

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

Name of Property

Historic name: Oxford Downtown Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Location

Street & number: Washington Street/Michigan-24 and Burdick Street

City or town: Oxford State: MI County: Oakland

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title : State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☒

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☒

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>34</u> | <u>7</u> | buildings |
| <u>1</u> | <u>1</u> | sites |
| <u></u> | <u>3</u> | structures |
| <u>2</u> | <u>7</u> | objects |
| <u>37</u> | <u>18</u> | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, professional, bank, department store, restaurant

SOCIAL: meeting hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE: park, monument/marker

LANDSCAPE: city park

EDUCATION: library

HEALTH CARE: medical office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, professional, bank, department store, restaurant

EDUCATION: school district offices

RECREATION AND CULTURE: park, monument/marker

LANDSCAPE: park, monument/marker

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Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian: Italianate, Queen Anne

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival, Neo-Classical Revival

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Commercial Style

Modern Movement: Art Deco, Moderne, Modernistic

Other: Mansard Revival, Commercial Brick

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, stone, limestone, weatherboard, plywood,
wood shingle, stucco, concrete, glass, vinyl

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Oxford Downtown Historic District is the commercial nucleus of the one-square-mile Village of Oxford. The village is located in Oxford Township, in northeast Oakland County, approximately thirteen miles northeast of the county seat, Pontiac. The downtown is bisected by state highway M-24, locally known as Washington Street. M-24 is a major trunkline road that provides access to I-75 and Pontiac area/suburban Detroit to the south; and I-69 and further north to Michigan's thumb region. The historic district is centered on approximately two commercial blocks of Washington Street, and includes two commercial buildings that front on the major east-west cross street, Burdick Street. The district includes forty-four buildings, and one site, as well as associated structures and objects, all of which date from circa 1880 to the present time. Eighty percent of the resources were constructed during the period of significance of 1876-1968, beginning with the earliest extant buildings; many of which were constructed after the arrival of the Detroit and Bay City Railroad (1872); and passage of the village charter (1876) when the village came into its own as a commercial center; and ends fifty years ago. The buildings range from one to three stories in height and embody a range of architectural styles, including: Italianate, Queen Anne, Neo Classical, Art Deco, Colonial Revival, and influences of mid-century modern movements. The predominant function of the district buildings is commercial, although historically, there were social and governmental uses as well. Naturally, alterations to

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the buildings and resources have occurred, however the resources cumulatively retain the aspects of integrity necessary to convey significance with commerce, social organizations, and architecture.

Narrative Description

The village of Oxford covers a one-square mile area within Oxford Township, in northeast Oakland County.¹ The village has a population of 3,436, with an additional 20,526 people living in the surrounding township.² The village and township are among the northern-most metropolitan Detroit suburbs, located approximately thirteen miles northeast of Pontiac, the Oakland county seat, and thirty-five miles north of Detroit. Adjacent towns include Lake Orion, three miles south with a population of 2,973; Rochester and Rochester Hills, thirteen miles southeast and a combined population of 83,706; and Lapeer, fourteen miles north and a population 8,841. The landscape surrounding the village was historically rural and largely occupied by agricultural fields. In the mid-twentieth century, the area surrounding Oxford experienced a wave of suburbanization with housing developments spread between wooded areas; a pattern of development which has continued into the early twenty-first century. Active gravel pits are located north of the village limits.

The Oxford Downtown Historic District is comprised of the extant historic resources within the commercial center of the village. The downtown area is concentrated on two roads, North and South Washington Street (M-24) and East and West Burdick Street. Washington Street is essentially north/south, but within the village it has a northwest/southeast orientation. Burdick Street extends east/west as it passes through the commercial core to the surrounding residential area. Because downtown Oxford is comprised of two crossing roads, which visually separates the commercial center into four distinct sections, it is often described by residents as quadrants, with the two streets forming an X/Y axis. The quadrants are limited to the commercial area, which is clearly distinguished from the surrounding buildings by adjacent parking areas. The historic district is just under two blocks long on both sides of Washington Street, approximately 0.17 mile, including one block south of Burdick Street, and one block north. All but two of the districts buildings front on Washington Street, with both of the Burdick Street buildings located east of Washington, resulting a district approximately 0.08 mile wide. The district boundaries include those resources with the greatest historic integrity, and eliminate areas of modern buildings at the district's Washington Street termini. Additionally, the boundary excludes the expansive paved parking lots behind (east and west of) the district's buildings. Overall the district conveys the setting and feeling of a traditional turn-of-the-century commercial district.

¹ "Welcome to the Village of Oxford Michigan," <http://www.thevillageofoxford.org/index.php/about-us>, accessed 18 January 2018.

² "Oxford Village, Michigan." The American Fact Finder, United States Census Bureau, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml#, accessed 18 January 2018; "Oxford Charter Township, Oakland County, Michigan." The American Fact Finder, United States Census Bureau, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml, accessed 18 January 2018.

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Washington Street is a major state highway trunkline road. The four-lane road, with a center turn lane at Burdick Street, carries heavy traffic, including large gravel trucks, at most times of the day. Additional travel lanes were created by the removal of angled parking spaces that historically lined both sides of Washington Street.³ As of 2017, parallel parking lines each side of Washington Street. These on-street parking areas are defined by bump-outs in the sidewalks. In contrast to Washington Street, Burdick Street is only three lanes wide with a more intimate feel. Large paved parking areas, each accommodating approximately one hundred cars, are located behind each quadrant of buildings within the historic district, forming a buffer that divides the commercial district from surrounding land uses.

Pedestrian traffic utilizes paved sidewalks on Washington and Burdick Streets that are trimmed with modern brick pavers. Within the sidewalks are plantings of small trees and evenly-spaced modern lampposts. Additional curbed sidewalks abut the rear elevations of the buildings, forming a pedestrian path between the buildings and parking areas.

Although the district is primarily comprised of buildings, there are also three open areas. The first is a paved pedestrian walkway that extends between 24 and 28 South Washington, near the southeast corner of the district. The sidewalk provides access to the mall storefronts at 28 South Washington as well as access to the parking lot behind the southeast quadrant businesses. The second open area is Centennial Park, which defines the southwest corner of the historic district. The park, which is bounded by 23 South Washington on the north, a sidewalk on the east, and is adjacent to the southwest quadrant parking area at its west and south sides. The park and its associated paved paths also provides access to the parking lot from the commercial district. The manicured lawn of the park is shaded by scattered trees, and modern street furniture. Within the park are several monuments at the southwest corner, including two that are historic and contribute to the district. The third open area is currently a vacant parcel between 9 and 19 North Washington Street. Although the parcel is paved, it is closed off to parking. Modern brick walls divide the lot from the sidewalk, forming a boundary between the parcel and public right-of-way.

The historic commercial area has a high building density with a current total of forty-one buildings, four of which were historically two separate buildings and have subsequently been combined with an adjacent building. There are no buildings that rise to a height greater than three stories, and most share at least one party-wall. Most of these buildings historically featured glazed storefronts at the street level with additional commercial or social spaces on the upper floors, when present. These features are still extant on the majority of the buildings, revealing historic integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Because of the high level of integrity, thirty-four, or eighty-three percent, of buildings contribute to the historic significance of the district. Only seven buildings, all of which have either modern construction dates or a loss of historic integrity, are non-contributing. Of the total buildings in the district, thirty-six, or eighty-seven percent, are brick or brick veneer. One of the combined buildings is half brick and half concrete block. Three buildings are concrete block with a veneered façade. Other building

³ Photograph, #485, 1926 Post Card, Oxford Street Scenes #1, Northeast Oakland Historical Society (NOHS), Northeast Oakland Historical Museum, Oxford, Michigan.

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materials include one building sheathed in limestone, another clad in wood siding, and one clad in a combination of stucco, stone, and wood.

Buildings in downtown Oxford can be dated to specific phases that correlate to economic factors. The earliest buildings date to the late-nineteenth century railroad boom period, circa 1880-1899; followed by the interurban years, 1900-1930, the mid-twentieth century suburban era, 1931-1970, and the modern era, 1970-2018.

Just over half, fifty-two percent, of the contributing buildings in the district were constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; circa 1880-1899. Shared architectural features of these buildings include first floor commercial storefronts with added architectural detail present on the façade second story. Decorative elements on these buildings reflect the Italianate commercial style, with window hoods and pediments, ornamented cornices at the parapets, and decorative brickwork including pilasters and corbeling. Good examples of these are the eight commercial buildings in the northwest quadrant, between 21 and 35 North Washington Street. Generally, the buildings are all two-stories high, with large display windows and recessed entrances on the façade. The upper stories are typically divided into three fenestration bays with arched window openings. Each of these buildings also includes decorative elements such as brick corbeling or an ornamented cornice.

Some of the more distinguished buildings from this period are located at the main intersection of the district. The northeast quadrant includes the large commercial block at 2 North Washington, a natural focal point of the district given its visibility based on its corner location. The two-story brick building has an irregular footprint resulting from the 120-degree angle of Washington and Burdick Streets. Historically divided into four storefronts, with two each on Washington and Burdick Streets, the building today houses a single large restaurant at street level and residential space on the second floor. On the first floor, display windows above paneled bulkhead walls extend across the façade (west) and south elevation. The second story has numerous tall one-over-one windows, with ornate pedimented hoods over the Washington Street windows and more modest treatment for the side street elevation.

The northernmost buildings in the southwest quadrant of the historic district are also comprised of Italianate-style commercial blocks. The corner building, 1 South Washington, has a two-story brick masonry core. A one-story addition with an irregular footprint extends from the north elevation of the pharmacy. The main portion of the building has ornamental Italianate elements, including prominent window pediments and a bracketed cornice. The buildings at 3 and 5 South Washington (Tunstead Block and Hackett Block, respectively) were both erected in 1879 following a fire, and therefore are architecturally similar by having matching window hoods on the upper floors of the facades. The Tunstead Block, 3 South Washington, is three stories high, and the tallest extant building in the historic district. In the mid-twentieth century, the store front was altered by the installation of an angled wall and display window adjacent to the recessed front entry. Like its neighbors, the Tunstead block has a decorative cornice that spans the width of the façade. The Hackett Block, a two-story commercial block at 5 South Washington, features

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window hoods and brick corbeling. The building has a Queen Anne addition at its southeast corner, which includes an ornate conical roof turret.

The next phase of building construction in the district extends from circa 1900 to 1922, twelve of the forty-four buildings, or twenty-seven percent, date to this period. The earliest of these buildings closely resemble their nineteenth century neighbors. Prominent examples include a large former department store at 2-10 South Washington. The corner building of the southeast quadrant constructed in the Queen Anne and Neo-Classical styles. Its two-story brick building has an angled footprint that conforms to the irregular angle of the intersection. The primary entrances are recessed on the west elevation and placed within storefronts. The street level of the building includes a series of large display windows, while the second story fenestration includes a round turret at the corner overlooking the road intersection, stings of windows, three oculus windows below a parapet, and a canted oriel window. The building has undergone some alteration, including replacement storefronts and parapet, and has been divided into two parcels; 2-6 and 8-10 South Washington. However, the prominent building retains a good degree of integrity and conveys both architectural and historical commercial significance.

Another building from the early twentieth century is the northern-most building in the northeast quadrant, the former Veterans Building, at 28 North Washington. The building was built in the early 1900s and historically served as a combination dwelling and millinery. It is the only former residential building in the district, and continues to clearly display its residential roots. Like many other buildings of the period, the exterior is clad in brick and the windows are set into segmental arched openings.

As the twentieth century progressed, the architectural details within the historic district emphasized more straight lines and geometric shapes, instead of the arches and curves that characterized earlier buildings. At 10 North Washington, the 1912 Meriam Building, has a deeper footprint than many others on the same block. Its later construction date and architectural style also sets it apart from neighboring buildings, notably absent are window hoods or brackets, with ornamentation including horizontal brick panels and vertical pilasters that define the fenestration bays.

One of the most distinctive buildings in downtown is the Art Deco former Oxford Savings Bank, at 1 North Washington. Constructed in 1922, the former bank is located at the southeast corner of the northwest quadrant, and has a triangular footprint. In addition to its architectural style, and footprint, it is also the only stone-clad building in the downtown. Ornamenting the grey limestone walls are numerous engravings and sculptural elements including an urn and carved eagle. Rising above the eagle at the angled corner of the building is a patinaed flag pole surmounted by a five-point star.

The next major period of building construction within the district occurred between 1931 and 1970. In the early 1940s and 1950s, smaller one-story commercial blocks were erected on East Burdick Street. These include 15 East Burdick on the north side, and 10 East Burdick on the south side of the street. The building at 15 East Burdick has subtle influences of the Moderne

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Style demonstrated in its large display windows and deeply raked joints between a pair of brick courses to create a striped pattern on the façade. Across the street, at 10 East Burdick, the one-story commercial building with modest colonial/classical elements; including pilasters and dentils. Both retain historic integrity.

In the mid-twentieth century, two fires reshaped the building fabric on South Washington Street. In 1957 the 1912-13 three-story Masonic Temple at 20 South Washington burned. Rather than demolishing the whole building, the third floor was removed and the second and first floors rebuilt; resulting in a two-story building. Today, the two-story brick commercial block has a glazed asymmetrical storefront. A Masonic emblem is embedded in on the second story façade between the two strings of windows. Non-historic circular brackets have been added to the parapet, referencing the current occupant, a saddlery and tack shop. Overall the building retains historic integrity, as the reconfiguration to its current form occurred in 1957, during the period of significance.

North of the Masonic Temple, 16-18 South Washington was also affected by the 1957 fire, and therefore reconstructed. The one-story storefront is a mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival-style building with details influenced by the Cape Cod Revival style.

The second fire occurred in 1966 and destroyed the buildings south of the Masonic Temple, 24 through 30 South Washington. They were replaced the following year by two buildings, 24 and 28 South Washington. The building at 24 South Washington is a one-story concrete-block building with a brick façade. The building at 28 South Washington, is a two-story building marketed as a mall. A pedestrian pathway extends between the two buildings, providing access to the mall doors on the north side of the mall building and access to the rear parking lots. The mall has a faux-Mansard roof sheathed in wood shingles, which includes just the lower slope of the Mansard and was popular in the 1960s-1970s.⁴

Other buildings during this period were remodeled to reflect changing aesthetics in the aging downtown. This is the case for 9 and 11 South Washington, which were historically two separate buildings constructed in the nineteenth century. The buildings were combined in 1947 to form one large store. By 1965 the building facades were remodeled and clad by a faux-stone veneer. Today the two buildings once again function as separate units, and retain historic integrity as long-standing commercial buildings in the downtown, and their appearance dates to the period of significance.

In recent years, other buildings have been unified to fit the needs of a single business. Buildings at 13 and 15 South Washington Street (now known as 13 South Washington Street) have been combined and unified by a modern storefront that features a dentilated cornice. Additional alterations include removal of historic cornices at the roofline, and replacement windows. However, the buildings retain some historic integrity on the second stories that convey their original nineteenth century construction periods. This is expressed through the window hoods

⁴ "Mansard." docomomo_WEWA, http://www.docomomo-wewa.org/styles_detail.php?id=30, accessed 24 April 2018.

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and brick corbeling on the earlier (1884) 13 South Washington Street building, while 15 South Washington (built 1897) has more restrained features, including a large arched window opening and simple brick belt courses.

A third combined building is located at 21 South Washington. The turn-of-the-century brick commercial block has been combined with a one-story 1956 concrete block building. Although these buildings are now combined, they too retain historic integrity as visually separate entities, and therefore contribute to the historic district.

In addition to the buildings described above, the remaining commercial buildings within the historic district, all constructed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, retain a high level of historic integrity and unify the streetscapes of downtown Oxford. Like the other buildings, they generally included glazed storefronts and brick exteriors, and some level of ornamentation. The district's features discussed in greater detail in the Inventory section below.

Inventory

For each of the following entries, a number of standard references were consulted. These include Sanborn-Perris and Sanborn atlases; the 1999 *Inventory of Sites and Structures in the Oxford Community Development Authority District*; and the 2016 *Downtown Oxford Historic District: Inventory of Sites and Structures*.⁵ Additional unique sources for each site, where applicable, are cited at the end of each inventory entry; however, the standard sources have not been individually cited.

The following entries are placed in order as they appear on each street, listed numerically with odd numbers first and even numbers second.

East Burdick Street, North Side

15 East Burdick; Kroger; 1942; Contributing

This one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint with the long axis oriented perpendicular to East Burdick Street. The building has a small addition at the rear northeast corner. The building rests on a concrete foundation and the exterior walls are clad in brick. The brick on the south-facing façade is corbeled with every other row stepping forward to form horizontal stripes. Brick is laid on the remaining elevations in common bond pattern. The flat roof is encircled by an unornamented parapet with metal coping. A string of eight single-light metal-framed display windows that rest on a continuous metal sill, extend almost across the full width of the south-facing façade above a low concrete bulkhead wall. Three pedestrian entrances are spaced along the length of the east elevation, accessible from an adjacent paved parking lot. The entryways include a pair of fully-glazed metal-framed doors near the southeast corner, a

⁵ Oxford Community Development Authority [CDA], "Inventory of Sites and Structures in the Oxford Community Development Authority District," (Oxford, Michigan: Oxford CDA, 1999); Chelsea Grossman and Joe Frost, "Downtown Oxford Historic District: Inventory of Sites and Structures," (Oxford, Michigan: Oxford Downtown Development Authority, 2016).

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single glazed door with a transom above centered on the elevation, and a single pedestrian door at the northeast corner. Windows on the east elevation include a string of three single-light display windows between the doors at the southeast corner and center of the building, two similar windows adjacent to the south side of the center door, and a replacement canted oriel window located immediately south of the northern-most door. A modern fabric convex awning extends above the façade windows and continues north on the east elevation over the two southern pedestrian entrances. A pent roof clad in asphalt shingles shelters the northern-most entrance and oriel window. Between the center and northern-most entrances is an empty wood-framed signboard.

The rear addition is approximately two-thirds the height of the original building. The addition is clad in brick on the east and west elevations, and concrete block on the north elevation. It has a flat roof with brick parapets on the east and west elevations.

Erected in 1942 the building was originally occupied by a Kroger grocery store, which was previously located at 1 South Washington Street.⁶ Notes on the 1945 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* indicates the building has concrete block construction with a brick veneer.⁷ By 1965 the store is occupied by Wright IGA.⁸ As of 1971 the building was occupied by an auction house, Oxford Auctions.⁹ As of 2017 the building was occupied by John Burt realty.

The building has had minimal exterior alterations and retains historic integrity to convey both architectural and commercial significance.

East Burdick Street, South Side

10 East Burdick; Auto Parts Store; c. 1950; Contributing

The one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint, with the long axis oriented perpendicular to East Burdick Street. The building is constructed of concrete block with numerous materials on the storefront façade, including vertical spans of brick veneer flanking the façade display window, and wood covered bulkhead panel, moldings, pilasters, and board and batten on the upper walls of the façade. The flat roof has a coped parapet, which steps down to the rear of the building on the side elevations. The facade is framed by applied pilasters that visually support at the cornice. A storefront cornice extends between the storefront and signboard area. The façade is divided into three fenestration bays; the eastern two include a pair of single-light display windows above the wood paneled bulkhead and the remaining bay is occupied by the primary entrance. The door consists of a lower wood panel topped by a nine-light window. The door includes a classical surround with a dentilated cornice. The display windows are flanked by brick piers. Fenestration on the east and west elevations includes a series of four single-light widows, placed high on each wall. Some of these windows have been painted out. A

⁶ Photograph: "Kroger moved off the four main corners in 1942, but not far..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D11

⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1937, 1945), 2.

⁸ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9.

⁹ Advertisement. *Detroit Free Press*, 16 July 1971, 31.

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second pedestrian entrance is located at the west corner of the south elevation. Historically, there were two doors, with a fluted pilaster and dentilated surround, currently the eastern opening has been sealed with a vertical wood panel. The west opening contains a door to match that on the façade.

Based on available *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, 10 East Burdick was erected sometime after 1945.¹⁰ The earliest reference to a business at this location was an auto parts store, owned by Claude Rogers. In 1959, Oxford Auto moved to this location, taking over Rogers' store, selling automobile supplies.¹¹ As of 1976 it was home to Papillon's, a unisex hair styling salon.¹² By 1980 the building housed Lynne's Hallmark.¹³ Since 1999 the building has been occupied by Creative Embroidery, a business which offers custom embroidery services.¹⁴

The building's storefront has been altered since its original construction. The Colonial Revival elements of the building are likely mid-1970s alterations. However, its overall appearance (including massing, fenestration pattern, and some materials) retain sufficient integrity to convey its commercial association.

North Washington Street, West Side

1 North Washington; Oxford Savings Bank/Northeast Oakland Historical Museum; 1922-23; Contributing

This Art Deco former bank building is the corner building for the downtown's northwest quadrant, situated at the main cross-roads of Oxford. The one-and-one-half-story building has a nearly triangular footprint, with the Washington Street façade its widest point, arrowing to a wall just wider than a single window on the west. The south elevation is fully exposed to West Burdick Street while the north elevation is fully obscured by the abutting commercial building. The flat roofed building has walls constructed of brick with an Indiana limestone veneer. The building retains a high level of historic integrity, and is an iconic fixture in the downtown.

The former bank building is adorned by numerous decorative details, including: a cornice, architrave, and a watertable. Detail work is concentrated around the fenestration on the façade and south elevations. The east-facing façade is divided into four asymmetrical fenestration bays separated by three pilasters; within the bays from south to north are a single window, four windows, a door, and a final single window. The door is bronze with a large glazed window. It is topped by an arched transom, which in turn, has a half-dome-shaped fabric awning. Above the transom window is a three-light window that extends to just below the signboard. Windows on the façade have tall sashes, with their glazing patterns partially obscured from view by individual fabric awnings. The windows extend to the base of the pilasters' capitals, just below the signboard. The pilasters rise from the ground to the architrave. The three pilasters feature

¹⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

¹¹ "Chronology 1955-1970," B8.

¹² Advertisement. "Who to Call," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40.

¹³ Tom Walsh and Gary Graff, "A Crucial Christmas for Retailers," *Detroit Free Press*, 25 November 1982.

¹⁴ "About," Creative Embroidery, <http://creativeembroidery.com/about/>, accessed 5 January 2018.

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decorative capitals, containing Art Deco-inspired straight-lined details, accented by fleur-de-lis, which wrap around the corners. Between the window lintels and the architrave are limestone signboard panels with bas relief sculpture. The southern-most panel provides the founding date of the Oxford Savings Bank, 1884, while northern-most lists the construction date of the building, 1922. The panels above the central windows states "OXFORD SAVINGS," while the final panel, over the door, reads "BANK." A nearly identical bank of seven windows is on the east half of the south elevation situated above carved bulkhead panels. These windows are divided with a pilaster separating each outer window in the group from the center five. The south elevation windows are smaller than the façade and have glass block infill. The signboard panels above the windows repeat the founding and construction dates in the small outer panels, and include the full name of the bank over the center five windows.

