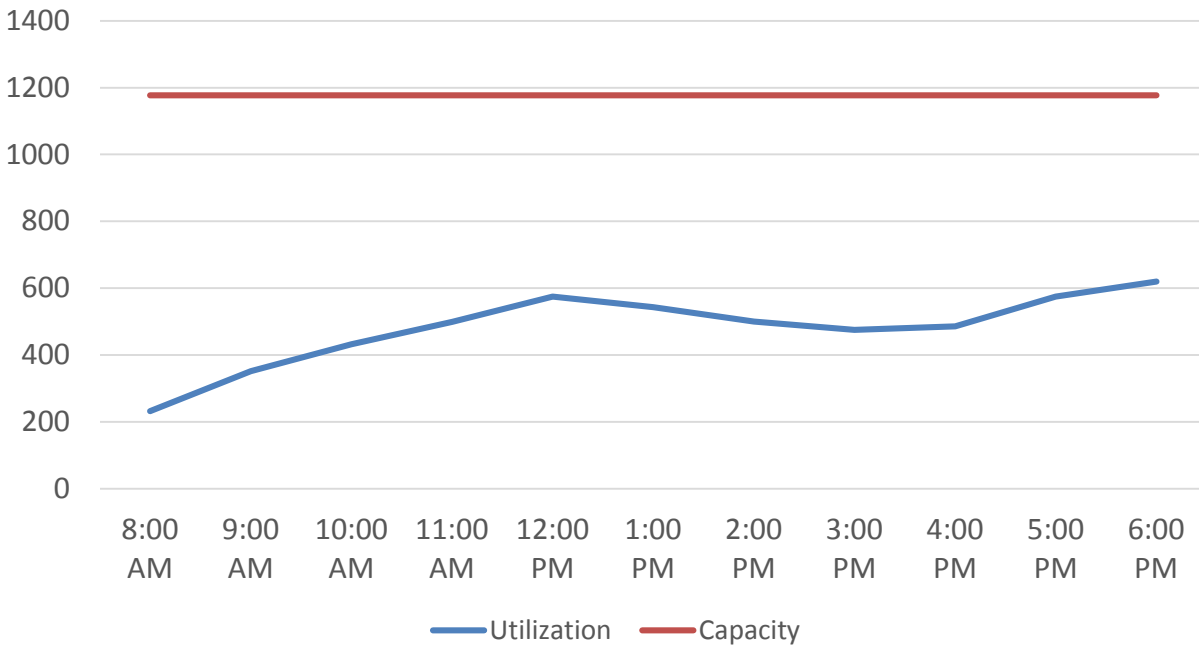


Map 1: Parking Study

Overall, the Parking Study showed that parking demand in Downtown Oxford peaks in the evening hours, when the bars and restaurants are busiest. There is also a bump in demand at lunch time.

Of the 1,177 parking spaces surveyed in and around Downtown Oxford, the most that were filled at any given time was 620, around 6 pm. 575 were filled around noon.

Figure 1: Overall Parking Demand, Downtown Oxford



Source: McKenna Associates Parking Study, October 2, 2015

Public parking lots bore the brunt of increased demand during peak hours. There are 733 off-street parking spaces available to the general in and around Downtown Oxford. At the peak observed time (6 pm), 533 of them were filled (73%). However, as demonstrated in the table below, the available spots were not efficiently distributed:

Table 1: Parking Occupancy, Downtown Oxford Public Parking Lots, 6 PM, October 2, 2016

Parking Lot	Occupancy
Southeast Quadrant	100%
Northeast Quadrant	66%
Northwest Quadrant	59%
Southwest Quadrant	100%
Village Hall	76%
Mill Street	93%
Church North	30%
Church South	0%