Fenestration on the west half of the south elevation is more restrained, with only a modest service entrance near the west corner of the first story below a bank of five small windows. The windows have a shared decorative stone sill that terminates in an ornamental pendant at each end. Because of the nearly triangular footprint of the building, the rear west elevation is very narrow. The elevation includes one-over-one windows on the first and second stories, which rest on stone sills. Unlike the street-facing elevations of the building, the narrow west elevation is void of decorative details.

The southeast corner of the building is angled to accommodate sculptural ornamentation facing the intersection. At the base of the corner is an urn and pedestal. Rising from the urn to the architrave is a bas relief pilaster, which includes a geometrical pattern of straight lines and cascading tringles. The pilaster is topped by a three-dimensional carved eagle perched on a shield. Above the eagle, a broad pedestal pierces the parapet and serves as the base for a slender flag pole. The pole is a patinated metal and has a five-point star medallion finial.

Inside the former bank, there is a large open lobby at the front (east) half of the building, and a safe/office area at the west end of the building. A mezzanine level is located above the safe providing more usable space – with a view over the former banking floor.

The Oxford Savings Bank, founded in 1884, began construction on this building, its third location, in 1922.¹⁵ The bank moved into the completed building for its new headquarters the following year and carried out business at this location until it moved to a new building in 1966. The bank is presently located at 60 South Washington, with multiple branch locations in the area.¹⁶ The former bank building was vacant until October 1971 when it was donated to the Village of Oxford to house the Northeast Oakland County Historical Society, which remains in the building as late as 2018.¹⁷

¹⁵ "Oxford Savings bank Plans New Building," *Detroit Free Press*, 19 February 1922.

¹⁶ "Locations & Hours," Oxford Savings Bank, <https://www.oxfordbank.com/about-us/locations-hours/index.html>, accessed 26 January 2018.

¹⁷ "Oxford Savings Bank" Working File, original on file at Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Lansing, Michigan.

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The building retains a high level of historic integrity, exhibiting minimal changes, excluding the modern glass block windows. Its details convey both architectural and commercial historic significance.

5 North Washington; Clothing Store; 1897, c. 1920, c. 1995; Contributing

The commercial building is comprised of two distinct sections. The primary mass is a two-story structure with a rectilinear footprint that fronts on North Washington Street. The north and south elevations of the original building abut adjacent commercial buildings and do not have visible exteriors. The second section, added later, is an irregular one-story addition extending from the rear (west) elevation. The rear addition includes a secondary entrance from the north side of West Burdick Street. Both sections of the building have brick masonry construction and flat roofs.

The east-facing façade retains some of its original features on the second story, with a modern, but not unsympathetic, storefront on the first story. The storefront was added over the original building, sometime after circa 1995, and projects slightly forward from the rest of the building.¹⁸ A shallow metal-clad shed roof is utilized to cover the transition from the original building to the front of the new storefront. The exterior of the storefront is clad in stucco with applied decorative moldings, including a pilaster at each of the outer corners. Two recessed and glazed pedestrian entrances occupy the north half of the storefront. The southern entrance provides access to the first-floor business, while the northern entrance opens to stairs to the second floor. The south half of the storefront includes a broad display window over a low bulkhead wall.

There are three one-over-one windows on the second story, which share a continuous narrow stone sill and wide lintel. Above the lintel are three corbeled brick arches, comprised of four header courses, the upper most course is textured by having every other brick project. Below the sill are courses of terra cotta, carved in a saw-tooth pattern. A similar course of terra cotta is carved in a beaded pattern above the storefront. The second story brickwork is surmounted by a cornice and parapet. The cornice is corbeled with indentations of recessed brick, and another course of saw-tooth brick. The parapet includes brick panels and features a centrally placed etched date plate with the date of construction, 1897. The parapet was originally crenelated, but was reconstructed in the late twentieth century; possibly using historic bricks.¹⁹

The west (rear) elevation of the original building is painted brick. It includes two one-over-one windows each with a fabric awning. Unlike the Washington Street façade, the rear of the building lacks extensive decorative details.

The one-story rear addition, which is shared with the building at 7 North Washington, has a flat roof with a tall parapet on the north and south elevations. The parapet includes patterned brickwork on the south elevation facing Burdick Street, while the north parapet is a utilitarian

¹⁸ Photograph, circa 1995 photo of North Washington Street. Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

¹⁹ Photograph, #48 Post Card, 1926, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; Grossman and Frost, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

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demarcation of the division between two commercial spaces inside. The decorative brickwork includes recessed panels with bricks inset in an H-pattern. Above the panels is a dentilated cornice.

The wall that forms the southeast corner of the addition parallels the north wall of the original building, leaving a triangular opening behind the former Oxford Savings Bank. The angled wall contains a modern glazed pedestrian door, accessed from a raised step, above which hangs a signboard that projects perpendicular to the wall. The primary fenestration on the south elevation is a string of three display windows. A second entrance, accessible by a concrete ramp, is positioned on the west elevation of the addition. The pedestrian door is fully glazed with a fixed transom above. Adjacent to the door is a one-over-one window with a stone sill.

Based on the date plate on the Washington Street façade, and supporting evidence from Sanborn maps, the original portion of the building was erected in 1897, with the addition added between 1915 and 1926.^{20, 21} The building has always housed commercial enterprises. In the early twentieth century, the first floor housed a clothing store, followed by the L. H. Cooper jewelry store.²² Circa 1920 the building housed a meat market, owned by Ed Summers.²³ By the 1930s the market was known as Central Meat Market, owned by Otto J. Boat, which remained into the 1940s.²⁴ During the early twentieth century, the second floor housed the Justice of the Peace office.²⁵ As of the late 1990s, the building housed Blue Moon Neon Works. Since 2010 the building has housed Funky Monkey Toys on the first floor.²⁶ At the time of recordation, Academics and the Arts, a learning center, was on the second floor.

Although the building has been altered by a replacement parapet and modern storefront, the building retains many of its original features and has a good level of integrity to convey its associations with architecture and commerce.

²⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1900), 2.

²¹ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1926), 2.

²² Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Photograph: "The northwest quadrant..." *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D16

²³ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Photograph: "The northwest quadrant..." *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D16; United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States*, (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of the Census, 1920),

https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/6061/4311627-00814?pid=40666752&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D6061%26h%3D40666752%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26phsrc%3DONk32%26_pstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=ONk32&_pstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true, accessed 30 April 2018.

²⁴ Advertisement. "Bake one of our Good Hams for Easter." *Oxford Leader*, 25 March 1932, 7; United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of the Census, 1940), https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/2442/M-T0627-01800-00364?pid=85666211&backurl=https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv%3D1%26dbid%3D2442%26h%3D85666211%26tid%3D%26pid%3D%26usePUB%3Dtrue%26phsrc%3DONk35%26_pstart%3DsuccessSource&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=ONk35&_pstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true, accessed 30 April 2018.

²⁵ Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B12.

²⁶ "About Us," Funky Monkey Toys, <http://funkymonkeytoysonline.com/about-us/>, accessed 2 May 2018.

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7 North Washington; Haddrill Block; 1921; Contributing

This two-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint with a one-story rear addition. Located in a row of commercial buildings, only the east and west elevations are visible of the Haddrill Block. Both the original building and addition are of brick construction and have flat roofs. The façade includes numerous decorative brick elements, including a tall brick parapet or boomtown facade that creates the illusion of a third story or large attic space. Within the parapet, brick work creates vertical and horizontal bands through the use of soldier courses and projecting bricks; as well as projecting brick crosses and a basketweave band course. On the second story, brickwork includes window surrounds and another band course comprised of an alternating recessed and corbeled soldier course.

Both stories of the east-facing façade are divided into three fenestration bays. At street level, the storefront has engaged columns flanking each fenestration bay, with a string of paneled signboards above. The primary entrance is recessed within a segmentally arched opening in the center bay. The door is modern fully glazed door is set in an arched and glazed surround. Flanking the entrance are two plate glass display windows above a low paneled bulkhead wall. Windows on the second story have one-over-one sashes. These are paired in the center bay and placed singularly in the outer bays. The second story windows share a common sill that forms a band course across the façade. The windows are surmounted by shelf moldings that are punctuated by keystones. The top of façade is adorned by decorative brickwork, including an etched stone date plate that reads:

Haddrill
-1921-

Historically, the date plate was the upper-most part of the building, which was stepped above the roofline.²⁷ Since the 1920s, the parapet flanking the date place has been infilled with modern brick. The brick parapet wall is capped with a wood cornice that was added circa 1995.²⁸ The cornice includes a segmentally arched center panel highlighted by a keystone, and flanked by globe finials on the outside corners. The rear elevation of the second story is painted brick and includes four singly spaced one-over-one windows with fabric awnings.

The brick rear one-story addition, circa 1921-1926, which is shared with the building at 5 North Washington, has a flat roof and stepped parapet blocking views to the flat roof. Fenestration includes a glazed pedestrian door on the west elevation, sheltered by a fabric awning; and a one-over-one arched window on the north elevation.

The Haddrill Brothers' clothing store was founded several years before their move into the building at 7 North Washington. Records indicate that in 1907 they were located across the street at 4 North Washington.²⁹ It is believed they moved from this location to the Haddrill Block upon

²⁷ Photograph, #485 Post Card, 1926, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

²⁸ Photograph, circa 1995 photo of North Washington Street. Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

²⁹ Photograph: "Homecomings..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D2

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completion of the new building in 1921. The brothers sold their business to the G. W. Carpenter Company of Lapeer in December 1923, who took possession on January 1, 1924.³⁰ With the new ownership, the firm name changed to Haddrill-Carpenter. The business was again sold in 1948, when it was purchased by Fred Conley and Neil Coulter of Lapeer.³¹ The menswear store was renamed Coulter and Conley, and remained in business until June 1, 1974 when they closed.³² In the late-1990s the building housed a conglomerate of eight home-good related businesses, known together as New Season; with Angela Profant as proprietor.³³ As of 2017, the building housed Beadifferent Boutique, a bead and gifts store.

The building retains much of its original architectural details, although the cornice and storefront have been replaced. Overall the building holds sufficient integrity to convey its architectural and commercial significance.

9 North Washington; Clark Block; c. circa 1894; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The north, east, and west elevations are exposed, but the south elevation is a shared party wall with 7 North Washington, completely obscuring it from view. Primary exterior materials include brick on the east-facing façade, stucco on the north elevation, and vinyl siding on the west elevation.

Both the first story storefront and windows of the second story are divided into three fenestration bays. The exterior of the storefront is wood-paneled, including the bulkhead wall, a broad signboard over a large display window in the south half of the elevation, the wood trim around the display windows, and moldings for two doors located in the north half of the storefront facade. The southern of the doors is positioned on a slightly angled wall, which is clad with green heavily flecked stone. The northern door is set parallel to the building façade. And has a transom window above. Each a door is paneled, however the upper half of the southern door includes a multi-light window, while a much smaller window is placed on the northern door. Above the recessed entrance bay is a fabric awning. The second story facade has a center panel which is slightly recessed from the façade, and is pierced by a bank of three windows. The windows themselves are one-over-one replacement sashes. The sashes are squared and surmounted by a decorative carved lintel, and an arched spandrel. The facade has minimal decorative elements, brickwork is limited to modest corbeling above the arched windows. The north elevation is void of fenestration.

Fenestration on the rear (west) elevation includes pedestrian entrances on the first and second stories, as well as one-over-one windows on the second story. The second story door provides access to a large wood-framed deck supported by wood posts. The deck is encircled by a simple modern wood balustrade. In 1894 the Clark Block became the second home of the Oxford

³⁰ "Thumb Briefs- Lapeer," *Times Herald*, Port Huron, Michigan, 12 December 1923.

³¹ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11

³² Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

³³ "Eight is Enough," *Detroit Free Press*, 27 June 1998, 3D.

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Savings Bank.³⁴ At the time, a wood-framed ancillary building was west of the main building. By 1909 a rear two story porch was added and the ancillary building had been expanded. The ancillary building was removed by the 1920s. The Oxford Savings Bank moved to its new building at 1 North Washington Street in 1923. Following the bank's departure, the building became home to Roy Robinson's barber shop.³⁵ A photograph from the mid-1920s shows that there was historically a tall parapet wall on the façade, which has subsequently reduced to its present size.³⁶ A photograph, taken circa 1995, indicates that a barber shop with the Robinson family name continued at this location well into the late twentieth century.³⁷ As of 2018 the building is home to a dental office, the Healthy Smile Center.

Some loss of the building's original materials has occurred, including the parapet and an altered storefront. However, the Clark Block overall retains original design, cladding, and massing to convey its historic commercial associations.

15 North Washington; Vacant Lot and Brick Walls; c. circa 1980; Non-contributing

The vacant lot is a rectangular paved parcel that was formerly a parking lot. The parking lot was formerly accessed by Washington Street; however, the present sidewalk and curb prevent vehicular access from this point. Similarly, vehicular access from the west is also prevented by a modern sidewalk. The former Washington Street access point to the parking lot was between two brick walls that extend across the lot, abutting the sidewalk. The two brick walls are low, modern structures, constructed circa 1980. Each wall has a foundation of soldier courses and a top row of header courses. The ends of the walls are highlighted by low brick piers with concrete caps. The interior of the lot includes concrete bumper stops at the former parking spots. A rectangular patch of gravel extends across the west end of the lot, abutting the sidewalk.

The lot occupies the primary area of the Oakland House hotel site, a three-story building that was constructed in 1889 by Fred M. Clark.³⁸ The hotel not only offered rooms for guests, but also meals, and entertainment. It was one of three hotels operating in Oxford at the end of the nineteenth century.³⁹ The hotel was demolished in 1971.⁴⁰ A photograph from April 1976 shows that the brick walls had not yet been erected, indicating that circa 1980 is an appropriate construction date.⁴¹ These resources are of modern construction, and therefore a non-contributing site, and two non-contributing structures to the historic district.

19 North Washington; Perry's Shoe Service; c. 1975; Non-contributing

³⁴ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 4; "Oxford Savings Bank" Working File, original on file at Michigan State Historic Preservation Office[SHPO], Lansing, Michigan.

³⁵ "It was 1865 when Stub's kin started barbering here." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E2.

³⁶ Photograph, #485 Post Card, 1926, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

³⁷ Circa 1995 photo of North Washington Street, Box: Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

³⁸ Maurice Cole, "'The Oakland,' Best known, longest lasting hotel in Oxford history," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B1.

³⁹ R. L. Polk, *Polk's Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1897*, (Detroit: R. L. Polk & Co. 1897), 1348.

⁴⁰ CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

⁴¹ Photograph: "This picture will soon be obsolete, if it isn't already." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D19.

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The one-story building has a rectilinear footprint. The north elevation abuts an adjacent commercial building, while each of the remaining elevations is visible. South of the building is a large vacant paved lot. The building is constructed of concrete block with a brick veneered façade. The flat roof is partially hidden by the parapet wall that extends across the façade and continues in steps down the south elevation. The façade is divided into three fenestration bays consisting of a center door flanked by two display windows. The door and windows have heavy moldings, including a shelf hood above the signboard over the door. On the west elevation, it is clear that the roof continues beyond the wall junction to form an overhang over the rear entry. The rear entry is located at the south corner of the elevation, with a large section near the center of the elevation clad with vertical wood sheathing, suggesting that an overhead door may have once been present. The building is of modern construction and therefore does not contribute to the historic district.

The building occupies a portion of the Oakland House hotel site (see entry for 15 North Washington).⁴² The lot at 19 North Washington was historically part of the hotel property, but remained unoccupied until after the hotel's demolition in 1971. Although the precise construction date is unknown, the building at 19 North Washington appears to have been constructed circa 1975. In 1976 the building housed Perry's Shoe Service. Since approximately 1990 the building has housed Sisters' Family Hair Care.⁴³

21 North Washington; W. H. Smale Building; 1900; Contributing

The two-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The brick construction material is visible on the east-facing façade, and upper walls of both the south and west elevations. The first story of the south elevation is partially obscured by the one-story building at 19 North Washington, while the first story of the east and west elevations have been clad with modern, circa 2010, clapboard siding. The north elevation of the building is largely obscured by the adjacent business at 23 North Washington, although a small section of the wall is visible from the northwest, revealing that no fenestration pierces the wall, however two windows are on the second story of the south elevation.

The storefront façade is divided into three fenestration bays consisting of a partially glazed pedestrian door in each of the outer bays and the center bay has a pair of display windows. The storefront is sheltered by a metal pent roof that extends the width of the façade. Above the storefront is a blank wood signboard divided into three paneled sections. The second story fenestration bays are defined by brick pilasters, which create a narrow bay on either side of the wider center bay. Within each bay is a single window, consisting of narrow windows in the outside bays and a wider window in the center bay. Each of the second story windows has a squared wood sashes, set into segmental arched openings. The two outer windows are double hung, with one-over-one sash, while the center window consists of fixed lower sash with a

⁴² CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

⁴³ Advertisement. "Who to Call," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40. "Oxford, MI Beauty Salon," <http://sistershairecareoxford.com/>, accessed 16 November 2017.

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transom above a heavy lintel. Additional one-over-one double hung sashes are utilized on the second story of the south and west elevations. The façade cornice has been boxed with modern paneling, obscuring original brick details. Below the modern cornice the brick façade of the building has been parged to create a dentilated pattern. The parged surface over the brick is visible in a circa 1995 photograph, however the photograph reveals that the modern boxed cornice is obscuring decorative brickwork; including diamond point brick and recessed panels.⁴⁴

Like the façade, the rear (west) elevation is divided into three fenestration bays. The first story is clad with modern clapboard below a pent roof. A glazed pedestrian entrance and one-over-one window fill the southwest first story bay, and the remainder of the first story has a door comprised of four vertical hanging-sliding panels. A modern signboard, similar in design to the signboard on the façade, extends above the pent roof to four brick courses below the second story windows. These windows are one-over-one replacement sashes that rest on stone sills and are set into segmental arched openings. Two identical windows are on the second story of the south elevation as well. This building was included in the 1900 Sanborn-Perris map with the note “under construction to be a hardware store.”⁴⁵ The hardware store was owned by W. H. Smale, who had been doing business in Oxford since 1885.⁴⁶ By 1909 the store had a tin shop on the second floor and an ancillary building had been erected behind the building. Between 1926 and 1937 a one-story concrete block addition was made to the rear elevation, which was removed sometime after 1945.⁴⁷ In 1957 the local papers carried the news that a major remodel of the interior was underway.⁴⁸

The building remained a hardware store nearly the entire period of significance, although it changed owners and names multiple times. The final owners of a hardware store in the building were Neil Coulter and Fred Conley, who also owned the clothing store at 7 North Washington. The pair who purchased the business in 1961, and renamed it C&C Hardware. They expanded to include the store next-door space to the north, 23 North Washington.⁴⁹ In 1967 the business was moved across the street, to 10 North Washington and the owners sold 21 North Washington Street, but retained ownership of 23 North Washington. In 1981 the building was occupied by Forbes Printing & O/S (possibly office solutions).⁵⁰ It remained a printing store through circa 1995.⁵¹ As of 2011 the building was occupied by a Curves fitness center, but as of 2017 was vacant.⁵²

Commented [TAW1]: What is this?

Commented [ses2R1]: I am not sure. A friend in the printing/office tech industry said it is likely Office Solutions.

⁴⁴ Photo, #265, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁴⁵ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁴⁶ Advertisement: “72 Years...,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A4.

⁴⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1937), 2.

⁴⁸ Advertisement: “72 Years...,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A4.

⁴⁹ Jim Sherman, “Main street fixtures are gone,” *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3; Advertisement. *Detroit Free Press*, 17 April 1964, 19.

⁵⁰ Advertisement, *Detroit Free Press*, 16 October 1981, 16.

⁵¹ Photo, #265, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁵² Photo, “Where ‘Curves’ is today (8-2011), Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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The building's storefront, rear, and cornice alterations have impacted its historic integrity. However, the building's second story retains sufficient historic fabric to convey that the building has been a continued presence in downtown Oxford, and therefore the building is contributing to the district.

23 North Washington; Office/Retail; c. 1898; Contributing

The commercial building has a rectilinear footprint, with a two-story brick masonry core, and a rear one-story concrete block addition. The south elevation abuts adjacent 21 North Washington, while the north elevation forms the south side of a narrow alley or light well between 23 and 25 North Washington. A brick wall constructed between the two buildings prohibit access to the space, and a tree planted in the street obscures any view from the street. The original two-story section of the building has a flat roof, with a chimney stack near the north elevation.

The first story of the façade includes the storefront, which is divided into two asymmetrical fenestration bays. The fenestration bays are framed by narrow pilasters that rise to support a sign board across the storefront. The southern bay has the primary entrance, consisting of a modern glazed door and sidelight that is surmounted by a tall segmentally arched transom. The northern bay contains a three-part display window below a single segmentally arched transom.

The second story of the façade is divided into three fenestration bays each with a wood sash window. The central bay has a large single light window with an almost flat segmentally arched transom. The outer two bays have one-over-one windows with similarly arched transoms. The windows are topped by brick hoods, and a belt course that uses a soldier course of diamond point bricks that extends below the hoods. The diamond point bricks are enclosed by stretcher courses at the top and bottom and a single soldier that abut the window openings. Single soldier bricks are absent from the belt course at the northern and southern ends of the building. The windows hoods are comprised of three header courses, the upper-most course having every other brick project, creating a texturized appearance. Above the hoods, the same diamond point brick technique is used to create a series of vertical stripes, each eight bricks tall. A dentilated cornice is present that features three panels of corbeling; each displaying a checkered pattern created by placing the half-bat bricks in each course in the diamond point seen elsewhere on the building. These panels are evenly spaced, with the outer two panels flush with the pilaster of 23 North Washington, and the pilaster of the adjacent 21 North Washington.

The rear wing is of concrete block construction with a brick veneer on the west elevation. The original structure of the wing is one story with a flat roof. The wing has been expanded by a modern one-and-one-half-story front-gable that extends the length of the wing and projects from the west elevation. The front-gable section is clad in wood shingles on the first story, with a belt course above, and vinyl siding clads the second story. Within the gable is a string of four-single light windows on the first story, and broad single-light circular arch window on the second story. The window consists of four single-light sashes and is topped by a single arched light. The boxed bay is clad in a combination of wood shingle and vinyl siding. Decorative brackets are applied to

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the gable ends. A second pedestrian entrance, consisting of a single modern door, is positioned south of the boxed bay window.

The original building was erected sometime between 1895 and 1900. It was first used as an office, followed by a jeweler and later a furniture store.⁵³ In 1926 three doctors moved their offices to this location, Dr. Bachelor, Dr. W.W. Lewis, and Dr. S. H. Mills.⁵⁴ Early in the doctor's occupation, circa 1930, shallow two-story brick addition was added to the rear of the building. The extant rear wing appears to have been added sometime after 1945.⁵⁵ In the early 1960s the building was purchased by Neil Coulter and Fred Conley and became part of the C&C Hardware next-door at 21 North Washington. Coulter and Conley moved out of the building in 1967, but retained ownership.⁵⁶ Following their departure, the building was home to Oakland Gun Rack.⁵⁷ In 1972 Coulter and Conley opened Village Paint and Wallpaper in this building. They retired and sold the building in 1981. By the mid-1990s children's clothing was sold here, and a faux barn veneer was applied to the storefront, consisting of board and batten siding and the outline of a gambrel roof in the signboard.⁵⁸ This storefront was removed sometime between 1995 and 2017. At the time of recordation, the building housed Sullivan's Irish Pub.

Although altered by a rear addition, and changes to the storefront, the building overall retains a large number of original features to convey its historic architectural and commercial significance.

25 North Washington; Millinery; c. 1880; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. Only the façade (east) and rear (west) elevations are visible. The north elevation is a shared party wall, and although there is small alley or light well between the south elevation and the adjacent building it is partially obscured by a brick wall constructed between the buildings and tree planted in the sidewalk further obscures views from the right-of-way.

The façade includes a two-bay storefront on the first story, and three fenestration bays punctuated by a single window in each bay on the second story. The two first-floor storefront bays are divided by a wrought-iron pilaster. The north bay is angled to a recess that includes two pedestrian entrances. The northern-most of the two entrances is parallel to the street and is surmounted by a multi-light transom. The second door is positioned on the angled wall of the recess and abuts a narrow display window. The main display windows occupy the south storefront bay. All three of the display windows sit atop a low brick bulkhead wall. Wood signboards and a metal storefront cornice extend above the storefront. The metal cornice has a ribbed frieze and incorporates the decorative bases of the second story's outer brick pilasters.

⁵³ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1909), 2; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 2.

⁵⁴ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A9

⁵⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

⁵⁶ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

⁵⁷ "We Buy, Sell and Trade Guns," *Detroit Free Press*, 2 November 1968, 24.

⁵⁸ Photo, North Washington Street Circa 1995, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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The north end of the cornice and pilaster decorative detail is half the width of the south end, and has a jagged edge, suggesting it may have been removed when the storefront to the north was altered.

The second story of the building contains three symmetrical fenestration bays defined by brick pilasters. Each bay has a one-over-one replacement window with transoms set in the semi-circular arched window opening. The replacement windows appear to be close to the same width as the original windows, but are much shorter, resulting in a large arched spandrel above the transoms. The window openings are surmounted by decorative brick circular arches, formed by three rowlock courses surmounted by a projecting header course. Above the windows is an elaborate corbeled and dentilated cornice.

The building's footprint is expanded slightly on the west elevation by a modern wood balcony. The balcony extends across the northern two-thirds of the building and is attached on the north side by a second-story entry enclosure on the west elevation of the building at 27 North Washington Street. The south corner of the balcony is supported by a simple wood post that rests on the paved area outside the building. The balcony is accessed by a paneled door on the second story. Below the balcony is a pedestrian door at the northwest corner of the first story. Additional first story fenestration includes a narrow double-hung window and transom near the door and a similar, but wider, window opening just south of the balcony posts. Directly above the wider window is a similar window on the second story of the building. All windows, including the transom window above the door, and doors on the west elevation are replacements.

The building appears to have been erected circa 1880, during a boom that occurred from railroads entering the community. As of the 1890 Sanborn map, the building was noted as a millinery.⁵⁹ It remained as such until 1900.⁶⁰ In 1909 the building was a telephone office, with a rear two-story wood-framed porch and an ancillary building; both of which were removed sometime after 1945. By 1915, 25 North Washington had become vacant. Eventually the building became offices for both the W. O. Smith Insurance and Real Estate Company and the Ridgelawn Cemetery Association; both are present in the building by the mid-1930s.⁶¹ Throughout much of the twentieth century, the office was home to various realtors and insurance agents.⁶² As of 2017 the building housed Curtis Insurance, which was established in 1948.⁶³

Although the building has been altered with replacement windows and removal of the cornice, the extant features, including storefront configuration and decorative brickwork, conveys the building's historic significance.

Commented [TAW3]: Does the north end show any cut marks that would indicate this? It looks somewhat jagged on that edge. If that's the case, note that as well. Also, this does not appear to be original. Historical photographs do not show this, and window sills seem visible.

Commented [ses4R3]: I looked on the website and could not see the building clear enough to know if the frieze is not original. Yes, adjacent buildings had a cornice atop the storefront, but this one (at least in photographs) did not, however I could not see it clear enough to know what was there instead.

⁵⁹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, 1890), 2.

⁶⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁶¹ Photograph: "This isn't so long ago ..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E8.

⁶² "Real Estate Outside Detroit." *Detroit Free Press*, 2 April 1951, 33; "Open House." *Detroit Free Press*, 9 June 1957, 56; "87-Acre Parcel." *Detroit Free Press*, 28 September 1969.

⁶³ "History," <http://curtisinsuranceagency.com/company>, accessed, 16 November 2017.

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**27 North Washington; Hardware Store/Detroit Edison Company; c. 1880. c. 1892;
Contributing**

The commercial building has a two-story brick masonry core with a rectilinear footprint. The original building has been expanded by a circa 1892 two-story wood-framed rear addition. Both the original building and the addition are sheltered under a flat roof. Only the east-facing façade and rear west elevation are fully visible. The north and south elevations are party walls with adjacent buildings, the north elevation is not visible at all, and only a small portion of the original building is visible on the south elevation.

The façade includes the storefront on the first story, which is divided into two fenestration bays. The north bay includes two recessed pedestrian entrances, the northern most positioned parallel to the street and the second positioned at an angled wall between the façade and the north door. The north door has a cross-and-bible panel pattern and the south door, which accesses the storefront, is fully glazed. The south bay of the storefront includes a string of three single-light display windows over a brick bulkhead. A modern metal awning extends the width of the storefront just below the sign board. Positioned at the center of the signboard is a metal back-lit sign that projects perpendicular from the wall. The second story of the façade is divided into three fenestration bays, each defined by segmentally arched hoods with corbelled drops over the replacement windows. The center window is currently a horizontal sliding unit, while the outer two are one-over one sashes. The windows do not fill the space below their respective hoods, and the resulting space is infilled by wood panels with decorative moldings that replicate the detail at the base of the window hoods, essentially an inverted ziggurat. Additional decorative brickwork on the façade includes a cornice comprised of two courses of corbeled bricks supported brick modillions in the same inverted ziggurat pattern as was utilized on the window hoods. A brick parapet extends above the cornice.

The exterior of both the west elevation of the original building and addition are clad in vinyl siding. Extending from the walls of the building is a long modern wood staircase providing access to a door at the second story. A modern gable roof, supported by wood posts, projects from the west elevation, and shelters the first story fenestration of the addition. Below the projecting roof is a glazed pedestrian entrance at the southwest corner of the addition, and a square single light window high on the wall north of the door. Second story fenestration includes a pedestrian door at the head of the stairway and two windows on the second story of the addition, including a double hung window above the first story entrance and a small fixed light in the northwest corner.

The building appears to have been erected circa 1880, during the Oxford's railroad boom years. In 1890 Sanborn maps indicate that the building was used as a dwelling, however it is not clear if the whole building was a dwelling, or just the second floor.⁶⁴ By 1895 it had become a hardware store, and a rear two-story addition present today, was made to house a tin shop shortly thereafter. A drug store occupied the building in 1909, although it did not enjoy a long tenure,

⁶⁴ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2.

Commented [TAW5]: The entire building?

Commented [ses6R5]: This is based on a Sanborn Map, which do not always specify the upper floors. I cannot say for certain, only that the building was marked as a drug store.

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and the building was vacant in 1915.⁶⁵ The Detroit Edison company took over Oxford's municipal power plant in 1920.⁶⁶ A newspaper photograph from the mid-1930s illustrates this building as the company's local office.⁶⁷ Detroit Edison remained in the building through the mid-1960s.⁶⁸ By 1981 the building was home to Heckle and Jeckle Party Store, owned by Dan Koshiw.⁶⁹ The party store remained in business through 1999. The building was vacant at the time of recordation.

Historic integrity of the building has been diminished by replacement windows, siding, and a modern storefront. However, the extant features, including decorative brickwork, convey the building's historic associations, and therefore it is contributing to the district.

29 North Washington; Smith Store Building; c. 1880; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The only visible elevations are the east-facing façade and rear west elevation. The north and south elevations are shared party walls with adjacent commercial buildings.

The first story of the façade includes the building's storefront, which unlike the rest of the brick building, is clad in painted plywood. The storefront is divided into three asymmetrical bays. The northern-most bay includes a transom-topped pedestrian entrance that provides access to the second floor. The middle bay has a slightly recessed partially-glazed pedestrian entrance to the first floor retail. The southern bay consists of a short-angled wall at the north end which allows access to the recessed entry, with the remainder of the bay includes two large display windows. Below each of the display windows is a bulkhead wall that is also paneled with the smooth plywood utilized on the remaining storefront. A broad, framed, plywood signboard extends the width of the building, covering the entire area between the top of the storefront windows to the base of the stone sills of the second story windows.

The second story is divided into three symmetrical bays, each defined by a window. The window openings include a stone sill with three courses of progressively shorter corbeled bricks rising from the base at each corner of the opening. This motif is repeated at the base of the drops flanking each of the projecting segmentally arched brick hoods, with four courses of brick corbels forming the ornament. Within each window opening are one-over-one replacement sashes, set into arched openings infilled with wood spandrels. Additional decorative brickwork includes pilasters on the outside corners, and a corbeled brick detail supported by fifteen stepped corbeled modillions. The façade is surmounted by an ornamental wood cornice. The cornice contains three recessed wood panels with a dentiled molding above. Each panel is set off by four decorative consoles with carved etchings. The outer two consoles are larger than the inner two. The northern-most console is in better condition than the other three, and is surmounted by a

⁶⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

⁶⁶ "Edison welcomed as Municipal plant fails," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D14.

⁶⁷ Photograph: "This isn't so long ago ..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E8.

⁶⁸ Michigan Bell Co., *Michigan Bell Telephone Directory for Oxford-Leonard*. (Michigan Bell: October 1966), 12.

⁶⁹ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

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pyramidal finial. This could be because the northern console is shared by with the neighboring building at 31 North Washington, which has a matching console on its northeast corner.

Extending from the rear (west) elevation of the building is a two-story wood-framed dog-leg stairway partially protected from the elements by a shed roof. The stairs begin on the south side of the building with a short run that ends at a platform adjacent the building, then turns and climbs along the rear of the building until it reaches a door at the north corner of the second story. Tall wood posts support the stairway and roof. Fenestration on the rear of the building includes a modern door near the center of the first story, under the stairway. A pair of segmentally arched openings flank the door, one largely obscured by the stairway near the south corner of the elevation, and the second north of the door. The northern opening is boarded with vertical wood panels. At the second story, there is the door at the north corner, and two windows, openings, one positioned just south of the door, and the second near the south corner. All windows on this elevation are comprised of one-over-one replacement sashes.

The building appears to have been constructed during Oxford's railroad boom years, circa 1880. In 1890 the two-story commercial block was home to a hardware store. Between 1895 and 1900 the building was a furniture store, and there was a rear one-story ell added to the building. Circa 1915 the building was occupied by Smith Store, a grocery owned by C. F. Smith.⁷⁰ By the mid-1920s Smith removed the building's rear addition, which he replaced with a one-story wood-framed porch.⁷¹ Smith Store remained open until 1955 when it was succeeded by Ashley Store.⁷² By 1976 the building housed Oxford Floral and Gift Shop.⁷³ In the mid-1990s, Oxford Door and Hardware Store was located here.⁷⁴ As of 2017 the building housed a hair salon known as Villa de-Goochi.

The building retains original fabric including decorative brickwork and a wood cornice. Although altered by replacement windows and a modern storefront, the building retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance.

31 North Washington; Curry Building; c. 1880; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The only visible elevations are the east-facing façade and west rear elevation. The north and south elevations are shared party walls with adjacent buildings.

The first story of the façade includes a three-bay storefront. The central bay has three arched display windows, enframed by engaged posts topped by modern wood capitals. Both the windows and the columns rest on a brick bulkhead wall, which projects at the base of each post. A stone still tops the bulkhead wall. The outer two bays have pedestrian entrances. The northern

⁷⁰ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11; Photograph: "This isn't so long ago ..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E8.

⁷¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

⁷² "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11.

⁷³ Advertisement. "Who to Call," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40.

⁷⁴ Photo, North Washington Street Circa 1995, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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entrance is slightly recessed and accesses the first floor. This door is fully glazed, and includes glazed transom and sidelight windows. The southern entrance, a modern paneled door with a faux brass camed window, accesses the upstairs. A wood spandrel fills the space over the door. The storefront is surmounted by a single signboard with the current business name in raised cursive letters.

The façade second story is divided into three identical fenestration bays. Each bay is defined by a single window set in an opening. The openings have a stone sill with three courses of progressively shorter corbeled bricks on either side of the base. The segmentally arched hoods over the windows are constructed of two courses of corbeled bricks that drop approximately a quarter of the window height on each side. At the base of each hood is a pair of stepped corbeled bricks mimicking a corbel. Within each opening are one-over-one replacement windows with a fixed panel transom. Modern light fixtures project from the top-center of each panel. The building has corbelling below a boxed or paneled entablature. The wood cornice is plain horizontal banding with pyramidal caps atop each of the consoles at the north and south ends of the building.

The rear (west) elevation is more modest than the façade. The brick wall is painted, and a metal staircase has been added at the south corner of the elevation. The stairway has a straight run up to a small platform in front of a second story door. The first story includes a centrally placed pedestrian entrance consisting of a metal security door with a glazed transom. In addition to the door on the second story, there are two small window openings, each with a one-over-one window and modest wood surround. Close examination of the brick wall reveals that several previous windows have been infilled. Most of the infill appears to have taken place years ago, with careful brick infill of larger window openings on the second story and a window that is totally missing north of the door, but its segmental arched hood remains. There also appears to have been some alterations adjacent to the door, which have subsequently been infilled with concrete block.

Based on architectural evidence and the historic context of downtown, the Curry Building was likely erected circa 1880, during Oxford's railroad boom years. As of 1895 the Curry Building was a drug store.⁷⁵ By 1900 it had changed to a grocery.⁷⁶ In 1913 the building was remodeled and became the first movie theatre in Oxford, the Pastime Theatre.⁷⁷ Roy McMullen was the proprietor. He claimed that "nothing will ever be shown that can possibly offend," such as "prize fights or vaudeville."⁷⁸ The interior remodel included an inclined floor and seating for seventy-five to one hundred people. The theater was short-lived however, as McMullen soon chose to relocate to 9 South Washington Street, and by 1915 the Curry Building was vacant.⁷⁹ Subsequent

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⁷⁵ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1895), 2.

⁷⁶ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁷⁷ "First movies promised no offensive pictures like fights, vaudeville," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C7.

⁷⁸ "First movies," *Oxford Leader*, C7.

⁷⁹ "First movies," *Oxford Leader*, C7; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

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Sanborn maps simply list the building as a store.⁸⁰ As of 1976 the building was home to Oxford Village Coiffures.⁸¹ In the mid-1990s it was a business called “Hairy Situations.”⁸² As of 2017 the building was occupied by Mark A. Young Jewelers, which has been in business in Oakland County since 2003.⁸³

The building retains its decorative brickwork and holds sufficient integrity to convey its historic associations. The alterations, including replacement windows and a modern storefront, do not diminish the overall appearance of the building, and therefore the Curry Building is contributing to the historic district.

33 North Washington; Grocery Store; c. 1880; Contributing

The brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint, comprised of a two-story core and a rear one-story addition. Both sections of the building have flat roofs. The only visible elevations on the original building are the façade (east) and rear (west). The north and south elevations are shared party walls with adjacent buildings.

The first story of the façade includes the building’s four-bay storefront. Unlike the rest of the brick building, the storefront is clad with a wood paneled bulkhead and metal paneled signboard. The front door is off-centered and slightly recessed in the widest of the four bays, located third from the south. Within the bay, and adjacent to the door is a sidelight, and above it is a transom. Three display windows occupy the remaining bays each defined by a narrow pilaster. A metal-paneled signboard extends across the upper part of the storefront.

The second story of the façade is three fenestration bays, each with an identical window. The openings have a stone sill with three courses of progressively shorter corbeled bricks on either side of the base. The segmentally arched hoods over the windows are constructed of two courses of corbeled bricks that drop approximately a quarter of the window height on each side. At the base of each hood is a pair of stepped corbeled bricks mimicking a corbel. Within each opening are one-over-one replacement windows with an arched transom. Corbeled modillions extend across the façade cornice below the projecting cornice. The wood cornice is divided into four sections by small decorative brackets.

The rear one-story brick addition was made circa 1897. It has a flat roof and a large wood-paneled frieze below the cornice that wraps around all three exposed elevations. Fenestration on the rear of the addition includes a glazed door, centered on the west elevation. A second door is positioned at the southwest corner of the original building and is accessed by a wood staircase.

The earliest reference to a business at this location was the barber shop of Sidney R. Riley in the mid-1860s; however, it not clear if the shop was in the extant building, or just at this location.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

⁸¹ Advertisement. “Who to Call,” *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40.

⁸² Photo, North Washington Street Circa 1995, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁸³ “About,” Mark A. Young Jewelers, <http://markayoungjewelers.com/about/>, accessed 30 April 2018.

⁸⁴ “It was 1865 when Stub’s kin started barbering here,” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E2.

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The building's architectural elements indicate that it was likely constructed during the railroad boom years in Oxford, circa 1880. Based on Sanborn map research, as of 1895, the building housed a grocery store. Five years later it housed both a "hand printing" facility and a dry goods store. By 1909 the rear addition had been added to the building. At that time 33 North Washington, as well as its northern neighbor at 35 North Washington, housed one large department store. The department store was short-lived, and by 1915 the two buildings had returned to separate entities, with 33 North Washington housing both a confectionary and cobbler's shop. In the mid-1930s the building was home to a used furniture store, owned by Ed Skinner.⁸⁵ In 1972 it became A-A Flower Shop, owned by the mother/daughter team; Alice Barbo and Ann Loomis.⁸⁶ The shop remained at this location through the mid-1990s.⁸⁷ As late as 2013 the building has housed an Italian restaurant, Vendetti's Pizza and Pasta. The building retains a good level of historic integrity with minimal alterations.

35 North Washington; Grocery & Dry-Goods Store; c. 1880, c. 1965, c. 2005; Non-contributing

The two-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The north, east, and west elevations are visible, while the south wall abuts the adjacent building. The façade and west elevation are clad in a modern brick veneer, while original brick is visible on the north elevation.

The first story of the façade is divided into three bays, with the northern two bays being slightly recessed and clad in wood. The southern bay is also recessed, and is fully occupied by a doorway. Both of the doors have Colonial Revival stylistic details, featuring multi-light paneled doors with pedimented surrounds. The center bay is comprised of a string of three display windows above a vertical wood bulkhead. The façade's second story includes an off-center picture window flanked by a pair of operable one-over-one sashes. Decorative brickwork on the façade mimics what may have been present historically, including projecting pilasters on the outer edges of the elevation, and corbeled brick arches that divide the parapet into three sections. A metal sign projects perpendicular to the elevation above the northern-most door.

The west elevation has been reclad with multiple color brick, such as gained popularity in the 1970s. Fenestration on the elevation includes pedestrian entrances at the south corner of the first and second stories, with the second story door accessed by a stairway that runs straight up from grade over the first story door. Windows include two single one-over-one replacement windows on the first story and a string of three windows on the second story.

The north elevation is void of architectural detail. It has minimal fenestration, including only two one-over-one replacement windows on the second story.

⁸⁵ Photograph: "This isn't so long ago ..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E8.

⁸⁶ "Business up at A&A," *Oxford Leader*, 27 March 1975, 10.

⁸⁷ Photo, #265, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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A precise construction date for this building was difficult to identify, due to multiple alterations and major remodeling that it has undergone. However, Sanborn map research indicates it is likely a contemporary to 21-35 North Washington, which were constructed circa 1880.

From 1890 through 1900 the building housed a combination grocery and dry-goods store.⁸⁸ In 1909 it was part of a large department store with its southern neighbor.⁸⁹ By 1915 the department store no longer occupied the space and the two buildings had returned to separate functions; with a fifteen-car auto garage at 35 North Washington.⁹⁰ By 1926 the building housed the post office on the first story and a lodge hall on the second story; both were present through the mid-1940s.⁹¹ Examination of Sanborn maps indicates that originally, the building extended an equal distance west as the adjacent rear wing of 33 North Washington. Historic aerial photography indicates that the length of 35 North Washington was shortened to its present size sometime between 1945 and 1964.⁹² The façade was remodeled to the present fenestration arrangement in the 1960s.⁹³

A circa 1995 photograph shows that at the time, the original brick was extant on the facade, which was painted blue. Additionally, the photograph shows decorative wrought-iron screens on the second story, metal framed windows, and a metal awning over the second story window, all appearing to have been added in the 1960s renovation. The façade extant in 2017, including replacement brick and removed metal screens, appears to date to the 2000s. At the time of recordation, the building housed Oxford Pregnancy Center.

Because the building has been extensively altered, it no longer retains historic integrity and is therefore non-contributing to the historic district.

North Washington Street, East Side

2 North Washington; Dry Goods & Offices/Red Knapp's; c. 1880, c. 1890, c. 1900; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial block is located on the northeast corner of Washington and Burdick Streets, with the primary façade facing west to North Washington. The building has an irregular footprint, formed by its corner position on Washington Street. The west and south elevations parallel the adjacent streets, the north elevation abuts the building at 6 North Washington. The east elevation reveals that the building originally consisted of three structures, with the southernmost only fronting on Burdick Street, and the remaining two sections are progressively longer to the north. The entire building has a flat roof. A covered paved patio extends along the east elevation between 2 North Washington and 15 East Burdick Street. A brick wall with a wood entrance gate is located at the street-side entrance of the patio.

⁸⁸ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁸⁹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 2.

⁹⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

⁹¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

⁹² Aerial photo, 1964. NETROnline, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>, accessed 30 April 2018.

⁹³ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

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Historically, the building included four storefronts, two facing North Washington and two facing East Burdick. The divisions of space are made evident by brick pilasters that extend from the foundation to the parapet and collaborated by the change in decorative brickwork within the parapets. On the Washington Street façade, the parapet is supported by a series of corbeled modillions. The cornice on the Burdick Street elevation is more ornate and topped by coping. The western third of the cornice, at the building's southwest corner, is aligned to the Washington Street parapet and is slightly taller than the parapet on the remainder of the elevation. It is divided into three recessed panels with corbeled modillions below a decorative cornice. The cornice includes a frieze of brick in a saw tooth pattern, formed by placing the bricks at a diamond point. The eastern two thirds of the Burdick Street parapet have corbeled brick modillions that form a series of T's, above which is another saw-tooth frieze and a series of recessed brick panels.

The primary entrance to the building is on an angled wall within a recess at the southwest corner of the south elevation. The entry recess is outlined by a rustic stone veneer. Adjacent to the recess is a wall-mounted sign with paneled bulkhead wall below.

The same wood panel finish is applied to the bulkhead walls below the storefront windows, and the signboards on the south elevation. Each of the storefront bays consists of three single-light display windows, with fluted pilasters between the large windows. Above the windows a continuous fabric awning extends down both elevations. A similar awning shelters the entry. In lieu of wood paneling, a single sign board with modern neon lettering extends across the west elevation storefronts.