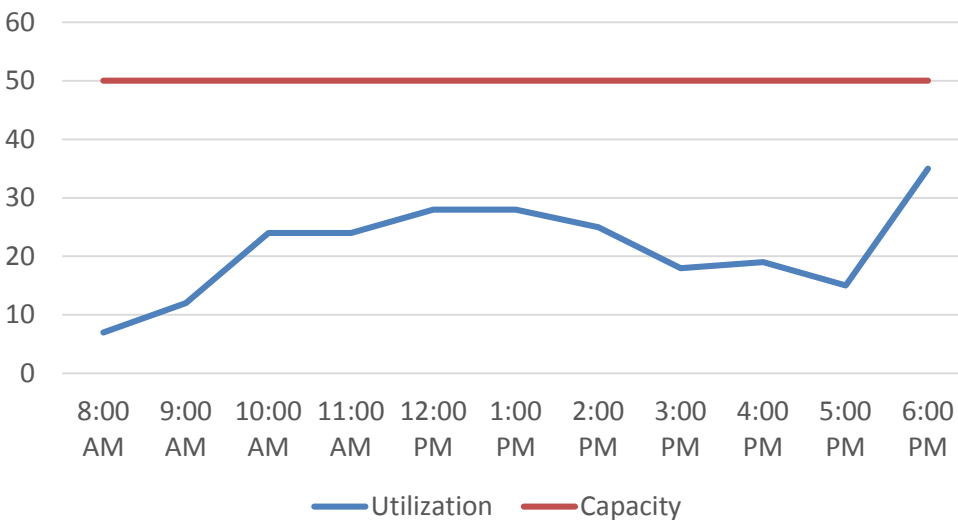
Source: McKenna Associates Parking Study, October 2, 2015

Lots south of Burdick Street were almost completely full, with only limited spaces in the Mill Street and Village Hall lots, which generally serve as overflow. However, there were many spaces available in the lots north of Mill Street. This imbalance is caused partially by the locations of parking-heavy businesses such as restaurants, but it is also caused by the poor pedestrian environment on M-24/Washington Street, which dissuades people from parking north or south of their destination and walking.

Further, it is not clear that the public knows it is allowed to park in “Church South” (Oxford United Methodist Church’s parking lot along Burdick) on non-Sundays. The lot never had more than two cars parked in it at any time during the study, despite the Homecoming Parade lining up nearby.

On-street parking was under-utilized in the downtown area, except during peak times, as shown in the graph below. At 6 pm, all on-street spaces along Hudson were filled, and all but one of the spaces on Washington was filled. However, only 4 of 7 spaces on East Burdick were filled, despite cars desperately circling the Southeast Quadrant parking lot. Very few people utilized the Dennison Street parking between Hudson and Washington, indicating that it is not clear that it is open to the public.

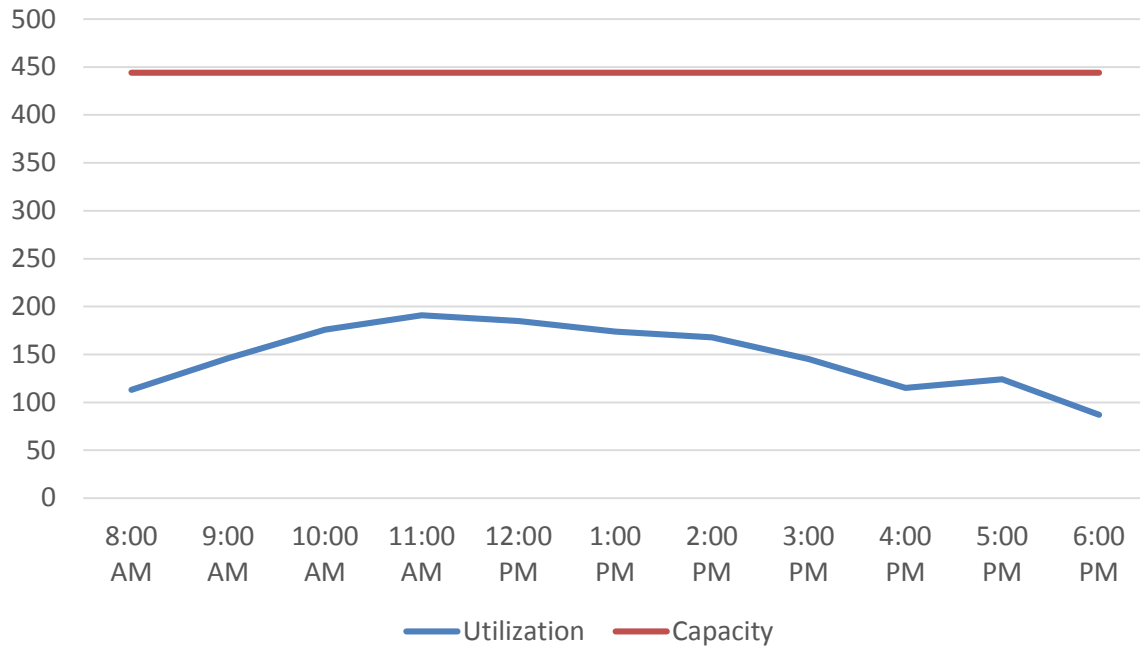
Figure 2: On-Street Parking Occupancy in Downtown Oxford, October 2, 2016