Windows on the building's second story street-facing elevations are one-over-one replacement sashes, placed one in each bay as is defined by the first story windows. On the west elevation these windows are surmounted by pedimented hoods that feature a bullseye molding drops. East elevation windows also are positioned with one in each bay and have segmental arched openings with a narrow spandrel above the flat-topped one-over-one window. All the second story windows have simple stone sills that rest on the top of the first story signboards.

The southern-most section of the rear wall retains its original brick finish. However, north of this section of the rear elevation is clad with vinyl siding. Extending from the rear wall of the north two sections of the building is a one-story flat roof that is supported by wood posts. South of the porch the structure continues to form an open arbor over the paved patio between 2 North Washington and 15 East Burdick. Under the shelter of the entry porch are two pedestrian entrances. The northern-most entrance is a simple paneled pedestrian door. The southern entrance consists of paired doors, each with a tall window and wood panel below. Windows on second story of the elevation are one-over-one replacement sashes, flanked by shutters consisting of two vertical boards with cross braces. Research did not reveal a specific construction date for this building. However, based on its architectural information, and the historic context, the building was likely erected during Oxford's railroad boom years, circa 1880. As of 1890, the

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building was the only brick commercial block on the east side of North Washington Street.⁹⁴

Historically the building contained four different storefronts: 2 and 4 North Washington; and 3 and 5 East Burdick Street. In 1996 the building was purchased by Brett Knapp, who remodeled the separate stores to a single restaurant on the building's first floor.⁹⁵ The histories of the separate storefronts prior to 1996 are detailed below.

2 North Washington

Between 1890 and 1900 the storefront housed a dry goods store.⁹⁶ In the early twentieth century it became a grocery store, owned by Brokenshaw and Olive; or B & O.⁹⁷ Eventually, the space was occupied by a clothing business, owned by J. A. Arnold.⁹⁸ Arnold sold the store in 1935 to J. Wesley Brower and Fred J. Streit.⁹⁹ By 1937 an addition had been made to the building, which conforms to the present-day footprint.¹⁰⁰ In 1954, Streit left of the partnership, and the business was renamed Brower's Department Store.¹⁰¹ Brower undertook extensive remodeling on the store in 1957. Based on historical photographs, this was likely when enameled metal paneling was added to the first story storefronts (subsequently removed, likely in the 1996 renovation).¹⁰² By 1961 the department store was replaced by Mitchell's Drug Store.¹⁰³ As of the mid-1980s, 2 North Washington housed Kessler's Korner/Back Room, which sold "ice cream and submarines."¹⁰⁴

4 North Washington

By 1890 this section of the building housed a dry goods/boots and shoes store on the first floor, and a cigar factory on the second floor.¹⁰⁵ This portion of the building was extended by a one-story addition on the rear elevation, which by 1900 had been made two stories and to match the height of the original building. In the early twentieth century, the building became a clothing store, owned by the Haddrill Brothers.¹⁰⁶ The brothers remained in this location until they erected a new building at 7 North Washington, circa 1921. The next occupant of the building was the American Family Restaurant, which included a hall on the second floor.¹⁰⁷ This configuration remained through the mid-1930s, with the space occupied by Gambles hardware store by the mid-1940s.¹⁰⁸ Gambles built a new store at 21 South Washington Street in 1956.¹⁰⁹

⁹⁴ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2.

⁹⁵ "Red Knapp's Restaurants History," http://redknapps.net/?page_id=2, accessed, 16 November 2017.

⁹⁶ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* 1890, 2.

⁹⁷ Post Card, June 1912, #21, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁹⁸ Advertisement: "Since 1935..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 8.

⁹⁹ Advertisement: "Since 1935..." 8.

¹⁰⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2.

¹⁰¹ Advertisement: "Since 1935..." 8.

¹⁰² "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B6.

¹⁰³ "Oxford-Addison Sesquicentennial," *Oxford Leader*, 14 October 1987, 13.

¹⁰⁴ Photograph, #2015.0090.0001, June 1912, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

¹⁰⁵ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2.

¹⁰⁶ Photograph: "Homecomings..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D2

¹⁰⁷ Photo, #432, Circa 1925; Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2.; Photo, circa 1945, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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In 1961, 4 North Washington was occupied by Bossardet's Colonial Shop, a home furnishings store.¹¹⁰ The mid-1970s saw the space occupied by Volk's Cycle, bicycle shop in the mid-1980s it was vacant.¹¹¹

3 East Burdick

The storefronts on East Burdick Street had a smaller square footage and typically housed small businesses or professional offices. Between 1890 and 1915, 3 East Burdick housed a barber shop.¹¹² At some point, the storefront was incorporated into the larger Brower and Streit department store, which occupied the space at 2 North Washington Street.¹¹³ By 1961 the storefront housed Town and Country Business Service.¹¹⁴ In the mid-1970s it was home to Al B.'s beauty salon.¹¹⁵ In the following decade, the business Tee Shirts Lettering was located here.¹¹⁶

5 East Burdick

Between 1890 and 1895 this storefront housed a doctor's office.¹¹⁷ It was then used briefly as a dwelling before becoming a dentist office.¹¹⁸ In 1926, O. C. Travis and H. A. Nique opened the Oxford Real Estate Exchange at this address.¹¹⁹ Research did not reveal information on subsequent businesses.

The building retains a good level of historic integrity. Although the original cornice has been removed, and storefronts altered, the building retains many of its distinctive features and conveys its architectural and commercial significance.

6 North Washington, Whitcomb Furniture; c. 1892, c. 1920; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial block has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. Only the west-facing façade and east-facing rear elevation are visible, as the north and south elevations are party walls and abut adjacent commercial buildings.

The first story of the façade contains the building's storefront, which is divided into two asymmetrical fenestration bays. The southern-most bay is a recessed entrance with two modern multi-light paneled wood doors. The northern two bays have broad display windows that rest on a low bulkhead wall that unlike the rest of the building, consists of a narrow mid-twentieth

¹⁰⁹ Photograph: "These are Henry Houck's auto sales and service buildings...", *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C22.

¹¹⁰ "Oxford-Addison Sesquicentennial," *Oxford Leader*, 14 October 1987, 13.

¹¹¹ Advertisement. "Volks Cycle," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D4; Photograph, #2015.0090.0001, June 1912, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

¹¹² Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

¹¹³ Photograph, North Washington Street at East Burdick Street, Circa 1945, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

¹¹⁴ "Oxford-Addison Sesquicentennial," *Oxford Leader*, 14 October 1987, 13.

¹¹⁵ Advertisement. "Who to Call," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40.

¹¹⁶ Photograph, #2015.0090.0001, June 1912, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

¹¹⁷ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1895, 2.

¹¹⁸ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

¹¹⁹ "Centennial News Notes," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D4.

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century brick veneer. The storefront is sheltered by a shed pent roof with a prominent front-gable. The exterior of the front gable is clad in broad horizontal siding, while the roof slopes are sheathed in green asphalt shingles. The fascia of the pent is utilized as a signboard.

The second story of the façade is divided into three fenestration bays defined by brick pilasters that feature stepped brick capitals. Brick dentils extend between the pilasters. The façade is surmounted by a shelf molding cornice, appended beneath a flat parapet. The parapet is brick with a concrete or stone cap. It is darker in color than the rest of the building, indicating that it is likely a replacement. Second story windows are double-hung wood sashes with each sash consisting of three horizontal lights. Although boasting similar height and construction, the center window is much wider than the two flanking windows. Each window has a flat top set into almost flat segmental arched openings. In lieu of hoods, the window arches are topped by three courses of rowlock brick.

The east elevation of the building is divided into three fenestration bays. The first story fenestration is sheltered by a wood-framed flat roof structure that aligns to similar structures on neighboring buildings at 2 and 8 North Washington. Wood-framed planter boxes extend across the base of the elevation. A Colonial Revival-style entrance is on the southern-most bay. It includes paneled door with a multi-light window set in a classical surround that includes fluted pilasters and a broken pediment with an urn molding. North of the door are two modern four-over-four windows. They are squared and set into segmental arched openings. Second story fenestration includes two-over-two wood-framed windows in the southern- bays. Each window is set into a segmentally arched opening. The northern-most bay has and a multi-light pedestrian door, also set into an arched opening. The door is higher on the wall to comfortably use the roof of the covered walkway, but this reveals that the sill is a wide stone, approximately double the width of the window sills.

Based on Sanborn maps, the building was erected circa 1892 and was first used as a furniture store.¹²⁰ The building was extended by 1900 with a rear one-story addition, noted on Sanborn maps as a Repair Shop.¹²¹ Sometime between 1915 and 1926 a second story was added to the rear addition; bringing the building to its present-day form.¹²²

Gilbert J. Whitcomb opened his furniture business in Oxford in 1876, and in 1888 his son Charles entered the business.¹²³ Their furniture business expanded to include undertaking in 1892. The funerary arm of the business was eventually relocated next-door at 8 North Washington.¹²⁴ By 1939 Whitcomb had partnered with J. Harold Mabley; known as the

¹²⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1895, 2.

¹²¹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

¹²² Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

¹²³ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 4.

¹²⁴ Photograph: "Homecomings..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D2.

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Whicomb-Mabley Funeral Home.¹²⁵ The furniture store/funeral parlor configuration remained here until the early 1950s when the funeral parlor was moved to a house on Burdick Street.¹²⁶

The furniture store was replaced by a clothing store in the early 1960s. In 1961 Gladys and Phyllis Lamoreau moved their women's apparel business to this building, from "across the street," (likely in the non-extant Oakland Hotel building) and rebranded the business as the Clothes Closet.¹²⁷ The Clothes Closet remained in this location through the mid-1970s.¹²⁸ The building currently houses A&A Flowers and Gifts, which was previously located at 33 North Washington, and moved to 6 North Washington sometime after the mid-1990s.¹²⁹

The building retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its historic associations with downtown Oxford. The extant storefront appears to date to the mid-twentieth century, within the period of significance. Other alterations, including replacement windows, the storefront pent roof, and removal of the original cornice, have not substantially diminished the intact brickwork on the exterior.

8 North Washington; Whitcomb Undertaker; c. 1905, c. 1910; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial block has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. Only the west-facing façade and east-facing rear elevation are visible. Both the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings.

Each story of the façade is divided into three symmetrical fenestration bays. The first story contains a storefront. The storefront bays have semi-circular arched openings enframed by painted stone or concrete; the arches rise from large springer blocks painted to match the arches. The center bay is both wider and taller than the outer two bays. Both the center and northern bay have display windows that are topped by leaded glass arched transoms. The southern bay has a recessed pedestrian door with a large single-light window, topped by a single-light arched transom. A large signboard extends across the façade above the storefront. The signboard partially obscures a series of brick panels created by a single course of corbeled bricks, with each panel aligning with the width of the fenestration bays.

The second story bays mirror those on the first story; with three segmentally arched window openings. The windows themselves are one-over-one sashes, topped by arched transoms. The center bay is wider and accommodates a pair of windows. A belt course of soldier bricks extends across the façade as the base of the transoms. Decorative fixed shutters are placed between the windows over the belt course.

The façade cornice is adorned by decorative brickwork that includes three rectangular brick panels that echo the width of the fenestration bays below. These panels each have a solid

¹²⁵ "The northeast quadrant in 1939," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D16.

¹²⁶ Susan Bossardet, (NOHS and Oxford Village President), email to Scott Slagor, 25 January 2018.

¹²⁷ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9.

¹²⁸ Advertisement: "19 Years of Fashion Leadership in Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A15.

¹²⁹ Photo, #265, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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course base and are approximately the width of one brick apart. Below the spaces between the panels a two-course single header brick corbel, which acts as punctuation between the brick panels. The outer edges of the cornice include a stack of horizontal projecting brick, on a base of three soldier courses.

The rear (east) elevation includes a one-story flat-roof covered walkway that is supported by paneled boxed columns. Under the roof is a modern paneled-wood door with an arched window and transom above. Adjacent to the door is a three-light display window. Below the display window is a segmental arched course of brick at the ground level; indicating that once there may have been window well with a basement window or door. A pair of windows is located at the second story level of the building. The windows have modern six-over-one sashes, set into segmentally arched openings. Between the two windows is an oval signboard, which based on the brick color and partially visible segmentally arched brick course, suggests the area was historically a third window opening.

Sources are contradictory for the construction date of this building. Based on Sanborn map research, the building was erected sometime between 1909 and 1915. However, a streetscape photograph dated 1907 includes a similar building at this location, which at the time was Whitcomb's funeral home, associated with the furniture store adjacent at 6 North Washington.¹³⁰ A 1910 building fire may be responsible for the alteration or reconstruction of the building.¹³¹ The building was not depicted on a Sanborn map until 1915; when it was noted as an undertaker, and included an elevator and a one-story wood-framed concrete-faced rear addition.¹³² By 1926 the rear addition was used as an auto garage; which was removed sometime after 1945.¹³³ A photograph from the mid-1920s indicates that the parapet was originally crenelated with an arched panel at the center.

The Whitcomb family began undertaking in 1892.¹³⁴ By the mid-1930s Whitcomb Funeral Home had merged and was known as Whitcomb-Mabley Funeral Home. At that time, J. Harold Mabley was the owner and Edward Bossardet worked as an apprentice.¹³⁵ The funeral parlor was moved to a house on Burdick Street sometime in the early 1950s.¹³⁶

In 1968 V & B Furniture opened in the building and remained at this location through the early 1980s.¹³⁷ Between 1983 and 2016 the building was occupied by Mel Pawl & Company

¹³⁰ Photograph: "Homecomings..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D2

¹³¹ Maurice Cole, "Best known, longest lasting hotel in Oxford History," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B1

¹³² Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

¹³³ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

¹³⁴ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 4.

¹³⁵ Photograph: "Chevrolet, Pontic, Olds and Packard Sales were all..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D23

¹³⁶ Susan Bossardet, (NOHS and Oxford Village President), email to Scott Slagor, 25 January 2018.

¹³⁷ Advertisement: "Happy Birthday Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B15; Photograph, 2015.0090.0001, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

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Photographers.¹³⁸ At the time of recordation, the building was occupied by the studio of Johnston Photography.

The building retains historic integrity, with minimal alterations. The decorative brickwork and arches that characterize the building are intact. Additionally, the two leaded-glass arched transoms on the façade are a unique feature, not found in other downtown Oxford buildings. Although the extant cornice has been altered, and some windows have been replaced, the building overall conveys its historic associations.

10 North Washington; Meriam Building; 1912, c. 1995; Contributing

The two-story brick commercial block has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The west-facing façade and east-facing rear elevation are fully visible; however, the north and south elevations abut adjacent buildings, and are only partially visible.

The façade rises to a tall parapet which creates the illusion of a third floor or attic. The façade is divided into three fenestration bays, each enframed by brick pilasters. The center bay is narrower than the flanking bays, but is taller and creates a stepped parapet on the facade. The upper story is divided by a band of soldier course bricks, with every other brick recessed and painted light a lighter color for contrast. The top of the parapet has a corbeled cornice, which includes a course of saw tooth brick, and a series of corbeled modillions. A large nameplate is on the center parapet, which notes the name and construction date of the building.

The primary entrance is recessed in the center bay of the façade. The door itself includes an upper window and is flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom divided into three vertical lights. Flanking the entrance bay are strings of three display windows, with decorative square wood moldings centered above each window. Second story windows are positioned in the outer two fenestration bays. Each pair of one-over-one sashes is shaded by modern fabric awnings.

The east elevation of the building, and visible portion of the south elevation, are an addition to the original building, that is clad in modern multiple color brick. A parapet extends across this portion of the building, which includes two rows of stacked soldier courses. The center of the parapet rises to a circular arch that incorporates a modern wall-mounted clock.

The east elevation is divided into seven fenestration bays. On the first story, the northern-most bay contains a pedestrian entrance and the southern three bays are comprised of a boxed bay window with a brick bulkhead and sidewalls. The south elevation and shed roof of the boxed bay is glazed with four fixed black mirrored glass windows. The remaining windows on the first story are placed in a pair just north of the box bay and then two single windows. Each window has four-over-four sashes with a single light transom above. A continuous signboard extends across the entire first story above the fenestration. Second story fenestration includes a central nine-light window with a fanlight above. The outer six windows are four-over-four sashes, the

¹³⁸ C. J. Carnacchio, "Pawl to Close Studio After 20 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 3 March 2016.

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center of each pair of three windows has a fanlight, and the remaining four windows are topped by an arched spandrel in lieu of a fanlight.

In 1893, C. A. Meriam, for whom the building is named, purchased a harness shop on North Washington Street from Charles May, and moved to Oxford from Mackinaw City.¹³⁹ Meriam replaced the old harness shop with the extant building in 1912. In addition to harnesses, his new store sold agricultural implements, and a livery/feed barn was located east of the building.¹⁴⁰ Shortly after the building was constructed, the automobile became a more prevalent form of transportation, and Meriam's business expanded to sell autos and auto parts.¹⁴¹ By the mid-1920s the first floor of the building was occupied by an auto dealership that extended into a new one-story brick addition to the north, at 14 N Washington (not extant). A circa 1925 photograph indicates the addition included a small garage bay on the façade. A sign above the garage noted that it was a Pontiac Oakland dealership.¹⁴² The building was further expanded by a one-story wood-framed addition on the rear elevation (not extant). Also by the mid-1920s, the former livery behind the building was converted to a garage. While a car dealership was on the first floor, the building's second floor was occupied by the Knights of Pythias Hall.

C. A. Meriam owned the harness shop/dealership until his death in 1936.¹⁴³ After Meriam's death, the building continued as a Chevrolet/Pontiac/Oldsmobile Dealership, owned by Al Case; presumably a relation to Meriam's long-time business partner, George Case.¹⁴⁴ The building remained a dealership with various owners through the 1950s.¹⁴⁵ The livery building and north and rear additions remained through the mid-1940s, but are not extant today.

In July 1967 the first floor of the Meriam Building became home to C&C Hardware, which relocated from 21 North Washington Street.¹⁴⁶ By 1968 Village Ceramics had joined the hardware store in the building.¹⁴⁷ C. & C. Hardware moved out of the building in 1972, and its owners reorganized the business at 23 North Washington Street as Village Paint and Wallpaper.¹⁴⁸ Two years later, the Knights of Pythias Hall moved out of the building.¹⁴⁹ As of 1999 the building housed Allstate Insurance, and Oxford One-Hour Photo. Sometime after 1945 the one-story wood-framed addition was removed and replaced by the extant two-story brick veneered addition that forms the present rear elevation. This section of the building appears to be of modern, circa 1995 construction. As of 2017 the building was home to the Oxford Community Schools offices.

¹³⁹ "The Leather Artist, C. A. Meriam," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D12-13.

¹⁴⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2; "The Leather Artist, C. A. Meriam," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D12-13.

¹⁴¹ Advertisement: "Miller Geared to the Road Tires," *Detroit Free Press*, 7 October 1917.

¹⁴² Photograph, #432, "East side of M-24 North of Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

¹⁴³ "State Briefs," *Lansing State Journal*, 28 April 1936.

¹⁴⁴ Photograph: "Chevrolet, Pontic, Olds and Packard Sales were all..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D23

¹⁴⁵ Advertisement: "Jeffrey Ford Sales," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A5.

¹⁴⁶ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

¹⁴⁷ Advertisement: "We're all Fired Up over Oxford's Centennial!" *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E14.

¹⁴⁸ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

¹⁴⁹ "Top Pythian officer from Oxford in '53," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E2.

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The building has experienced some alterations, including replacement façade windows and replacement of the entire rear elevation. However, from the façade, the original fenestration pattern and character-defining brickwork is intact, conveying the building's historic significance in downtown Oxford. Therefore, the Meriam Building is a contributing resource.

14 North Washington; Kessler Auto Sales; c. 1960; Non-contributing

The one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The west-facing façade and rear east elevation are fully visible. The north and south elevations are shared party walls, which results in the north elevation being completely obscured by an adjacent building and only a portion of the south elevation visible. The exterior design, materials, and workmanship have been extensively altered and no longer convey a circa 1960 building.

Currently, the building façade is clad in stone veneer that ends below a tall parapet with an Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EFIS) smooth finish on the broad frieze and a shelf molding cornice. The façade is divided into two nearly identical storefronts, each consisting of a centrally placed fully-glazed door topped by a transom. Flanking the door are tall display windows. The display windows rest on low paneled bulkhead walls. All the glass utilized in the doors and windows has a dark tint, and the surrounding moldings are finished with EFIS or a similar material. The south storefront windows are narrower than those on the north. Simple angled awnings project over the windows of the north storefront. Both storefronts have a signboard set into the stone veneer above the windows. These are lit by gooseneck light fixtures mounted above.

The rear of the building is clad in EFIS with heavy moldings used as trim around the fenestration. The primary rear entrance is within a large recess on the building's southeast corner. The recess is accessible from both the east and south elevations. Inside the recess is an angled glazed wall where a pair of fully glazed pedestrian doors provides access to the interior of the building. A single pedestrian entrance is slightly recessed on the south elevation. Additional fenestration on the east elevation includes a recessed multi-light overhead door, and two large single-light windows.

The numerous modern exterior materials on the building obscure historic details that would indicate an accurate construction date. As of 1965 the building was home to Kessler Auto Sales, Inc., a Dodge dealership.¹⁵⁰ By 1972 the dealership was known as Hight Dodge, Inc., owned by Jerry Hight.¹⁵¹ A few years later, in 1976, it was Lynn's Service Garage.¹⁵² At the time, the building's façade had a very different appearance, which included a central pedestrian door, flanked by a garage bay, and a large display window.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Advertisement. "Grand Opening Belleville Dodge." *Detroit Free Press*, 3 June 1965

¹⁵¹ Advertisement. "East Side, West Side, All Around the Detroit Area, these Good Guys Tell it Like it is." *Detroit Free Press*, 23 May 1972.

¹⁵² Advertisement. "Who to Call," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, 40.

¹⁵³ Photograph: "Oxford's northeast quadrant." *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, E10.

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Additionally, the building was described in a 1999 survey as having a central entrance flanked by brick piers and display windows.¹⁵⁴ The façade extant as of 2017 does not match this description, indicating that it was remodeled once again in the ensuing eighteen years. At the time of recordation, the building was vacant; however, a sign above the north storefront indicates it formerly housed AAA Insurance office.

The building has undergone extensive changes that do not convey its historic design, materials or workmanship. Therefore, the Kessler Auto Sales building is non-contributing to the Oxford Downtown Historic District.

18 North Washington; Red's Grill and Bowling Alley; c. 1948, 1996; Non-contributing

The one-story commercial building has been remodeled to reflect the Romanesque style, and no longer retains any of its original architectural elements. The building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof, with a tall parapet on the east-facing facade and rear, west-facing, elevation. The façade, east, and north elevations are easily viewed from the right-of-way; however, the south elevation abuts the adjacent building and is not visible.

The building is of concrete block construction with a brick veneer on the façade and east elevation. The façade is divided into two storefronts and a third door to provide access to an interior space. Each storefront consists of a pedestrian entrance placed near the center of the elevation, with a transom above and two adjacent display windows. Surmounting the glazed door and display windows is a string of five transom windows

The placement of decorative brickwork corresponds to the fenestration. Brick pilasters with corbeled capitals rise to the top of the storefronts and pedestrian entrance transoms. The pilaster capitals serve as a base for large semi-circular brick arches over the storefronts, as well as the base of a rectangular brick panel above the single pedestrian entrance. A course of corbeled brick defines the parapet, which includes an ornamental brick frieze that essentially mimics the form triglyphs and guttae of a traditional Greek entablature.