Source: McKenna Associates Parking Study, October 2, 2015

Private lots in downtown Oxford were much less full throughout the study day, including at peak times, as shown in the chart below. There are 444 parking spaces in and around downtown Oxford that are reserved for employees and guests of specific buildings or businesses. Of those, no more than 191 were ever filled throughout the day. As the public lots filled around 6 pm, the private lots emptied out.

Figure 3: Parking Occupancy in Private Lots in Downtown Oxford, October 2, 2016



Source: McKenna Associates Parking Study, October 2, 2015

Most notable among the private lots is the Oxford Bank lot, which contains 88 parking spaces. The lot never held more than 18 cars during the bank’s business hours, and only held 30 cars during the at 6 pm, when the Southeast Quadrant lot was 100% full.

The parking recommendations of this plan can be found in Chapter 8.

Public Input

In late 2015, an online public input survey was distributed to Oxford residents.

The following charts show the responses to the survey:

Table 2: Transportation Priorities

Potential Priority	Average Rating (Out of 5)
Maintain Existing Roads	4.48
Slow Down Cut-Through Traffic in Neighborhoods	3.92
Reduce or Re-Route Truck Traffic	3.69
Provide More Safe Places to Cross the Street in the Downtown Area	3.68
Improve the Walking Experience on Major Roads such as Washington	3.61
Create Additional Road Capacity	3.60
Add More Off-Street Parking	3.46
Provide Better Connections from Neighborhoods to the Polly Ann Trail	3.33
Improve Sidewalks on Streets within Neighborhoods	3.25

Install Bike Racks in the Downtown	3.10
Add Additional Traffic Lights	2.69
Bring Fixed Route Bus Service to Oxford	2.64
Add More On-Street Parking	2.21

Source: Village of Oxford Public Input Survey 2015

Table 3: Percentage of Respondents Favoring a Traffic Light in the Following Locations

Potential New Traffic Light	Percentage of Respondents
Burdick and Pontiac	59.6%
Lakeville and Bay Pointe	34.3%
Washington and Lincoln	18.2%
Washington and Dennison/Stanton	16.2%
Washington and East	6.1%
Washington and Davison/Center	6.1%
Burdick and Mill	5.0%
Washington and Crawford	4.0%

Source: Village of Oxford Public Input Survey 2015

Residents were also surveyed on their preferences for transportation improvements with a Visual Preference Survey, which asked respondents to rate images from 1 (“I would hate to have this in Oxford”) to 5 (“I would love to have this in Oxford”).

The five highest rated transportation images were as follows:

Average Rating: 4.50



Average Rating: 3.86



Average Rating: 3.32



Average Rating: 3.31



Average Rating: 2.88



3. Overall Recommendations

The following maps and text summarize the recommendations for transportation upgrades in various parts of the Village. Additional details can be found in the chapters that follow.

Downtown



The following improvements are envisioned in the Downtown area:

- Pedestrian safety upgrades on Washington Street
- Bike lanes, upgraded streetscape, and crosswalks along Burdick Street
- The conversion of Stanton and Dennison Streets to one-way westbound from Mill to Hudson Streets.
- Increased on-street parking on Stanton and Dennison Streets.
- “Sharrows” and other bicycle wayfinding signage on Mill Street, Center Street, Louck Street, East Street, Pleasant Street, and Davison Street.
- New traffic lights at Washington and Stanton/Dennison, Washington and East, and Burdick and Pontiac.

Northwest



The following improvements are envisioned in the northwestern portion of the Village:

- “Sharrows” and other bicycle wayfinding signage on Pleasant Street and Davison Street.
- New traffic light at Burdick and Pontiac.
- Bike lanes along Burdick Street.
- Pedestrian refuges along Washington, or a landscaped median if possible.