The façade and west elevation are mirror images of each other and exhibit decorative brickwork. Unlike the façade, two segmentally arched signboards are placed above the storefront bays. Based on Sanborn Map research, the building was not present in 1945.¹⁵⁵ A newspaper advertisement noted that in 1948 a building at this location became Red's Grill and Bowling Alley; which remained at this here as late as 1957.¹⁵⁶ In 1996 the building it was remodeled to reflect the Romanesque Revival style, extant at the time of recordation.¹⁵⁷

The building has undergone extensive changes and no longer reflects a circa 1948 building. Therefore, the building is non-contributing to the historic district.

¹⁵⁴ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

¹⁵⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Advertisement: "Reds Grill and Recreation," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957.

¹⁵⁷ Grossman and Frost, "Downtown Oxford Historic District."

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22 North Washington; Roy Howland's Garage; Built 1910, c. 1920, c. 1930, c. 1965;

Contributing

The one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The building has false-front form, with a façade clad in blonde brick giving the appearance of a flat roof, while the rest of the building, clad in red brick, has a gable roof. The façade is divided into three symmetrical fenestration bays, each recessed slightly from the surface of the façade to accommodate brick planters that extend the width of the bay. The primary entrance, in the southern-most bay, is paneled wood with an upper light comprised of small diamond lights. A single-light is situated above the door. South of the door is a two-light display window and a single light display window, divided by a heavy wood mullion. The remaining façade windows are two-light display units, with one light at the center of the façade, and a pair of windows in the northernmost bay, which also includes a mullion like that in the southern bay. Unlike the rest of the blonde brick façade, the center bay display windows rest on a bulkhead wall of long, gray, rough-finished brick. The building was historically an auto dealership, and the center bay was formerly a garage bay that was infilled sometime after 1976.¹⁵⁸

The rear (east) elevation includes a central garage bay with a tall overhead door. South of the garage bay is a pedestrian entrance and series of windows, sheltered by fabric awnings. North of the garage bay is a chimney stack and a concrete block shed-roof addition.

Views to the north elevation of 22 North Washington are largely obscured by the adjacent building at 28 North Washington, however multi-light metal-sash frosted glass windows are visible. West of the building is a private paved parking area, which is defined by a wrought-iron fence with brick posts.

The building was erected in 1910 for "Roy Howland's Olds, Packard and H-C Gasoline Garage."¹⁵⁹ At the time, the original brick garage building had a forty-car capacity.¹⁶⁰ By 1926 the interior of the garage had been divided, and its capacity reduced to twenty cars. The front of the building served as the showroom, while the back was used as a repair shop. Also at this time, a rear wood-framed one-story addition was made to the building's northeast corner, extant today and clad in concrete block.¹⁶¹ A newspaper retrospective notes that the false front of the building was added to the original structure sometime after it was built.¹⁶² Based on Sanborn maps, it appears to have been added sometime between 1926 and 1937. Roy Howland continued to own the garage and showroom through the late 1930s.¹⁶³ There was a dealership present in this building as late as 1945.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Photograph: "Oxford's northeast quadrant." *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, E10.

¹⁵⁹ "The Northeast Quadrant in 1939," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D16.

¹⁶⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

¹⁶¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

¹⁶² "The Northeast Quadrant in 1939," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D16.

¹⁶³ Photograph: "Chevrolet, Pontic, Olds and Packard Sales were all..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D23

¹⁶⁴ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

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In 1948 Production Gear Manufacturing was established.¹⁶⁵ The business was originally located on Broadway Street, but was relocated to 22 North Washington by 1966.¹⁶⁶ Production Gear Manufacturing remained in the building through 1976.¹⁶⁷ Since circa 1982 the building has housed Williams Art Glass Studio, Inc.¹⁶⁸

Although the building has been altered multiple times, its current form was achieved by the mid-1960s, and falls within the period of significance. There are relatively few replacement materials on the building, therefore integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been retained.

28 North Washington, McVey Millinery/ Christian-Slayton Public Library/Veterans Memorial Building/Veterans Memorial Civic Center; c. 1905, c. 1980; Contributing

The building, which has had many uses in its century of history, was originally built as a mixed use residential and commercial building. Due to the variety of uses, the building was altered over time, and currently consists of three distinct sections, a two-story brick former residence that fronts on Washington Street, a one-and-one-half-story concrete block addition to the rear of the original residence, and a one-story wood-clad addition to the concrete block section.

The original residential portion of the building is two-stories with a rectilinear core, expanded by a two-story addition on the north elevation. The asphalt shingle clad roof includes a platform-on-hip on the original building and a half-hipped form on the addition. A dentilated frieze wraps the building's original section and addition at the roofline.

The original building façade is divided into three fenestration bays. The primary entrance, a paneled wood door, occupies the first story center bay. The door is sheltered by a one-story open porch with a gable front roof with broad overhanging eaves. The roof is supported by Doric columns that rest on the concrete porch deck. The deck rests on a brick foundation. Concrete stairs, flanked by modern metal hand rails, provide access to the north and south elevations of the porch. The porch roof partially obscures a corbeled brick arch over the front door.

Flanking the entrance porch are pairs of one-over-one windows with transom lights. The windows south of the door are topped by a segmental brick arch with a modest corbelled brick hood. The pair of windows north of the door are placed in an infilled section of the brick wall, as is evidenced by the surrounding replacement brick and the extant flat arch at the same height as the segmental arched hood on the southern windows. The second story windows are one-over-one sashes, set into segmentally arched openings. These windows are placed singly in the north and south bays and paired in the center bay. Similar windows are repeated on the south and east elevations of the original building. A front-gable dormer, whose face is clad in painted shingles,

¹⁶⁵ Advertisement: "Production Gear Congratulates Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C19.

¹⁶⁶ Michigan Bell Co., *Telephone Directory Rochester-Clarkston-Lake Orion-Leonard-Oxford* (Michigan Bell: October 1950), 55; Michigan Bell Co., *Michigan Bell Telephone Directory for Oxford-Leonard* (Michigan Bell: October 1966), 20.

¹⁶⁷ Advertisement: "Production Gear Congratulates Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C19.

¹⁶⁸ "About our Company," Williams Art Glass Studio, Inc., <http://www.williamsartglass.com/>, accessed 16 March 2018.

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with a single-light window, pierces the façade slope of the roof. A small single light window is situated at the center of the gable face. There is no fenestration on the west elevation of the north addition, however, a glazed pedestrian door is located on its east elevation near the first of the rear additions. Also on this surface are a single window on the first floor and two individual windows on the second story.

The middle section of the building has relatively few architectural details. Constructed of concrete block, the building has a rectilinear footprint that extends slightly south of the original building. The addition is generally one-and-one-half story; however, a narrow two-story section wraps the southeast corner of the original building. Both the one-and-one-half and two-story sections have flat roofs. The only fenestration on the concrete block part of the building is a pedestrian entrance on the narrow west elevation.

The east section of the building is a one-story shed-roof addition to the concrete block section. The shed roof is sheathed in metal, and the exterior walls are clad in modern clapboard siding. A recessed entrance with glazed pedestrian doors is at the northeast corner.

A large patio extends partially across the east elevation of the building. The patio has a concrete deck and concrete block foundation. It is encircled by a metal fence and lit by strings of electrical lights on wood poles. The limited yard space east behind the building is landscaped with young trees. Additional landscape features include two brick piers adjacent to the façade that are aligned with the width of the north two-story addition. The original brick building was a combination dwelling and millinery, erected sometime between 1900 and 1909.¹⁶⁹ A 1909 Sanborn map shows that the building included a slight projection on the north half of the facade, likely a boxed bay window. A one-story brick addition was attached to the east elevation of the two-story core. Behind the main building were three ancillary buildings, all of which were removed sometime after 1945.

By the mid-1920s the house was owned by Zella McVey. She sold the building and property to Oxford Township in July 1925, who converted the building to the Christian-Slayton Public Library.¹⁷⁰ The unusual library name was based on the funding sources, including the liquidation of assets owned by the defunct Oxford Christian Church including the sale of a lot given to the church by Nellie Scott Slayton. Initially the library was held in a single room at the "old Oxford Savings Bank," (presumably 9 North Washington) and managed by an organization known as the Learn Something Club (L. S. Club).¹⁷¹ The public passed a millage in 1916 to support the library. With these funds the L.S. Club and managers of the Christian-Slayton fund were able to purchase the building to house the library.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 2.

¹⁷⁰ "Circulating over 36000 volumes a year," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B16.

¹⁷¹ "L.S. Club Outgrowth of Street Fair of '89," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D17.

¹⁷² "Circulating over 36000 volumes a year," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B16.

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The library was a popular resource in the Oxford community. During the 1930s it circulated 20,000 books in a single year.¹⁷³ By the end of the decade the library had outgrown its Washington Street location, prompting a move in 1939 to a large pioneer-era house in Oxford Township.¹⁷⁴ During its occupancy of 28 North Washington, the only visible change the library made to the building was removal of the bay window on the façade (circa 1915-1926), formerly located north of the front door where the replacement brick is extant.¹⁷⁵

After the library moved out, 28 North Washington became the Garden Restaurant.¹⁷⁶ In 1951 the facility was purchased by the Oxford Veterans Association for use as a community center.¹⁷⁷ Officially, the building was known as the Veterans Memorial, however it was more commonly referred to as the Veterans Building.¹⁷⁸ In later years, the building later hosted various other organizations in addition to the Veterans, many of which moved out of other downtown buildings to meet here, including: the Maccabees, Knights of Pythias, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.¹⁷⁹ A photograph from 1976 shows that the core of the building has not changed since that time. The photo shows the brick cladding, front porch, and façade fenestration pattern all intact.¹⁸⁰ In 1980 Oxford Township purchased the building to use as a community center, renaming the facility to Veterans Memorial Civic Center.¹⁸¹ Research did not identify a date for the multiple additions on the building, rear concrete block addition appears to post-date 1976, and was likely a remodel by the Township. Oxford Township sold the building in 2015. At the time of recordation, the building housed Homegrown Brewing Company.

The building has undergone several additions, including the rear concrete block section and shed-roof ell, and two-story brick ell on the north elevation. The rear additions are largely not visible from Washington Street, and the north ell is set back from the façade, clearly distinguishable from the core of the building. The original brick house remains intact and is identifiable on the exterior. Some alterations to the house, including removal of the bay window, occurred during the period of significance. The building's historic cladding, setback, and fenestration pattern, have been retained, thus conveying an early twentieth century building that contributes to the historic district.

South Washington Street, West Side

¹⁷³ "Circulating over 36000 volumes a year," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B16

¹⁷⁴ "Old Cozy Colonial Hospitality Revived by Oxford Library," *Detroit Free Press*, 24 December 1939, 7.

¹⁷⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

¹⁷⁶ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2; "Veterans buy McVey property for Memorial," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C9.

¹⁷⁷ "Veterans buy McVey property for Memorial," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C9.

¹⁷⁸ "Veterans buy McVey property for Memorial," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C9; "Top Pythian officer from Oxford in '53," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E2; "Oxford Maccabees Start in 1891 with 36 Members. *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 2.

¹⁷⁹ "Top Pythian officer from Oxford in '53," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E2.

¹⁸⁰ Photograph: "Oxford's northeast quadrant," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, E10.

¹⁸¹ C.J. Carnacchio, "Business is Brewing: Oxford's 1st craft brewery hosts open house, gets rave reviews," *Oxford Leader*, 5 April 2017.

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1 South Washington; Corner Grocery Store/VanWagoner Drugs/Patterson Pharmacy; c. 1880, c. 1913, c. 1930; Contributing

This brick commercial block has an irregular footprint. The original portion of the building is two stories with a generally rectilinear footprint, however the northeast corner is cut-away, a popular stylistic feature of the period. The building footprint has been expanded by a trapezoidal one-story wing on the north elevation, and a one-story shed roof addition on the west elevation. The façade of the original building is oriented east to South Washington Street, with a secondary façade oriented to West Burdick Street on the one-story wing. The rear (west) elevation faces a parking lot, and the south elevation abuts the adjacent building. Both street-facing sections of the building have flat roofs.

The façade of the original building is three fenestration bays, with one additional bay on the cut-away corner for a total of four bays. The first story of the façade and cut-away corner contain the storefront, while the second story has highly ornamented fenestration and a decorative cornice. The primary entrance to the first story business consists of a glazed wood-framed door and transom, located on the cut-away corner. A secondary entrance, consisting of a paneled-wood door, is positioned on the southern-most bay of the façade and provides access to the second story. Storefront glazing between the two doors includes a string of three broad display windows, with transom lights above, and divided by heavy wood mullions. Nearly all the bricked exterior surfaces of the building are painted, excluding the storefront bulkhead and first story walls surrounding the display windows; this section of the building has been reconstructed. The painted brick obscures brick arches above the cut-away-bay entrance, and storefront windows. A single signboard extends across the storefront fronting on South Washington Street.

The second story of the façade and cut-away corner includes one-over-one wood sash windows that are heavily ornamented. The windows rest on stone sills that include corbeled stepped bricks that abut the outside corners of the lower sashes. The upper sashes are surmounted by heavy pediments that feature keystones, decorative etchings, and drop moldings.

The facade parapet is also heavily ornamented. A brick frieze extends below the cornice, featuring dentils, a belt course of saw tooth brick, and panels of soldier courses set as diamond points. Above the frieze is a bracketed cornice with square wood panels between each bracket. The cornice is framed by large consoles on its outside corners.

The north elevation of the original building has restrained features. Windows on the north elevation are squared sashes set into segmentally arched openings. Most are one-over-one, however an eight-light window is placed near the northeast corner. The parapet continues many of the features utilized on the façade, including dentilation, a saw tooth belt course, and recessed brick panels.

The rear (west) elevation of the original building has a modern one-story shed-roof addition. The two exposed elevations of the addition are clad in T-111 siding. There is a pedestrian entrance on the west elevation and two single-light windows on the north elevation. Adjacent to the addition,

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on the first story of the original building, is a glazed pedestrian entrance protected by metal bars. A modern metal vent is positioned above the barred entrance. The second story of the original building west elevation includes a one-over-one wood-sash window with a segmental brick arch, and an inaccessible pedestrian door. The door, located in the corner adjacent to the building at 3 South Washington, has a lower paneled and upper single light window, with a transom light above. Like the modest second story windows, the door is surmounted by a segmental brick arch.

The one-story north addition has east and west elevations that are parallel to the original building. The north elevation parallels the alignment of West Burdick Street, and an angled wall forms a northwest elevation. The northeast corner of the addition is cut-away, mirroring the original building. A single pedestrian entrance is located near the center of the north elevation, accessible from West Burdick Street. A second pedestrian entrance is located near the north corner of the west elevation. Windows on the west and north elevations of the addition are broad single lights topped by segmentally arched transoms. Although lacking the massive hoods of the original building, each window along Washington and Burdick Streets has a corbeled detail above the brick arched opening, and includes a keystone and corbeled pendants. Additional fenestration is focused on the rear of the brick addition, where a second storefront is located. This includes a pedestrian entrance with an adjacent one-over-one window, and another window on the northwest elevation. The storefront is unified by a modern convex awning, which ends before reaching another window on the west elevation, not sheltered by the awning. A pedestrian entrance that has been boarded is located at the juncture of the northwest and north elevations. Just south of this door is a small segmentally arched one-over-one window.

In 1878 a fire destroyed the west side of South Washington Street.¹⁸² A historic photograph shows that the adjacent Tunstead Block at 3 South Washington was completed in 1879, prior to the subject building.¹⁸³ However, a prime corner location, the lot would not have remained vacant long. Its location, along with the heavy Italianate features of the building, suggest that it was constructed not long after the fire, circa 1880.

As of 1890, only the two-story core of the building had been erected. The first floor served as the Corner Grocery store, where owner C. H. Glaspie sold groceries and stationary.¹⁸⁴ The second floor housed a cigar factory which was succeeded by the office of Dr. Bachelor at the turn of the century.¹⁸⁵ Ownership of the grocery store transitioned to George Olive and Stewart Howser before leaving the building entirely by 1908.¹⁸⁶ The store was replaced by a pool and billiards hall occupied the first floor. Shortly thereafter, the one-story wing was added (circa 1909-1915) to the north elevation of the original building. The village post office was the first tenant in the

¹⁸² "Fire at Oxford." *Detroit Free Press*, 24 December 1878, 4.

¹⁸³ Photograph: "The original of this print is a tintype photo." *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, D1.

¹⁸⁴ Photograph, #73. "Corner Grocery- Main St. and Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1.

¹⁸⁵ Photograph, #73. "Corner Grocery- Main St. and Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

¹⁸⁶ Post Card, #1. 111, 1908, "West Side of Main Street, Oxford, Mich.," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

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wing.¹⁸⁷ Research did not reveal who occupied the building in the 1920s. The rear one-story addition was made sometime between 1926 and 1937. By the mid-1930s the building's primary tenant was the Kroger grocery store.¹⁸⁸ Kroger remained at this location until 1942 when it relocated to 15 East Burdick.

In 1947 the building became a drug store, which it has remained for the last seventy years. Lee VanWagoner purchased the building and moved his pharmacy practice from 5 South Washington.¹⁸⁹ At the time of purchase, VanWagoner Drugs was placed on the first floor, a dental office located was on the second floor, and the one-story wing housed Carroll Crawford's jewelry store and Fred Sternberg's barber shop.¹⁹⁰ Following purchasing the building, VanWagoner remodeled it to include a recessed storefront by the construction of a 45-degree angled wall that continued with a small addition that connected to the north wing. The storefront exterior was clad in aluminum sheathing and was surmounted by a projecting ledge that carried lettering, reading "Van Wagoner Drugs Fountain".¹⁹¹

On January 10, 1964, VanWagoner Drugs was purchased by Bill Patterson who rebranded the business as Patterson Pharmacy.¹⁹² The storefront has since been remodeled to reflect its nineteenth century configuration. Patterson Pharmacy remains in the building to this day. Laura Lee's salon is located in the building as well, accessed on the rear elevation.

The building retains its historic integrity, conveying its original design, materials, and workmanship. Few alterations are visible on the exterior, aside from the reconstructed storefront, which is sympathetic to the design and character of the original building.

3 North Washington; Tunstead Block; 1879; Contributing

The three-story Italianate-style commercial block has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. Although the foundation is not visible, historical documentation indicates that the brick building rests on fieldstones from local farms.¹⁹³ The east-facing façade and west-facing rear elevations are fully visible; however, the first and second stories of the north and south elevations abut adjacent buildings.

A glazed storefront extends across the façade first story. A series of six display windows angle inward from the façade's northeast corner, terminating at a recessed entrance. The entrance wall consists of a glazed window, the door, and four additional display windows. The windows rest on low paneled bulkhead wall and are sheltered by an awning. Above the storefront fenestration

¹⁸⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

¹⁸⁸ Photograph: "Kroger was on the southeast corner of the main four corners..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D20; Photograph: "Kroger moved off the four main corners in 1942, but not far..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D11.

¹⁸⁹ Advertisement: "30 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

¹⁹⁰ "Remember When" *Oxford Leader*, 20 January 1988.

¹⁹¹ Photograph, Undated, circa 1950. Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

¹⁹² Annette Kingsbury, "Bill Patterson Retires," *Oxford Leader*, 2 February 1994.

¹⁹³ Clem Cleveland, "At 95 he's grown with Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 25 April 1968.

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is a tri-panel signboard. Flanking the storefront are one-story fluted pilasters that rise to stylized square consoles. The consoles serve as a base for small egg-shaped finials.

The second and third stories of the façade are each divided into three fenestration bays. The bays contain one-over-one replacement windows. The replacement windows are smaller than the original openings and the space above the upper sashes has been infilled and covered by fabric awnings. The windows rest on stone sills with stepped corbeled brick at the outer corners of the lower sashes. The window openings are surmounted by heavy ornamental hoods that feature keystones, decorative etchings, and drop moldings.

Brick pilasters rise above the first story wood pilasters to terminate just below the cornice. Each brick pilaster has recessed panels created in the space between stacked corbeled bricks. Below the cornice is a corbeled brick arcaded frieze. The cornice itself is a replacement, as the original had been removed by 1995.¹⁹⁴ The replacement is very similar to the original design, it includes broad consoles placed on the outer edges. Within the cornice are narrow brackets that are placed progressively closer together as they near the center of the elevation; between each bracket are squared moldings. The center of the cornice rises to an arch, with additional brackets radiating around the arch. The arch accommodates a name and date plate at the base of the parapet that reads "MASONIC HALL 1879." Dentils extend across the top of the parapet, and within the bracketed frieze. Originally, the cornice also included finials on the outside corners, as well as another decorative molding over the central arch.¹⁹⁵

On the west elevation, the first story has a slight shed-roof projection. The walls of this projection are clad in wood paneling ornamented with a variety of moldings that encircle openings, and form cross pieces, much like battens on a board and batten wall. The frieze board of the roof is ornamented by wood dentils. Within the projecting section of the building are three recessed pedestrian entrance bays, the center of which is taller and wider than the outer two. Remaining fenestration on the upper floors of the building are one-over-one replacement windows. Like the façade, these windows are much smaller than their openings, and the tall area above the window is filled by a spandrel that matches the angle of the brick segmental arched opening. Similar windows are also located on the upper floors of the north, and south elevations,

William J. (Billy) Tunstead purchased an existing hardware store in 1862, and rebranded the business as Tunstead Hardware.¹⁹⁶ In December 1878, a massive fire destroyed several buildings on the west side of South Washington Street, including Tunstead's store.¹⁹⁷ Tunstead replaced his original store with the extant building the following year. Initially the first floor included the hardware store and the third floor the Masonic Temple, thus the recognition of the Mason's in the cornice ornament.¹⁹⁸ In 1884 the Oxford Savings Bank opened on the second floor; Tunstead

¹⁹⁴ Photograph, 1995. Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

¹⁹⁵ Photograph, "Washington Ave.," circa 1900. Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

¹⁹⁶ "The Tunsteads- Billy and George," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C1.

¹⁹⁷ "Fire at Oxford." *Detroit Free Press*, 24 December 1878, 4.

¹⁹⁸ "Fires destroyed Lodge 84 twice," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B8

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was the Vice President and one of the founders.¹⁹⁹ After the bank moved to 9 North Washington Street, the second floor was used as a tin shop for the hardware store.²⁰⁰

The Tunstead family owned the building and business well into the twentieth century, making relatively few changes to the exterior during that time. Around 1950 the storefront was remodeled to include the recessed entrance and large display windows that are extant today.²⁰¹ In 1970, after 108 years in business (ninety-two in the extant building), Tunstead Hardware was sold out of the family.²⁰² The building remained a hardware store until 1975 when it became a book store, known as The Book Place.²⁰³ As of 2017 the storefront houses a shop called the Boulevard Boutique.

The building retains historic integrity to convey architectural and commercial significance. Much of the historic-period materials and features of the building are intact, including brickwork and window hoods. The replacement cornice closely matches the original, and does not diminish the overall integrity. Additionally, the extant storefront window configuration was installed in the 1950s, during the period of significance. Replacement windows on the upper floors are partially obscured by awnings and do not diminish the historic appearance of the building.

5 North Washington; Hackett Block; 1879, 1899, c. 1980; Contributing

The Hackett block is a brick two-story building with a rectilinear footprint, which rests on a fieldstone foundation.²⁰⁴ The original portion of the building has a flat roof, which is broken by a conical turret addition (1899) on the southwest corner; and a rear two-story concrete block addition with a flat roof (circa 1980). The east-facing façade and west-facing rear elevation are visible, while the north and south elevations abut adjacent buildings.

The façade has an asymmetrical appearance, the original flat-roof building has three fenestration bays, while the southern turret addition adds another fenestration bay. The storefront of the original building consists of a three-light display window, with each window resting on a paneled bulkhead wall and divided by heavy mullions. At the center of the storefront is a glazed recessed entrance and a cross-and-bible paneled wood door occupies the northern-most bay. A paneled partition wall extends perpendicular to the storefront adding privacy to the paneled door, which accesses the second story. A third door is, in the same cross-and-bible style as the northern door, is located in southern-most bay, beneath the turret. The doors and windows of the storefront are sheltered by a fabric awning with a signboard above.

¹⁹⁹ "Banks and Newspapers," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A15

²⁰⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

²⁰¹ CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

²⁰² "State's oldest hardware store to close," *Oxford Leader*, 9 February 1973.

²⁰³ "Expanding and growing with Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 27 March 1975, 14; Advertisement: "The Book Place, Downtown Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A17

²⁰⁴ Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. Michigan State Register of Historic Sites (SRHS), original on file, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Lansing.

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The façade's second story is clad in brick. On the original building, each fenestration bay has a one-over-one window with fabric awnings obscuring the upper section of the window; which is potentially a transom or spandrel. The windows are ornamented by prominent hood moldings that match those on 3 South Washington, although they are painted, giving a slightly different appearance than those on the neighboring building. The hoods include a keystone, decorative etchings, and drop moldings. The windows rest on stone sills with stepped brick corbels placed at the outside corners of the lower sashes. The façade of the original building is surmounted by a corbeled brick arcaded frieze and a bracketed cornice.

The second story of addition is highly ornamented semi-circular turret. The base of the turret is a curved fan molding that terminates to a ball finial that hangs over the first story entrance. The base supports a curved paneled wall with decorative wood moldings. Above the paneling is a prominent bow window, comprised of three one-over-one wood sashes, topped by multi-light stained-glass transoms. Console moldings are applied to the mullions at the base of the lower sashes, upper sashes, and between the transom lights. A dentilated molding extends above the transoms. The upper portion of the turret has panels of alternating corbeled bricks placed at a 45-degree angle to result in a checkerboard pattern. Above the panels is belt course of saw tooth brick, and series of brick modillions. At the base of the turret roof is a molded cornice with small brackets supporting the triangular metal panels of the conical roof.

The visible portion of the building's west elevation is the concrete block addition, which was made sometime after 1976, circa 1980.²⁰⁵ There are two pedestrian entrances on the first story. The primary rear business entrance is a glazed door placed off-center on the elevation and sheltered by a fabric awning. North of the glazed door is a metal-framed door that appears to have once been glazed, but has since been replaced by wood. The second story includes two one-over-one vinyl windows, flanked by modern fixed shutters. Each shutter is comprised of two vertical boards. The original portion of the Hackett Block was built in March of 1879 following the fire that destroyed the west side of South Washington Street the previous year.²⁰⁶ The first owner of the building was Uriah S. Hackett, who operated a drug store in the building. In 1881 he sold the building to Charles Tunstead, brother of William J. Tunstead who owned the neighboring hardware store at 3 South Washington.

Charles Tunstead located the Mascott Cigar factory and a grocery store in the building.²⁰⁷ These businesses remained in the building until the 1890s.²⁰⁸ Sources vary on the exact date that Tunstead's grocery store and the cigar factory moved out, however sometime between 1890 and 1898 Tunstead opened Keystone Drug Store in the building.²⁰⁹ Tunstead hired Ed Wright to manage the drug store, and the Western Union Telegraph had an office in one corner of the

²⁰⁵ "Top Pythian officer from Oxford in '53," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E2.

²⁰⁶ Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

²⁰⁷ Photograph: "W.J. Tunstead's hardware is well known both for its wide..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D17

²⁰⁸ "U.S. Hackett Block," original on file at [SHPO].

²⁰⁹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* 1890, 2; Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

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store.²¹⁰ A jewelry store, owned by W. T. Blashill was located in another corner until he relocated in 1899.

In 1899 the turret addition was constructed and given the address 7 South Washington Street.²¹¹ This section of the building served as an extension of the main building by creating a new office for Western Union Telegraph, which was formerly located in part of Keystone Drug Store. The turret addition changed occupants a few times in the first half of the twentieth century, including a shoe repair shop and ice cream parlor.²¹² The turret section of the building housed small businesses that were separated from the main building through the mid-1940s. The floor space of the addition was likely incorporated in the main building in the mid-twentieth century, as research did not reveal businesses housed there after the 1940s.

The original building remained a drug store until the mid-twentieth century. Keystone Drugs was succeeded by Alston Palmer Drug Store (1908-1917), and then by Harriss Rexall Drug Store (1917-1927).²¹³ In 1927 Lee and Ray VanWagoner purchased Harris Rexall Drugs after having inherited \$500 they used for the down payment.²¹⁴ In 1936 they left the Rexall franchise, becoming simply VanWagoner's Drug Store. In 1947 the VanWagoners relocated their business to 1 South Washington.

After VanWagoner's relocated, the building became a clothing store. First it housed Hayes Men's Wear, and by 1957 it had changed to the Lucille Shop.²¹⁵ The Lucille Shop gave way to Noble's Suburban Shop in 1962, a Lake Orion business that opened its second location in Oxford.²¹⁶ The rear concrete block addition on the building likely dates to the mid-1960s, as it matches additions to adjacent buildings at 9 and 11 South Washington, which were remodeled during that time. Noble's remained in business until 1976.²¹⁷ From the mid-1980s to mid-1990s it housed a salon, known as Oxford Hair Design.²¹⁸ At the time of recordation, the building served as an extension of the Boulevard Boutique, which also included the store space in the Tunstead Block at 3 South Washington.

The Hackett Block retains a high level of historic integrity, with minimal visible exterior alterations. The replacement windows on the façade are somewhat obscured by fabric awnings and do not diminish the overall appearance. Historic-period materials and workmanship present include decorative brickwork, window hoods, and the ornate turret.

9 South Washington; Lenhoff Building/Grove Bros. 5¢ to \$1; c. 1893, c. 1965; Contributing

²¹⁰ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 4.

²¹¹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 3; Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

²¹² Photograph, 680.0014 "bldg.. south of the Tunstead bldg.." Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; Photograph,

"Washington Ave, Oxford", circa 1910, Oxford Street Scenes #1NOHS.

²¹³ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

²¹⁴ Advertisement: "30 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

²¹⁵ Advertisement: "30 Years," 3; "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

²¹⁶ Advertisement: "Fashions Change," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C24.

²¹⁷ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

²¹⁸ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

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The two-story commercial block has a rectilinear footprint consisting of a two-story original building, constructed of brick, and a rear two-story circa 1965 concrete block addition. Both sections of the building have flat roofs. The east-facing façade and west elevation are visible; however, the north and south elevations are obscured by neighboring buildings.

The façade is clad in a simulated horizontal stone masonry blocks, often known as Permastone. The fully glazed front door is centered in the storefront and is flanked by pairs of broad display windows above a Permastone clad bulkhead wall. A pair of smooth stones flank the door, and may be a remnant of the historic façade. The storefront is sheltered by a fabric awning. Between the awning and the second story windows a metal display arm extends perpendicular to the façade to support a small square sign. The second story is pierced by a row of five individual one-over-one windows, each with a fabric awning. The current windows are smaller than the openings, and have T-111 infill spandrels below the lower window sash.

The exterior of the west elevation is concrete block on the first story and vinyl siding on the second story. A glazed pedestrian entrance with a transom light is centered on the first story. The second story includes two one-over-one replacement windows. Each is enframed by a bulky surround.

When 9 South Washington was first erected, the brick commercial building housed John Lenhoff's Star Clothing House.²¹⁹ Lenhoff started his clothing business in Oxford in 1871, growing larger over time, and eventually erecting the extant building. His store carried a full line of men's clothing, including "hats, caps and everything necessary for man to wear."²²⁰

Lenhoff relocated his store by 1909 and a bakery was present in the building.²²¹ Not long thereafter, the building housed Melanoff Variety Store.²²² A circa 1910 photograph reveals that the building's façade was originally brick, with a prominent parapet and a large brick arch over the second story windows.²²³ These details have been obscured by a 1965 renovation. Between 1913 and 1915 Oxford's first movie theater, the Pastime Theatre, moved from the Curry Building at 31 North Washington Street, to this location.²²⁴

The theater was short-lived and by the 1920s the building had returned to a retail function, as Smith Novelty Store.²²⁵ In July 1931 brothers Homer and James Grove, opened a five-and-dime in the building, known as "Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1." The building was heavily remodeled upon purchase.²²⁶ Management of the store eventually transitioned to Homer and Leora Grove's son,

²¹⁹ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1; "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

²²⁰ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

²²¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

²²² Photograph: "The days when awnings were 'in'." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E15.

²²³ Photograph: "The days when awnings were 'in'." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E15.

²²⁴ "First movies promised no offensive pictures like fights, vaudeville," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C7; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

²²⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2; Martha Fulford, "The Dime Store is 50," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1981.

²²⁶ Martha Fulford, "The Dime Store is 50," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1981.

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Harold. Under Harold Grove's management, by 1947, the business expanded to include the floor space in the adjacent building at 11 South Washington. Once the new space was acquired, the building was remodeled again. The party wall between the two buildings was partially removed to form "two large archways," and connect the two retail spaces.²²⁷ The store was remodeled again twenty years later, by the next generation of the Grove family. In 1965 Harold and Clara Grove's son and daughter-in-law, Sunny and Maryann, purchased the business. The new owners remodeled the interior, removing the archways, and unifying the two storefronts on the exterior with matching cladding that is extant today.²²⁸ It was likely during this time that the concrete block addition was made to the rear of the building. Grove's 5¢ to \$1 remained in business through the early 1980s. By the late 1990s, both 9 and 11 South Washington had returned to housing separate businesses. As of 2017, the Lenhoff Building housed the Sweet & Savory bakery.

The building retains historic integrity as a commercial resource in downtown Oxford. The faux stone cladding on the façade obscures original brick details, however it was added in the mid-1960s as a way to unify the storefronts of 9 and 11 South Washington, as they were both occupied by Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1. The Grove store was a long-time fixture in the downtown business district, occupying 9 South Washington for fifty years (1931-1981). Although the exterior no longer conveys its nineteenth century construction, the current appearance of the building was realized during the period of significance (1876-1968). The changes to the building demonstrate continued use and desire for the owners to modernize their business. While not architecturally distinctive, the building does convey commercial significance and therefore is contributing to the district.

11 S Washington; Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1; c. 1885, c. 1965; Contributing

This two-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint, consisting of a brick-constructed original building, and a rear circa 1965 concrete block addition. Both sections of the building have a flat roof. The east-facing façade and west elevation are clearly visible; however, the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings.

The façade is clad in a simulated horizontal stone masonry blocks, often known as Permastone. A glazed storefront occupies most of the building's first story. The storefront comprised of a pair of doors with a transom, positioned between two broad display windows. The windows rest on Permastone clad bulkhead walls, which terminates with a tall stone at either side of the entrance. The storefront fenestration is sheltered by a modern fabric awning. A second glazed pedestrian entrance, including a glazed transom, is placed north of the storefront. On the second story there are three one-over-one replacement windows. The replacement windows are smaller than the original openings, and the space above and below has been infilled by T-111 siding. A signboard is mounted to the wall above the storefront awning with its upper edge even with the stone sills of the center and southern second story windows.

²²⁷ Fulford, "The Dime Store."

²²⁸ Fulford, "The Dime Store."

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The rear elevation is constructed of concrete block. The first story includes three pedestrian entrances positioned roughly in the center and at each outer corner of the building. The center entrance is partially glazed and provides access to the first-floor retail space. It is sheltered by a fabric awning. A second partially glazed door is located near the south corner of the elevation, with evidence that there had, at one time, been a sign above the door. The northern-most door is unglazed and sheltered by a small pent roof, sheathed in asphalt shingles. The second story fenestration includes two one-over-one replacement windows with wood surrounds.

The first known use of the building, which was constructed sometime prior to 1890, was a clothing store.²²⁹ In the early twentieth century the building changed functions at least once a decade. By 1900 it had become a saloon, in 1909 a crockery, and as of 1915 the building housed a “bazaar.”²³⁰

By the mid-1930s the first floor housed the A&P grocery store.²³¹ Circa 1947 the building was remodeled and the first-floor retail space was combined with the adjacent business at 9 South Washington, Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1.²³² In 1965 the façade was remodeled with the present materials to unify the two buildings.²³³ It was likely at this time the rear two-story concrete block addition was made as well. The Grove store remained at this location into the 1980s, by then known as a 5¢ to \$1. As of 2017 the building housed the Oxford Wine & Beverage Company.

The building retains historic integrity as a commercial resource in downtown Oxford. The faux stone cladding on the façade obscures original brick details, however it was added in the mid-1960s to unify the storefronts of 9 and 11 South Washington, as they were both occupied by Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1. The Grove store was a long-time fixture in the downtown business district, occupying adjacent 9 South Washington for fifty years (1931-1981), and 11 South Washington for around thirty-four years (circa 1947-1981). Although the exterior no longer conveys its nineteenth century construction, the current appearance of the building was realized during the period of significance (1876-1968). The changes to the building demonstrate continued use and desire for the owners to modernize their business. While not architecturally distinctive, the building does convey commercial significance and therefore is contributing to the district.

13-15 South Washington; E. R. Clark Saloon/24th Street Sports Tavern; 1884/1897; Contributing

The building was formerly two separate commercial blocks that have been combined to form one business on a single property parcel. The north half of the building was formerly 13 South Washington Street, and the south half was 15 South Washington, although both will be discussed here as a single property as it is currently recognized. The two-story building has a rectilinear

²²⁹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890), 2.

²³⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915, 3.

²³¹ Fulford, “The Dime Store.”

²³² Fulford, “The Dime Store.”

²³³ Fulford, “The Dime Store.”

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footprint and a flat roof. The facades of the two separate structures remain still visually distinct, however the rear, west-facing, elevation has been re-clad to visually unify the two buildings.

The exterior walls of the façade are clad primarily in brick. The storefront extends the full width of the combined building, with the primary entrances positioned off-center in the former 13 S. Washington. The two-glazed doors have transoms and are each flanked by a pair of large display windows also with transoms above. The northern-most door has an adjacent sidelight with the address 13 applied above it; while the southern door has the address 15 above. The windows are divided by heavy mullions and rest on brick bulkhead walls. Above the transom windows is a broad signboard with a dentilated frieze, which terminates with engaged posts at each end and flanking the arched sign board positioned above the front doors.

The second story of the façade reveals original character of the two separate buildings. The north half of the building, 13 South Washington, includes three window openings, each surmounted by a decorative hood that features keystones, etched patterns, and drop moldings. The windows themselves are one-over-one replacements with the space between the upper sash and hood infilled with a spandrel. Decorative brickwork continues on the cornice, which includes a series of corbeled bricks with stepped brick capitals. The parapet across the top of the building is currently flat and void of ornamentation.

The second story of the south half of the façade, 15 South Washington, has more restrained decorative elements. Centered on the elevation is a pair of one-over-one replacement sashes, set into a segmentally arched opening. The arch has been infilled by wood spandrel to fill the much larger opening. Decorative brick or terra cotta with a bead-and-reel pattern forms a frieze over the window arch and across the façade. A cornice extends across the façade parapet, which includes rope and egg-and-dart moldings, as well as small brackets. A date plate in the parapet reads 1897.

The west elevation of the building has been clad in EFIS over both sections of the building. A one-story shed-roof porch extends across the elevation clad in seamed copper. The porch roof is sheathed in metal and supported by partition walls that extend from the face of the building. A projecting signboard that matches the one on the façade is placed over an off-center pedestrian entrance. The entrance is glazed and a decorative surround with a keystone. Three other entrances are within the porch, each a solid pedestrian door. The second story includes three one-over-one replacement windows. Decorative details on this elevation include a chair rail molding within the porch. On the second story, engaged columns with quoins are placed at the outer edges of the building; and a bracketed cornice extend across the parapet.

The renovation that combined the two buildings as one business and one continuous storefront occurred circa 1985.²³⁴ As of 1999 they both housed a restaurant, Rob's Place, and at the time of recordation they housed 24th Street Sports Tavern. Because the building was historically two separate entities, their histories are discussed individually below.

²³⁴ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

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The first known use of this building was a liquor store/saloon owned by Elisha R. Clark.²³⁵ Clark entered the liquor business in 1870, selling cigars, tobacco, and light groceries.²³⁶ A photograph of the building from the 1930s shows the building as having a highly ornamental cornice (not extant) that reads "Clark's Block 1884."²³⁷ Mr. Clark's saloon occupied the building through 1907, after which, the building became C. S. Nichols Cigar Store.²³⁸ Nichols housed several businesses in the building, including a pool room by 1915, and in the mid-1930s it was once again listed in sources as a saloon.²³⁹ In the late 1930s, through the mid-1940s, the building was noted on Sanborn maps simply as a restaurant.²⁴⁰

15 South Washington

Based on the date plate on the parapet, this building was erected in 1897. Its first known occupant sold footwear, including boots and shoes.²⁴¹ The next known business was Howard Houck's "Little Cash Grocery Store," which offered a delivery service.²⁴² At the same time, there was a photography studio on the second story.²⁴³ By 1915 the grocery store was replaced by a telegraph office.²⁴⁴ In the 1920s the first floor returned to retail use, which it remained up through the 1930s and 40s.²⁴⁵ As of the mid-1930s it housed Harry Tice Shoeshine.²⁴⁶ Later in the 1930s the building housed Bartlett Paint and Wallpaper.²⁴⁷ As of 1949 Valentine's Furniture was located in the building.²⁴⁸

Although they have undergone multiple renovations, the buildings retain sufficient historic integrity to convey nineteenth century commercial resources in downtown Oxford. Their legacy is primarily conveyed through extant original brickwork on the façade second story, which reveals that the buildings were historically two separate entities, constructed at different times, independent of one another.

17 South Washington; B.D.T. Smoke Shop; c. 1897, c. 1965; Contributing

²³⁵ "Board walks and horse tie rings, those were the days," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D14

²³⁶ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1.

²³⁷ Photograph #58. "Main Street West side just south of Burdick Street intersection, Oxford, Michigan." Oakland County Historical Society, accessed 7 May 2018.

²³⁸ "Board walks and horse tie rings, those were the days," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D14

²³⁹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3; Photograph: "Kroger was on the southeast corner of the main four corners..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D20.

²⁴⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

²⁴¹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

²⁴² Photograph: "Howard Houck's 'Little Cash Grocery...'," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C14.

²⁴³ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

²⁴⁴ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

²⁴⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

²⁴⁶ Photograph: "Kroger was on the southeast corner of the main four corners..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D20.

²⁴⁷ Photograph #58. "Main Street West side just south of Burdick Street intersection, Oxford, Michigan." Oakland County Historical Society, accessed 7 May 2018.

²⁴⁸ Advertisement. "Elliott's UNI-TEX." *Detroit Free Press*, 9 May 1949, 8.

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The commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The original building is a two-story brick veneered structure with a flat roof. The building is expanded by a rear one-story concrete block addition with a shed roof (circa 1965). The east-facing façade and west elevation are visible; however, the north and south elevations are party walls that abut adjacent buildings.

The façade is divided into three bays on both the paneled wood first story and brick second story. The first story storefront has a recessed entrance on the northern-most bay, which consists of two glazed pedestrian doors. The entry bay includes one door parallel to the façade and a second door angled along the south wall of the recess. The center and southern storefront bays include broad display windows that rest on a paneled bulkhead wall. A three-panel wood signboard extends above the storefront and is lit by wall-mounted light fixtures.

Façade second story windows are one-over-one sashes with fabric awnings. All three windows share a continuous coarsely hewn stone sill. The windows are set into segmental arched openings with decorative roughly-finished brick applied to the lintels. A brick belt course with similarly roughly-finished brick extends across façade even with the upper edge of the hoods. A second belt course extends across the parapet, which is surmounted by projecting dentilated cornice.

The west elevation of the original building is clad in vertical wood siding, and includes a pair of centrally located one-over-one replacement windows. The concrete block addition has a shed roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. The addition's west elevation angles between the rear elevations of the adjacent buildings, which are not of the same length. This results in an angled wall on 17 South Washington. Fenestration on this elevation includes two glazed pedestrian doors and a display window.

The building was erected sometime between 1895 and 1900, and was first used as a drug store.²⁴⁹ By 1909 a hand laundry business was in the building and an ancillary building (not extant) was located west of the building.²⁵⁰ As of 1915, the main building had changed businesses once again, this time hosting a confectionary.²⁵¹ Over the next ten years, a series of small wood-framed additions were made to the rear of the building.²⁵² During the 1930s and 1940s the building was home to Kozak's Bakery.²⁵³ By 1945 the smaller additions had been removed, and a wood-framed two-story addition, and one-story coal room was on the rear of the building; both were removed and replaced by the extant concrete block addition circa 1965. In the mid-1970s

²⁴⁹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

²⁵⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

²⁵¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

²⁵² Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

²⁵³ Photograph: "Kroger was on the southeast corner of the main four corners..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D20; "Wanted" *Detroit Free Press*, 23 January 1944, 9.

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the Oxford Shoe Mart/Mr. G's Shoes was located in the building.²⁵⁴ In the 1980s it was a vitamin store, known as Secret Ingredient.²⁵⁵ As of 2018, the building houses B.D.T. Smoke Shop.

The building retains historic integrity and is a contributing resource to the historic district. The façade retains original brickwork on the second floor. The first-floor storefront retains its historic form and although materials have been replaced, they are compatible with the building.

21 South Washington; L. Randall Co. Building/Gambles; 1908/1956); Contributing

The large commercial building was historically two separate structures. The north building, formerly 19 South Washington, is a two-story brick commercial block with a flat roof and a rectilinear footprint. The southern half of the building, formerly 21 South Washington Street is a one-story concrete block structure, with an L-plan footprint and a flat roof. The two buildings are unified by exterior cladding on the first story façade, which includes an EFIS veneer and applied wood trim. The primary entrance is located at the southern corner of 21 South Washington, and consists of a recessed entry with paired doors. The doors are paneled with upper glazing. The remainder of the storefront on the one-story portion of the façade is angled to create the recess for the doors. This wall is divided into two bays, each with a pair of display windows. Each bay is emphasized by the wood details that give the illusion of pilasters. Above the windows is a surface mounted lighted sign for the restaurant that occupies the building. Two additional bays of display windows and wood "pilasters" are utilized on the first story of the 19 South Washington. However, above these windows is a transom window created by a ribbon of four single-lights.