Northeast



The following improvements are envisioned in the northeastern portion of the Village:

- “Sharrows” and other bicycle wayfinding signage on East Street, Center Street, Louck Street, and Mill Street.
- Improved crosswalk at Burdick and Mill Streets.
- Bike lanes along Burdick Street west of Glaspie Street.
- New roads north of Powell Street, in a connected grid that reflects the

Southwest



The following improvements are envisioned in the southwestern portion of the Village:

- Traffic calming devices on Crawford, Lincoln, Mechanic, and Hovey Streets.
- Potential traffic calming devices on Pontiac Street, unless such devices would cause safety or efficiency problems for school buses.

Southeast



The following improvements are envisioned in the southeastern portion of the Village:

- Traffic calming devices on Crawford, Lincoln, and Mechanic Streets.
- A new road south of the Marketplace shopping center to connect Washington to Glaspie Street.
- Complete the Edison Alley by connecting it back to Washington.
- Re-design Washington to permit left turns onto Broadway.
- Construct a West Alley starting at Lincoln Street, through White House Court to Crawford, and then north to Mechanic just south of where it intersects with Washington. Connect the alley to Washington across from Broadway if possible.
- New traffic light at Washington and Lincoln/Edison Alley.

Oxford Lakes



The following improvements are envisioned in Oxford Lakes:

- A sidewalk along the west side of Bay Pointe Drive from the point where the sidewalk ends to Lakeville Road.
- A traffic light at Lakeville Road and Bay Pointe Drive, with a crosswalk to improve access to the Polly Ann Trail.

Map 2: Future Transportation Plan

4. M-24/Washington Street Priorities

Overall Priorities

Washington Street is Oxford's Main Street. It is also part of M-24, a crucial transportation artery linking Metro Detroit and the Thumb. In the light of the upcoming reconstruction of M-24 through the Village and surrounding communities, the following are Oxford's priorities for the future design of the roadway:

- Traffic speeds should be controlled, with speeds limited to 35 MPH at least, preferably 25 MPH. Speeds should be controlled not only through the posted speed limit, but also through road design elements that promote slow speeds and cautiousness.
- Left turns off the roadway should be made safer without simply building a continuous center turn lane, which would detract from other Village goals for the road.
- The number of driveways should be minimized. Parallel alleys should be constructed wherever possible, especially south of Broadway, to allow the elimination of driveways.
- Pedestrian refuge islands should be added in key locations, and a landscaped median added where possible.
- The entire corridor should be lined with decorative, pedestrian-scale lighting.
- The downtown streetscape should be enhanced from both aesthetic and pedestrian safety standpoints, as expressed in previous Village and DDA planning efforts.
- Traffic lights should be added at key locations, described below, in order to facilitate pedestrians, bicycles, and crosstown automobile traffic.
- As much on-street parking should be included in the downtown as possible.
- Street signs should reflect the Village character and draw attention to side streets.

South Village Limits to Broadway

At the south end of the Village, the main priorities are to slow, safe traffic and to channelize left turns. The Village priorities are as follows:

- Complete the Edison Alley so it connects to Washington just north of Holy Cross Lutheran Church.
- Add a traffic light to serve both Lincoln Street and the new Edison Alley.

- Eliminate driveways and promote shared access to reduce the number of left hand turn opportunities.
- Add decorative medians and pedestrian refuge islands where possible, with frequent breaks to allow for public safety access.

Broadway to Polly Ann Trail (Downtown Oxford)

In Downtown Oxford, the Village's main priorities are pedestrian safety, a pleasant atmosphere for shoppers, and business viability. The Village priorities are as follows:

- Permit left turns from southbound Washington onto Broadway.
- Convert Stanton and Dennison Streets to one-way westbound from Mill Street to Hudson Street, allowing for the following improvements
 - A traffic light at Washington and Dennison/Stanton without the need for a left turn lane on Washington north of the intersection, and without the need to widen Dennison and Stanton.
 - Additional public on-street parking on Dennison and Stanton.
- A new traffic light to serve East Street and the Northwest Quadrant parking lot. Left turns into the Northwest Quadrant parking lot may be prohibited if the required design interferes with other priorities.
- On street parking maintained and expanded throughout the Washington corridor.
- Upgraded streetscape, including pedestrian amenities, bike racks, and street trees.
- A mid-block crossing, with a pedestrian refuge island near Centennial Park.

Other planning documents adopted by the Village or DDA should also be consulted during the re-design of this section of the corridor.