The second story of the 19 South Washington retains its original brick exterior. The façade includes three single-light fixed windows with stone sills and flat arch hoods. Each window is flanked by a recessed brick panel. Above the windows, a broad brick segmental arch springs from above the outermost panel at the north and south corners. The arch is highlighted by a corbeled brick course along the upper edge of the arch. The tall façade parapet appears to have been reconstructed with replacement brick. On the side elevation the parapet is stepped, progressively lower as it reaches the rear west-facing elevation. The exposed second story elevation is pierced by a series of four single-light modern windows are on the east half of the south elevation. The west elevation includes a single glazed pedestrian door centered on the elevation. The door is flanked by former window openings that have been infilled with brick.

On the west-facing rear elevation of 21 South Washington, the L-plan of the building is visible, as it forms a notch with the adjacent building to the south, 23 South Washington. Fenestration on this elevation includes a pair of modern glazed entry doors and a pair of modern display windows. There is extensive scarring on the elevation, indicating at least one additional window has subsequently been removed.

Commented [KK(10): We need to discuss this. SHPO Staff feel that the one story building is not contributing but we are still determining how to alter the listings/how to handle this.

²⁵⁴ Advertisement: "May we express sincere best wishes to all for a happy centennial celebration," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C7; Advertisement: "May we express sincere best wishes to all for a happy centennial celebration," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, C7.

²⁵⁵ Advertisement. Detroit Free Press, 26 January 1986.

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The two buildings were combined under one business, sometime after 1999. At the time of recordation, both buildings house Casa Real, a Mexican restaurant. Because the buildings have separate development histories, they are described separately below.

19 South Washington

The building was erected in 1908, and served as the C. L. (Charles LeRay) Randall Co. Bean Elevator.²⁵⁶ The building was heralded as “longest in town” at 30 feet by 106 feet, with a storage capacity of 7,000 bushels.²⁵⁷ Randall had his office on the second floor and a two-story dependency was located at the building’s southwest corner.²⁵⁸

The C. L. Randall Company elevator remained in business here until Mr. Randall retired in 1923.²⁵⁹ The first floor of the building subsequently housed a store and second floor continued as the telephone exchange.²⁶⁰ The dependency south of the building had been disconnected, and functioned as an auto repair shop. This configuration remained consistent through the mid-1940s.²⁶¹ As of 1947, the building housed Herald Cleaners.²⁶² The dependency was demolished for the construction of 21 South Washington in 1956.²⁶³ In the late 1990s, the building housed Dillinger’s Saloon.

21 South Washington

Herm Whitstock built this building in 1956 as a new location for the Gambles a hardware store.²⁶⁴ Previously, Gambles had been located in the Oakland Hotel on North Washington Street (not extant), and the commercial building at 4 North Washington Street.²⁶⁵ Gambles was still in business here by the mid-1970s; at that time the chain store had over 3,000 locations.²⁶⁶ Eventually, a false-front Mansard roof was added, which was extant as of 1999. During the late 1990s, the building housed a business known as Coach’s Corner.

The combined buildings have been extensively altered but retain sufficient integrity to contribute to the historic district. The 19 South Washington half of the building exhibits decorative brickwork on the façade second story, and although the storefront is remodeled, the building overall conveys an early twentieth century commercial block. The 21 South Washington half of the building does not retain original materials. However, the one-story building with a recessed entrance conveys the design of a mid-twentieth century, modest, commercial resource.

²⁵⁶ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3; “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1.

²⁵⁷ “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1.

²⁵⁸ “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1

²⁵⁹ “C. L. Randall did things in a big way,” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D8.

²⁶⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

²⁶¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

²⁶² Michigan Bell Co., *Telephone Directory for Rochester-Clarkston-Lake Orion-Leonard-Oxford*. (Michigan Bell: December 1947), 41.

²⁶³ Photograph: “These are Henry Houck’s auto sales and service buildings...,” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C22.

²⁶⁴ Photograph: “These are Henry Houck’s auto sales and service buildings...,” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C22.

²⁶⁵ Photograph: “Chevrolet, Pontiac, Olds and Packard Sales were all...” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D23

²⁶⁶ “More than Nuts and Bolts at Gambles,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 March 1975, 3

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23 South Washington; Commercial Building; c. 2007; Non-contributing

The two-story commercial building is of modern construction. The building has an L-plan footprint, with a flat roof. The façade is oriented south to Centennial Park. The east and west elevations are visible, while the north elevation is partially obscured since it abuts the building at 21 South Washington Street. The exterior walls are clad in brick veneer with Neoclassical decorative concrete elements, including pilasters, quoins, a parapet, and window surrounds. The corner pilasters rise to from the foundation to the top of the parapet, which is slightly stepped to give the pilasters more definition. Interior pilasters extend between fenestration bays on the first and second stories; above them are inset diamond panels.

The façade is divided into seven bays, while the narrower width of the building includes four bays on the east elevation and two on the west. Five separate storefront entrances are spaced across the south elevation; one each of the four western bays and the final door in the eastern bay. Two additional doors are located on the east elevation, and one additional door is on the west elevation. First story fenestration typically includes a door at one corner, then large display windows above the brick bulkhead to the top of the door. A string of transom windows extends across the top of the door and the display windows to just below the belt course that defines the floor. Above each of the fenestration bays the wall has brick panels, with solider courses at the base and rising to a field of common bond bricks. This area also provides a space for signage for each of the businesses within the building. The second story windows are within the segmentally arched openings, and include six single-light windows in the bottom course of fenestration topped by single light windows cut to fit the angles of the arch in the upper course of glazing. A small keystone is positioned at the center of each of the arched openings. The exception to the typical fenestration patters is found in the two-story flat-roof pavilion that rises in the third bay from the west on the south elevation. The first story of the pavilion is a glazed storefront with a fabric awning. The second story of the pavilion consists of a prominent twelve-light arched window surmounted by a console keystone, and flanked by decorative pilasters. Above the window is a three-dimensional sculpture.

Based on aerial imagery, visible in Google Earth, the building was erected circa 2007. The building houses multiple tenants, including a branch of Beaumont Hospital, known as Beaumont Parkside Medical Associated, and the Ox Bar & Grill.

Between 23 and 51 South Washington; Village Park/Centennial Park; est. 1926/1976; Contributing

Centennial Park is a square parcel that serves as an open green space in downtown Oxford. The west and south sides of the park are bound by parking lots. The east fronts on the sidewalk adjacent to South Washington Street and the north side abuts the walkway surrounding 23 South Washington Street.

The park is essentially an open lawn with intermittent trees and plantings. A gazebo, built 1976, is at the center rear of the park (non-contributing). It is accessed by angled paved sidewalks that

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extend from the northwest and southwest corners of the park at Washington Street. The one-story gazebo has a hexagonal footprint and a stepped concrete foundation. The hipped roof is supported by brick posts and surmounted by a cupola. The deck of the gazebo is encircled by a wood balustrade and a spindle frieze extends below the roofline.

The interior of the park includes various modern street furniture, including lampposts, benches, and picnic tables. East of the gazebo is a flag pole that appears to be less than fifty years old (non-contributing). Centered on the east side of the park, at the sidewalk, is a modern clock that is mounted on an iron post (non-contributing). South of the clock is a wood signboard and planter box (non-contributing). The southwest corner of the park has been landscaped with a series of memorials and monuments. The central monument in the grouping is a modern bronze soldier statue that commemorates veterans of the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and Vietnam (non-contributing). The soldier monument rests on a stone pier, with memorial stones placed in front of the statue at grade. Three of the markers are less than 50 years old and are non-contributing, they commemorate the Vietnam Conflict, World War II, and Gulf War. Two markers date to the period of significance and are contributing objects to the historic district. The oldest marker is an upright rough-carved granite tablet erected by the Women's Relief Corps (WRC) for a fallen member of the Grand Army of the Republic (GRC), also known as the Union Army. The monument reads:

IN MEMORY OF
1861 to 1865
and
FRANK POWELL
POST
GAR NO. 187
ERECTED BY
W.R.C. NO. 260
AUGUST 26, 1925.

The second oldest monument is in recognition of the founding crossroads of Oxford and was erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The inscription, as it appears on the stone, reads:

HISTORICAL SITE OF MICHIGAN
THIS MONUMENT, ERECTED IN 1954, WAS
PRESENTED BY THE JOHN CRAWFORD
CHAPTER, D.A.R. THIS COMMEMORATES
THE TERRITORIAL ROAD, WHICH WAS LOCATED
IN 1832 BETWEEN ROCHESTER AND LAPEER.
THE FIRST POSTOFFICE [sic.] OF OXFORD TOWNSHIP
WAS ON THIS ROAD IN SECTION 9.

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Centennial Park, historically known as the Village Park, was established in 1926.²⁶⁷ The Sanborn map from April of that year depicts a house and garage on the large parcel.²⁶⁸ At some point during that year, village residents voted to allocate \$7,425 to buy the property from Charles Lambertson, establishing a village park.²⁶⁹ The residents also voted to spend \$2,575 to install public toilets in the park, which do not appear to have been implemented. By 1937 the park had a band stand at its center (not extant), and the park boundaries extended to the areas west and south of the current boundary and are now parking lots.²⁷⁰ A historic photograph from the mid-1930s shows that there was also a flag pole in the center of the park.²⁷¹ The gazebo extant today was erected in 1976 as part of the Village's Centennial Celebration that year.²⁷²

The park has been altered by modern structures, monuments, and street furniture. However, the site itself is an open greenspace in the dense commercial district that has been a part of the downtown landscape for over ninety years. Therefore, the park is a contributing site to the historic district.

South Washington Street, East Side

2-10 South Washington; Joseph A. Jossman Building/Rolando Block; c. 1905-1906; Contributing

The two-story Queen Anne/Neo Classical-style commercial building has an irregular footprint due to its location at the southeast corner of South Washington and East Burdick Streets. The two major roads do not meet at a 90-degree angle, instead, South Washington Street crosses the straight East Burdick Street at a 45-degree angle. The long side of the building, the façade, faces west to South Washington Street and the north elevation faces to East Burdick. The northwest corner of the building is cut-away. The east (rear) elevation is visible, while the south elevation abuts an adjacent commercial building. A two-story addition is located at the northeast corner of the building.

The brick building has a flat roof and a tall cornice. The west-facing facade is divided into three distinct sections, denoted by the cornice, fenestration patterns, and quoined brick pilasters. The brick on the center and northern third of the building has been cleaned, and shows as a lighter color than the south half of the building.

The façade first story contains six entrances and four storefront bays. The storefront bays on the façade and north elevation are divided by brick pilasters that feature stone capitals and a stone inset, the southern three of which have been damaged or replaced. A frieze molding extends

²⁶⁷ "Village Residents..." *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B20.

²⁶⁸ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

²⁶⁹ "Village Residents..." *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B20.

²⁷⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2.

²⁷¹ Photograph, #175, "View of west side of Washington Street from land that became park," Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

²⁷² Photograph. "Workman who began construction on the band..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 May 1976.

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between the pilasters, above the storefront display windows, on the center and northern third of the facade. The 2-6 section of the building is accessed by a recess, located primarily within the northern third of the building. The recessed area has an angled north wall, the rear wall parallels the street, and the south wall is perpendicular to Washington Street. A single Doric column, positioned at the outer wall of the building, supports the second story within the recessed area. The walls within the recessed entrance are clad in vertical wood siding. There are two doors near each other in the north end of the recess, and the third door is located on the south wall, each entrance is a glazed door with a fixed transom light above.

North of the recess is a bank of display windows, with a single window facing to Burdick Street, the next window on the cut-away angle of the building, a window facing Washington Street, and the final window angled southwest into the recessed entry area. Each window is a single light topped by fabric awnings. Two additional pairs of display windows extend east along the north elevation. Additional display windows for this unit extend down the north elevation, including a singly placed window and two sets of paired windows. At the far end of the north elevation is a single-light window and a secondary pedestrian entrance.

The center storefront, at 6 South Washington, is south of the entrance recess. It includes a string of three and string of four single-light display sashes, each with a wood-paneled frieze above. The storefront at 8 South Washington includes two bays, which are divided by a pilaster that has a concrete inset of the current business's insignia. The two bays contain arched fenestration openings. The northern bay includes a pair of wood pedestrian doors with a large window in each. The southern door has a sidelight, and each includes a transom light above. The center bay contains a four-light arched display window. The southern-most storefront of the building, 10 South Washington, is clad in wood. It includes a glazed pedestrian door with a transom, and a display window.

On the building's second story, the parapet, decorative brickwork, and fenestration patterns, have an asymmetrical arrangement that further distinguishes each of the facade's three sections. All the second story windows share a continuous sill that forms a band course across the facade and north elevation. On the facade, brick quoins rise from the band course to the base of the parapet; two flanking the center third of the building and one placed on the southwest corner.

The parapet is its tallest at the center third of the facade, being surmounted by a triangular pediment which is flanked by pilasters. A small section of dentilated cornice is at the base of the parapet's pilasters, and a shelf molding extends across the center pediment. Matching features are applied to the parapet on the north third of the facade, and west half of the north elevation. Here, the parapet is surmounted by a shelf molding, includes a dentilated cornice, and features modern inset moldings. The parapet rises at the cut-away corner to incorporate a modern clock. Based on historic photographs, the parapet appears to have been reconstructed, and the clock a modern fixture.²⁷³ The parapet steps down from the clock on the north elevation.

²⁷³ Photograph, "Late 40s-early 50s." Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

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The parapet on the south third of the building has been replaced and does not include a dentilated cornice or moldings. It is shorter than the original and topped by tile coping. Centered on this section of the parapet is a hexagonal date plate with the name Ronaldo, and the year, 1906; a modern feature.

The building sections are further set apart by differences in window arrangements. On the center section of the façade, the windows include two strings of three one-over-one sashes. Both strings are unified by a shared stone lintel, above which are arches with keystones and inset fanlight spandrels. Above the window groupings are three oculus windows with corbeled surrounds.

The north third of the building has a series of one-over-one windows; two on the façade and twelve on the north elevation. These windows are topped by decorative hoods that feature keystones and an inset molding that imitates a fanlight. A prominent feature of the building is a circular oriel window placed off-center on the northwest cut-away corner. The oriel has a flat roof and walls are clad in vertical board siding. Within the oriel there are three one-over-one wood sash windows.

The southern third of the facade has two fenestration bays on the second story, including a pair of windows that match those on the north third of the façade, and an oriel. The oriel is comprised of three one-over-one sashes. The replacement hipped roof and curved base of the oriel are sheathed in metal.

The two-story addition on the building's northeast corner has a flat roof and stepped parapet. A two-story corner balcony is on the south elevation of the addition at its juncture with the core block. The deck of the balcony is supported by a single wood post and wall brace on the east elevation of the building. The shelters two glazed pedestrian entrances on the first story. The entrance on the main building includes a square transom, while the entrance to the ell includes a sidelight and arched transom. The balcony deck is encircled by a balustrade and sheltered by a shed roof. Window openings on the ell include a one-over-one sash on the north elevation, and an opening infilled by brick on the east elevation.

South of the rear addition is fenestration that corresponds to the 8-10 South Washington section of the building. This includes modern replacement windows and pedestrian doors, set into arched openings. On the south half of the first story a partially-glazed pedestrian door and window that share a broad segmental arch opening. The door has a tall transom that has been infilled with ventilation units. The window is two-over-two lights, with the lower lights and muntins having been replaced. North of the combined door and window opening is a second pedestrian entrance; including a modern glazed door, above which an air conditioning unit and single-light arched transom. North of the door is a modern single light window with a half segmental arch transom. On the second story there are two one-over-one windows with arched transoms, and a glazed pedestrian door with an arched transom. Two modern railings are installed horizontally over the door.

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The large building has been divided into two separate property parcels, which is visible by differences in the exterior of the building. The parcels include 2-6 South Washington, the north two thirds of the building; and 8-10 South Washington, the southern third of the building. Despite these alterations, the exterior overall retains a high level of architectural integrity. The various sections of the building are described separately below.

2-6 South Washington

The large commercial building was built not long after 1900. About 1905 Joseph A. Jossman opened Jossman's Dry Goods in the corner storefront, 2-4 South Washington.²⁷⁴ The building is first depicted on a Sanborn map in 1909, which noted a small jewelry store in the 6 South Washington unit.²⁷⁵ By 1910 the corner store had become Baxter's Department Store, and 6 South Washington was Blashill's Jewelry Store.²⁷⁶ Between circa 1917 and 1920 the building was occupied by a grocery store.²⁷⁷

By the early 1920s, the corner unit was again occupied by a department store, owned by partners Glaspie and Webster.²⁷⁸ The pair remained in business until 1927.²⁷⁹ Sometime after Glaspie and Webster's store closed, the space became home to Eggleston Department Store.²⁸⁰ In 1960, Russell Medaugh and his two sons purchased Eggleston's store, and rebranded it as Medaugh's Department Store.²⁸¹ The following year Medaugh's expanded to the floor space to include 6 South Washington. The Medaugh's store remained in business through 1982 when it declared bankruptcy.²⁸² Following Medaugh's the building housed Lynne's Hallmark Shoppe.²⁸³ As of 2017 the building houses Wireless Toyz at 2 South Washington (now 2A), an art therapy studio at 4 South Washington (now 2B) and Allstate Insurance at 6 South Washington.

8 South Washington

Based on the date plate and the architecture this section of the building, today known as the Rolando Building, was erected circa 1906. The first known tenant of 8 South Washington was Price Brothers Drug Store, owned by Roy and Elisha Price.²⁸⁴ In 1912 Elisha retired, leaving Roy sole proprietor, and "Brothers" was subsequently changed the name to reflect the evolving ownership.²⁸⁵ Price's Drug Store remained in business until 1946 when it was sold to Harry

²⁷⁴ Post Card, "A Business Block of Oxford Mich." circa 1905, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

²⁷⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

²⁷⁶ Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B13.

²⁷⁷ Post Card, #11 "Oxford, Mich." Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS; "Oxford was a commercial center in 1917, too," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B18.

²⁷⁸ "Before curbs and gutters," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C14.

²⁷⁹ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A9.

²⁸⁰ Photo, Washington Street at Burdick, circa 1940. Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

²⁸¹ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9.

²⁸² "Bankruptcies," *Detroit Free Press*, 29 November 1982, 20.

²⁸³ Advertisement. "Hallmark." *Detroit Free Press*, 30 November 1986, 153.

²⁸⁴ Thaddeus D. Seeley, *History of Oakland County, Michigan* Vol. 2 (Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), 709.

²⁸⁵ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 709.

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Borgne, who renamed the business Oxford Pharmacy.²⁸⁶ Since the late 1990s, 8 South Washington has housed Great Lakes Mercantile.

10 South Washington

From the early 1900s until 1923, 10 South Washington housed the office of Dr. Cole; a natural neighbor to a drug store.²⁸⁷ From 1929 through the late 1950s, the storefront housed Don's Barber Shop, owned by Don Awery.²⁸⁸ From the mid-1980s through late 1990s, the building housed Knit-centera. At the time of recordation, 10 South Washington was vacant.

The building has undergone some alterations, including changes to the storefronts at 2-10 South Washington, and reconstruction of the parapets on both sections of the building. Despite these changes, much of the original building fabric and design remains intact to convey both architectural and commercial significance.

12 South Washington; Farmers State Bank; c. 1905, c.1955, c. 2000; Contributing

The one-story brick commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The flat roof is encircled by a tall parapet on the façade, north, and south elevations. The west-facing façade and rear east-facing elevation are visible; however, the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings and are only partially visible on the rear of the building. The façade was remodeled in the 1950s and is veneered in long narrow or Roman bricks placed in a running bond pattern.²⁸⁹

A glazed storefront extends across the façade. The recessed front door, positioned near the north corner of the façade, is a multi-light pedestrian sash topped by a transom. North of the door is a single narrow display window, with an angled window south of the door creating greater depth for the recessed door. The remaining display extend south from the entrance recess in a string three single light display windows. The storefront is sheltered by a fabric awning, above which is a decorative frieze and cornice. The modern frieze has large projecting bulls eye moldings flanking the business's sign; which is lit by light fixtures mounted on the parapet wall. The projecting cornice is a simple shelf molding with brackets at each end.

The rear of the building is a circa 2000 addition which is clad in common bricks in a variety of colors. Three belt courses of soldier bricks are located near the upper section of the wall. A belt course is positioned just above the door opening, below the cornice, and along the top of the parapet. The only fenestration on the rear of the building is a recessed glazed door and associated sidelight and transom at the southeast corner.

Based on Sanborn-Perris and Sanborn map research, the building was built between 1900 and 1909.²⁹⁰ The first known occupant was the Farmers State Bank, which established in 1905.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11; Michigan Bell Co., *Telephone Directory for Rochester-Clarkston-Lake Orion-Leonard-Oxford*. (Michigan Bell: December 1947), 43.

²⁸⁷ "Before curbs and gutters," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C14.

²⁸⁸ Advertisement, *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957.

²⁸⁹ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

²⁹⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

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On July 5, 1932 the bank failed; it closed its doors and did not reorganize or reopen.²⁹²

Following the bank closure, Acheson Jewelers moved into the building, relocating from the Oakland Hotel building on North Washington (not extant).²⁹³ By 1967 Acheson Jewelers had outgrown their second location and moved to the newly constructed Oxford Mall at 28 South Washington.²⁹⁴ Since 1997 the building has been occupied by a restaurant, Victoria's Delights.²⁹⁵ The restaurant expanded the building with the rear addition, present today.

The building regains historic integrity to convey its commercial associations. The overall form of the building is intact. Materials to the façade were altered in the 1950s, which falls in the period of significance. The rear addition is modern, but sympathetic to the original building.

14 South Washington; Jewelry Store/Pink & Charlie; c. 1897, c. 1960; Contributing

This one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The original building is a brick masonry structure with a flat roof that includes a coped parapet on the facade. It is expanded by a concrete block addition on the west elevation that also has a flat roof. The east-facing façade and rear west-facing elevations are visible, while the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings.

The façade is clad primarily in the building's original brick. Brick pilasters frame the façade and rise to the building's parapet. Between the pilasters a decorative brick cornice extends across the parapet. Cornice details include a course of saw tooth brick, formed by placing the bricks in each course at a 45-degree angle at its base with rows of corbeling above.

A glazed storefront provides most of the visual interest in the façade. The storefront has a recessed entrance at the north corner that is comprised of a glazed door and its associated transom window. The door recess is formed by the north section of display windows placed at an angle between the street and the door. The display window on the angled wall contains a modern fifteen-light display window. South of the recessed entrance is a twenty-light modern display window. Both display windows rest on a bulkhead wall of vertical wood bead board paneling. Above the entrance and display windows are wood-framed single-light transoms, each with a decorative 45-degree angle molding in sashes' upper corners. A wall-mounted signboard is placed above the storefront, lit by wall-mounted light fixtures.

The east elevation of the building is concrete block. The only fenestration is a glazed pedestrian door near the north corner of the elevation, and sheltered under a dome awning.

²⁹¹ Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B13.