Polly Ann Trail to North Village Limits

The Village's priorities in this area are slow, safe traffic, especially at the First Street curve.

- Evaluate the geometry of the First Street curve to determine if re-alignment is possible or necessary.
- Ensure adequate egress for emergency responders from the fire station

Edison (East) and West Alleys

The Village envisions alleys east and west of Washington to serve as access circulators and reduce left turning movements. The Edison Alley has been constructed from Ensley Street south to Holy Cross Lutheran Church. The Village envisions the following future expansions:

Edison (East) Alley:

- Connect the alley to Washington Street north of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, with a traffic light at the intersection.
- Connect the alley between Ensley and Broadway, either by acquiring property and connecting directly to Mill Street, or by re-negotiating the terms of the lease agreement with the owners of the Crittenton Medical Building and opening up that Village-owned land to public through traffic. Parking along the alley should be maintained, although it may need to switch from the current perpendicular alignment to angled parking in order to more safely accommodate through-traffic.
- Construct a new alley between East and Center Streets to support development along Washington in that area. The alley should line up with the entrance to the Northeast Quadrant Parking Garage to the south.

West Alley:

- The existing Great Expressions Dental and White House Village Shops parking lots should be connected to each other to allow a complete connection between Lincoln and Crawford Streets.
- A public alley should be built extending north from Crawford to Mechanic Street.
- A connection to Washington Street across from the intersection with Broadway would be ideal, but is unlikely due to the Church of Christ Scientist building that would have to be removed.

5. Bicycle Circulation

The Polly Ann Trail is one of Oxford's gems, and is beloved by many residents. Other trails in the Village, such as the ones along Lakeville Road and Glaspie Street, are also well-used. However, the trails do not connect well to downtown Oxford, and can be hard to reach from some residential neighborhoods. Therefore, the Village envisions the following improvements.

The Polly Ann Trail can currently be accessed at five points in the Village:

- Burdick Street near the cemetery
- Pleasant Street (where parking is available)
- Louck Street
- Glaspie Street
- Lakeville Road across from Bay Pointe Drive

The Village envisions the following improvements to better connect those access points to the Downtown and neighborhoods:

- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along Pleasant Street from Burdick to the Polly Ann Trail.
- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along Davison Street from Washington to Pleasant.
- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along Center Street from Washington to Louck.
- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along East Street from Washington to Mill.
- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along Louck Street from East to Center.
- Wayfinding signage and "sharrows" painted on the road along Mill Street from Burdick to East.
- Continuous bike lanes along Burdick Street from the Polly Ann Trail to Glaspie Street.
- A sidewalk or shared-use path along the west side of Bay Pointe Drive from where the sidewalk currently ends to Lakeville Road, with a marked crosswalk (ideally a traffic light) to get across Lakeville.

6. Parking

The parking study described in Chapter 2 indicated that the parking lots and on-street parking spaces in downtown Oxford do not efficiently handle the demand. At peak times, some lots are full while other nearby lots are empty. This plan recommends the following actions to help correct the problem:

- Develop a system of wayfinding signage directing motorists to available parking lots, including the capacity of each lot on the sign. Electronic signage displaying the available spaces in each lot is encouraged, but unlikely due to cost.
- Use the wayfinding signage to clearly label parking lots and on-street spaces that are available to the public.
- Ensure that the M-24 rebuilding project does not decrease the total number of on-street spaces on Washington Street. Increase the number of spaces if possible.
- Create a “drop-off area” on Stanton Street adjacent to the movie theater.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to allow a reduction in the number of required parking spaces in areas near the downtown, to complement the existing Parking Reduction District (which eliminates the parking requirement for the properties within it). The new regulations should:
 - Reduce the required minimum number parking spaces for commercial development within a block of a public parking lot.
 - Allow spaces in excess of the maximum parking requirement (125% of the minimum) only if the spaces are available to the general public.
- Partner with private property owners, especially Oxford Bank, to allow public parking on their lots after business hours.
- Work with business owners to ensure the employees park further from businesses. Implement parking regulations that encourage employees to leave prime spaces open for customers, including a three-hour maximum on the parking spaces adjacent to the business entrances and no maximum time on parking spaces farther away, or parking spaces specifically reserved for employees at the edges of the public parking lots.
- Enforce existing parking regulations.



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