²⁹² Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 247; Richard A. Young, *History of Northeast Oakland County*, (Oxford, Michigan: Oxford Leader Inc., 1976), 63.

²⁹³ Steve Neef, "Acheson Jewelers oldest family retailer in town" *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C18.

²⁹⁴ "Acheson Jewelers oldest family retailer in town" *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C18.

²⁹⁵ "How it All Began," Victoria's Wine and Dine, <http://www.victoriasdelights.com/index.php/about-us/how-it-all-began>, accessed 15 March 2018.

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Based on Sanborn-Perris maps, the building was erected sometime between 1895 and 1900, and first housed a jewelry store.²⁹⁶ In 1910 it became a barber shop, which it remained through the 1920s, under the ownership of Fred Sternberg.²⁹⁷ Sanborn maps in the 1930s and 1940s list the building simply as a store.²⁹⁸ In 1957 the building became the temporary location of Oxford Electric Company, after its shop at 20-22 South Washington was damaged by fire.²⁹⁹ The rear concrete block addition likely dates to circa 1960. In the late 1990s, a branch of H&R Block was located in the building. As of 2017, the building houses Pink & Charlie, a European-style boutique.³⁰⁰

The building retains historic integrity. The façade includes its original form, and brickwork. The storefront includes replacement windows, however they fit the original scale and openings. Overall the building conveys a nineteenth-century commercial resource.

18 South Washington; Bartlett Paint and Wallpaper & Baldwin's Party Shop/Oxford Party Shoppe; c. 1957; Contributing

The one-story Colonial Revival-style commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The east-facing façade and rear west-facing elevation are visible, while the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings. The façade of the building has a false-front steeply-pitched shed roof, sheathed in wood shingles. The roof is pierced by three front-gable dormers; thus, creating the illusion of a Cape Cod form side-gable roof, while in reality, the rest of the roof is flat.

The first story of the façade includes two mirrored symmetrical storefronts. Entrances to the storefronts are recessed and centered on the building. The northern entrance; formerly 16 South Washington, is a paneled-wood door with a single-light window. The southern entrance at 18 South Washington is a fully glazed unit. The wall above the doors is clad in T-111 siding. Flanking the doors are narrow display windows perpendicular to the façade, and creating the recess for the doors. The remaining display windows are even with the front of the store, and include a string of three windows both north and south of the recessed entrance. The windows rest on paneled bulkhead walls, with each panel with decorative boards that form cross bracing. A modern convex awning, with a segmentally arched panel carrying the store name centered over the doors, extends across the storefronts at the roofline, which includes an arched signboard over the recessed entrance. Windows on the façade dormers are fifteen-light wood sashes.

The west elevation of the building is clad in T-111 siding. Fenestration includes a glazed pedestrian entrance off-center to the south corner of the elevation. North of the door are three

²⁹⁶ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

²⁹⁷ "Before curbs and gutters," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C14; "Barber Wanted," *Detroit Free Press*, 15 June 1927, 27.

²⁹⁸ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1936, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

²⁹⁹ "2 Business-Masonic Temple Burn Monday," *Oxford Leader*, 6 March 1957.

³⁰⁰ Pink & Charlie, "About Pink & Charlie," <https://pinkandcharlie.com/pages/about-us>, accessed 15 March 2018.

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single-light display windows. A modern awning matching that on the facade extends nearly the full width of the elevation at the roofline.

Based on historical research, the building was likely erected circa 1957 after a former building at this location had been damaged by two fires. The first fire occurred in February of that year, damaging a building that then housed the Merna Gay shop.³⁰¹ The shop was succeeded by Vans Party Store which was damaged by a second fire that occurred March 6 in the adjacent Masonic Building, 20-22 South Washington. The extant building appears to have been constructed shortly after the 1957 fire, as evidenced by a newspaper retrospective that stated in 1958 Bob Bartlett opened a paint store in the former Merna Gay Shop (presumably the retrospective article meant the location of the Merna Gay Shop, rather than the original building).³⁰²

A 1959 photograph shows the present building looking nearly exactly as it does today. In the photograph, Bartlett Paint and Wallpaper was located at 16 South Washington, and Baldwin's Party Shop was located at 18 South Washington.³⁰³ Later in 1959, Bartlett moved to 28 South Washington Street, which opened a space in the building for the Oxford Barber Shop.³⁰⁴ Since 1982 the entire building has housed the Oxford Party Shoppe.³⁰⁵ The building retains historic integrity, with nearly all of its original features intact.

20-22 South Washington; General Store/Masonic Building; 1912-1913, c. 1957; Contributing

The two-story commercial block has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The exterior walls are clad in brick veneer that has subsequently been painted. The façade's first story includes a storefront with a centrally-placed recessed entrance. The door itself is a wood-framed with a large window. Flanking the entrance, on the walls of the recess and stretching partially across the width of the façade, are strings of single-light windows that rest on paneled bulkhead walls. The storefront fenestration is sheltered by a modern brown convex awning. At the southern end of the façade first story is a secondary entrance, consisting of a wood-framed glazed door with a sidelight. The door provides access to the 22 South Washington half of the building, and is sheltered by a modern orange convex awning.

The façade second story includes two groupings of windows. Each is a string of four one-over-one sashes divided by heavy mullions, and topped by single-light transoms. The upper sashes of the windows are sheltered by modern brown convex awnings that span the width of each grouping. Between the two groupings is a brick panel with a concrete inset of the Masonic emblem. A sign shaped like a Western boot is affixed perpendicular to the center of the second story, immediately below the Masonic emblem. Two wood signboards, located above the first story awning, identify the present business as a tack shop. A band course of soldier bricks is

³⁰¹ "2 Business-Masonic Temple Burn Monday," *Oxford Leader*, 6 March 1957.

³⁰² "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B8.

³⁰³ "Chronology 1955-1970," B8.

³⁰⁴ "Chronology 1955-1970," B8; Advertisement: "We'd Like to Join in singing Happy Birthday to Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A24.

³⁰⁵ Tom Walsh and Gary Graff, "Card Shop's Longest Suit is Frustration," *Detroit Free Press*, 25 November 1982, C 7A.

Commented [KK(11)]: Is the footprint the same or different?

Commented [ses12R11]: The footprint of the building here in 1945 is similar, but not exact. As of 1945 the building had an L-plan brick core, made rectangular by a wood-framed addition. It occupied the same square-footage as the extant building however.

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aligned with the window sills and stretches across the façade. Above the windows, the façade parapet is angled, with the northern end being slightly taller than the southern. Within the parapet are modern decorative wood consoles. The parapet on the north and south elevation is capped by stone coping.

Windows on the building's side elevations (north and south) are placed on the second stories. They included one-over-one replacement sashes, set into segmentally arched openings. The east-facing rear elevation includes two additional pedestrian entrances. The northern entrance is glazed, slightly recessed, and sheltered by a modern convex awning. Flanking the entrance are modern fixed shutters. A second entrance is a simple pedestrian door at the building's southeast corner. The only window in this elevation is a one-over-one replacement sash, placed off-center to the south and between the first and second stories.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, Oxford's Masonic Lodge 84 had outgrown their temple room in the Tunstead Block (3 South Washington Street). In 1911 the lodge members began planning the construction of a new Masonic Temple, resulting in the building at 20-22 South Washington. The cornerstone was laid the following year, and the building was completed in spring of 1913.³⁰⁶ Originally, the building was three stories that housed a large general store was on the first floor, while the second floor had the Masonic dining room, and the third floor included the lodge meeting hall.³⁰⁷ In 1925 Oxford native, Bumpus (Elijah A.) Jones, left a brief career in professional baseball that included the Detroit Tigers, and returned to Oxford, opening a Buick and Oldsmobile dealership on the first floor.³⁰⁸ It is unclear exactly how long the dealership remained in the building. Sanborn maps from the 1920s-1940s list the first floor simply as a store. Mr. Jones died in April 1943.³⁰⁹ At the time, he was employed at the Fisher Body Plant in Pontiac.³¹⁰

The building retained its original appearance and layout until March 1957 when a fire severely damaged the building.³¹¹ The fire started in the basement and spread upstairs to the Oxford Tavern (20 South Washington) and Oxford Electric Co. (22 South Washington) on the first floor; and the Masonic Temple on the second and third. So large was the fire that it took over twenty firemen and twenty-six "pieces of equipment" to put it out.³¹² Damage was not limited to the Masonic Building, but also included Granada Market and Lockwood's on the south and Van's Party Shop, the vacated Merna Gay Shop, and Delano Insurance office to the north. Following the fire, the Masonic Lodge removed the third floor and reconstructed the interior other two.³¹³

³⁰⁶ "Fires destroyed Lodge 84 twice," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B8

³⁰⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1936, 2.

³⁰⁸ "Automobiles" *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A23

³⁰⁹ "Bumpus Jones finally made it to the Tigers," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, C7.

³¹⁰ Carol Tessien, "Elijah Albert 'Bumpus' Jones," Find A Grave,

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/45827714/elijah-albert-jones>, last modified December 27, 2009.

³¹¹ "2 Business-Masonic Temple Burn Monday," *Oxford Leader*, 6 March 1957.

³¹² "2 Business-Masonic Temple Burn Monday," *Oxford Leader*, 6 March 1957.

³¹³ "Fires take their toll on businesses" *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1972, D4

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In 1966 a second fire struck the building and destroyed adjacent buildings to its south. At the time Oxford Auto Supply was on the first floor of the Masonic Building.³¹⁴ It does not appear that damage from the 1966 fire caused alterations to the building. In the 1970s the building became home to Covered Wagon Saddlery, which still occupies it today.³¹⁵ As of 2017, Masonic Lodge 84 met in Lake Orion.³¹⁶

The exterior changes to the building have not negatively impacted its integrity. The third story was removed during the period of significance (1957), and the lodge continued to meet in the building after it was remodeled following both the 1957 and 1966 fires. Overall, the building still conveys an early-twentieth century combination social hall and commercial space.

24 South Washington, Parrish Insurance and Real Estate; c. 1967; Contributing

The one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. The building is fully visible on the west-facing façade, the rear east elevation, and the south elevation, which faces a pedestrian mall. Only the north elevation is obscured since it abuts an adjacent commercial building. The building is constructed of concrete block; however, the façade has a brick veneer and the east elevation is clad in modern faux stone. The building has a flat roof that is partially obscured by a stepped parapet that features coping on the north and south elevations. A half-hipped pent roof, clad in fish scale asphalt shingles, extends across the façade. A signboard is mounted on the façade roof.

A glazed storefront extends across the façade. A pedestrian entrance with a transom above is recessed at the north end of the façade. The south wall of the recess angles outward from to the façade, and includes a single light display window. A pair of single light displays extend across the remainder of the façade. The display windows rest on a brick bulkhead wall.

The rear elevation includes a second entrance. The centrally placed door is flanked by wood panels and is sheltered by a gable roof. The entry roof is supported by knee braces, sheathed in asphalt shingles and has a segmental arch cut-out over the door within the gable. North of the door is a small glass block window. Landscaping south and east of the building includes manicured hedges and ornamental trees, which add a touch of nature to the pedestrian pathways of the adjacent mall.

In 1961 Tom Humphries and Dave Parrish purchased a building at this location for their business; known as Parrish Insurance Agency and Real Estate.³¹⁷ In 1966 a fire burned a series of one-story commercial buildings that shared a common roof, from 24 to 30 South Washington Street.³¹⁸ The extant building appears to have been constructed shortly after the fire. The Parrish

Commented [KK(13)]: Was this pent roof original or added later?

Commented [ses14R13]: I don't have historic photos, however it is mentioned in the 1999 survey as being present. There it is described as a Mansard. The roof was possibly applied to mimic the Oxford Mall next-door, however, that is just speculation.

³¹⁴ "Thought We Would Lose Whole Town, *Times Herald*, Port Huron, Michigan, 1 February 1966.

³¹⁵ Advertisement in "Gravel Edition," *Oxford Leader*, 3 July 1975.

³¹⁶ "Lodge Info, Oxford Lodge No. 84," Michigan Masons, <https://www.michiganmasons.org/locations/lodge-info/params/cid/4140/>, accessed 16 January 2018.

³¹⁷ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9; Advertisement: "Congratulations Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A7.

³¹⁸ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9.

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agency remained in business at this location through the mid-1970s.³¹⁹ As of 2017 it housed Lori's Pet Paradise, a pet grooming salon.

The building retains its historic integrity, and conveys a mid-twentieth century commercial building.

28 South Washington; Oxford Mall; 1967; Contributing

The two-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint. Unlike the other commercial buildings in the district, which all front on a major road, the Oxford Mall façade faces north to a paved pedestrian mall. The building's west elevation faces to South Washington Street, the east elevation to a parking lot, and the south elevation abuts an adjacent commercial building. The building is topped by a flat roof; however, the second story of the visible elevations is wrapped by a Mansard pent, clad in wood shingles. The exterior walls are clad primarily in stucco with wood trim panels. Below the stuccoed wall section is a stone veneered bulkhead.

The façade is divided into eleven symmetrical fenestration bays. Centered on the elevation is a pair of glazed entry doors. The outer-most bays on the elevation contain single door; the western door is fully glazed while only the upper half of the eastern door is glazed. Extending from either side of the entrance bay are four display windows. Similar display windows are present on the side elevations, four on the west elevation and two on the east. Additional fenestration on the east elevation includes a horizontal window placed high on the wall, and occupying the space where a third window would be present, and a pedestrian door at the southeast corner. On the second story, one-over-one replacement windows are recessed within the Mansard roof. There are four recessed windows on the façade, two on the west elevation, and one on the east. The lower surfaces of the window wells are sheathed with standing seam metal.

A freestanding sign placed northwest of the building at Washington Street indicates that the building can accommodate up to five businesses. The sign is essentially a box, lit from the interior, and affixed to a metal pole. Surmounting the sign is a miniature mansard roof, clad in wood shingles, echoing that on the building.

The Oxford Mall was erected in 1967, following the 1966 fire that destroyed a series of one-story buildings at 24-30 South Washington Street.³²⁰ The multiple buildings were replaced by the single "mall" building.³²¹ When the mall opened, one of its first tenants was Acheson Jewelers, who had outgrown their location at 12 South Washington Street.³²² As of 1999 the primary tenant in the building was J. & M Sports Cards. At the time of recordation, businesses in the mall included Papillon's Styling Salon, Raymond James Financial Services, Norris CPA, and a fabric store known as Felt on the Fly.

³¹⁹ Advertisement: "Congratulations Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A7.

³²⁰ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9. "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B11.

³²¹ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B11.

³²² "Acheson Jewelers oldest family retailer in town" *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C18.

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The building retains a high level of historic integrity, with original cladding on the exterior walls and roof. Fenestration on the first floor appears to be original as well. Second floor windows are possibly replacements, but are appropriate to the building.

32 South Washington, Professional Offices & Grocery Store/Golden Moon; c. 1885; Non-Contributing

The one-story commercial building has a rectilinear footprint and a flat roof. The façade (west) and rear (east) elevations are visible, while the north and south elevations abut adjacent commercial buildings. The building is constructed in brick masonry. Most of the facade has been covered by a stucco or EFIS veneer, leaving only a portion of the original brick parapet visible. Currently the building is occupied by a Chinese restaurant, which is indicated by the Oriental-inspired façade decor. The front door, located at the north end of the façade, is recessed within a horseshoe arch vestibule. The vestibule recess includes decorative paneling on the façade and is sheltered by a shallow half-hipped pent. Façade windows have single-light fixed sashes, flanked by recessed panels of the same size as the windows, suggesting a band of windows, instead of just the two that are present. Decorative pilasters are placed between each window group. Heavy moldings are applied to the façade, including: a band course at the height of the window sills, a frieze atop the façade fenestration, pilasters on the outside corners of the façade that extend the full height of the elevation, and a central stepped panel below the parapet that includes a backlit signboard.

A one-story shed-roof addition extends across the rear (east) elevation of the building. The addition is open at the south, and provides access to partially glazed door on the rear of the original building. The roof of the addition is sheathed in asphalt shingles and is supported by wood posts. A modern balustrade extends across the concrete deck. The north half of the addition is a combination of concrete block and painted plywood. A second pedestrian entrance is positioned at the center of the enclosed portion of the addition.

The building was erected sometime prior to 1890. Since its original details are obscured by the Oriental veneer on the façade, it is difficult to determine a construction date based on architectural elements. As of 1890 there was a one-story commercial building on the site housing two storefronts, 32 and 34 South Washington Street. The two facades were combined as one business circa 1975 when the building became a Chinese restaurant.³²³ Because the building historically housed two businesses, the history of the addresses is described separately below.

32 South Washington

The north storefront was an office between circa 1890 and 1900, first housing the D. D. Waggott, an attorney, and later Dr. Mackinnon.³²⁴ Between 1909 and 1915 it was occupied by a novelty

³²³ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structure."

³²⁴ "Home Delivery," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, C9; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; "There are Others," *Oxford Intruder*, 2 December 1898, 4.

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store.³²⁵ By 1945 the retail space had become a restaurant.³²⁶ Jim's Family Restaurant opened here in 1966, and remained here through the 1970s, before it eventually moved to 15 East Burdick Street.³²⁷ Given that the building today is one large restaurant, it was likely during the era of Jim's Family Restaurant that the two storefronts were combined.

34 South Washington

In 1890, the south storefront was a grocery store owned by Hiram Killman.³²⁸ In 1898 Killman's store was purchased by Bob and Ab Marshall, and it became Marshall Brothers Fancy Groceries. Marshall Grocery remained in business until 1936. According to one source, it was the last home-owned local grocer in Oxford.³²⁹

The building has lost historic integrity from alterations to the exterior cladding. The building no longer conveys a nineteenth-century structure that housed two separate businesses. The extant façade was applied outside the period of significance. Therefore, the building is non-contributing to the historic district.

36 South Washington; Photography Studio/Oxford Tap; c. 1893, 1975; Non-contributing

The commercial building has a rectilinear footprint formed by a two-story core with a flat roof, and a rear one-story addition. The original building is of brick construction; however, the façade has a faux stone veneer. The first story of façade contains the storefront. The south half of the storefront is recessed with two pedestrian entrances. The southern entrance is a paneled door with a multi-light transom, and the northern entrance is a multi-light door with a single light transom. The north half of the storefront is slightly recessed from the façade and includes a string of three multi-light fixed windows. A modern awning extends across the entire first story.

The second story of the façade is divided into three fenestration bays, each with a one-over-one replacement window, topped by a stone veneer lintel. The center window is wider than the outer two, and all three are shaded by modern awnings. The windows have a lug sill and the lintel is a flat arch with a keystone in the same faux stone as is utilized on the rest of the elevation.

The north elevation is clad in the building's original brick, which reveals three segmental arched openings, each contains a replacement one-over-one window. Only a small portion of the original building's east elevation is visible, it is sheathed in stucco and includes a one-over-one replacement window.

The rear one-story addition has a gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. A large shed roof dormer pierces the north slope of the roof. The north wall of the dormer is clad in clapboard siding and contains a boarded window opening on the north elevation. A one-story porch with a

³²⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

³²⁶ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1942, 2.

³²⁷ Brad Kadrich, "End of an era," *Oxford Leader*, 15 May 1966; Advertisement: "We keep you happy with old fashioned home style cooking," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C14.

³²⁸ "Home Delivery," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, C9.

³²⁹ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A9.

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platform- on- gable roof extends across the east elevation with a metal-sheathed pent across the edge of the porch roof. Both the walls within the veranda, and the posts supporting the roof, are clad in modern stone veneer. The gable ends of the addition and porch roof are clad in wood shingles. Extending from the porch to the rear sidewalk is a concrete patio, encircled by a standard height wrought-iron fence.

The original building was erected sometime between 1890 and 1895. As of 1890, the property included two buildings, set deep within the lot; a one-story wood-framed and brick veneer building which housed a photography shop in front and a dwelling in rear; and an adjacent two-story building labeled "Junk" to the south.³³⁰ By 1895 the extant two-story commercial block had been added in front of the old one-story building, to expand the photography studio.³³¹ Between 1900 and 1909 front of the building had a furniture store, while the rear was a storage area.³³² The "Junk" building appeared to be part of the adjacent property, 38 South Washington.

In the 1910s the front half of the new building was a restaurant, which it remained in the space through the 1970s, although it periodically changed owners and names.³³³ In 1926 the former dwelling portion of the building was removed, leaving the extant two-story commercial block and one-story brick-veneered addition. A historic photo taken in the mid-1930s shows that the façade of the two-story building originally had a boxed-bay window and decorative brick corbeling on the second story.³³⁴ Circa 1957 the restaurant became known as Bill's Bar, which it remained through the 1970s.³³⁵ The building was heavily remodeled in 1975 when it came under new management; then owned by Harold Ganjo and managed by Larry Kortas. In the interior, the renovation removed the "aluminum tin high ceilings," and installed drop ceilings with recessed lighting. The mirrors behind the bar were replaced with red carpeting. On the exterior, they installed a mansard roof, paneled siding, and removed the "picture window" on façade; installing a smaller window with frosted glass in its place. The old storefront was completely "torn down." Based on present-day appearance, the 1975 exterior renovations have been removed and replaced by with the faux stone veneer. The building continues its saloon legacy and currently houses an establishment known as the Oxford Tap.

The building has been extensively altered and no longer retains its historic materials or conveys its original design. The building is lacking in integrity, and therefore is non-contributing to the historic district.

38 South Washington; A. P. Glaspie Building; c. 1897, c. 1955; Contributing

The commercial building has a two-story brick original section and a rear one-story addition that is clad in stone veneer. Both sections of the building have flat roofs. The west-facing façade, east

³³⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2.

³³¹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1895, 2.

³³² Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

³³³ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

³³⁴ Photograph, #175, "View of west side of Washington Street from land that became park," Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

³³⁵ "A new front for Bill's Bar," *Oxford Leader*. 1 May 1975, 15.

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elevation of the original building, and north and east elevation of the rear ell are visible. The north elevation of the original building, and entire south elevation, are party walls that abut adjacent buildings.

The façade is framed by brick pilasters that rise from the foundation to above the parapet. The exterior brick has been painted, however a decorative panel of basketweave bond is visible on the parapet. Additional brick details include a course of soldier bricks above the storefront, and above the second story window opening. The window is also highlighted by stacked bricks along each side and a stone lug sill across the base. The first story storefront includes an off-center glazed entrance with a brick panel above, and a recessed secondary entrance with a glazed door at the northwest corner. Storefront windows have tall wood-framed multi-light fixed sashes that rise to the same height as the top of the brick panel over the front door. Extending above the storefront fenestration is a dentilated molding and paneled signboard. A string of three one-over-one windows is centered on the second story.

An awning extends across the second story of the original building's east elevation. The awning shelters a pedestrian door at the northeast corner of the elevation. The door provides roof-top access to the rear ell, which serves as a deck for heating/ventilation/air conditioning units (HVAC). Fenestration on the rear ell is limited, to a metal pedestrian door at the southeast corner of the first story. A wood-clad shed with sliding doors and a shed roof has been appended to the north half of the elevation. A bracketed cornice supports a metal railing that extends across the roofline on the east elevation.

The building was erected sometime between 1890 and 1895. As of 1890 there was no commercial building on the property, just a small "Junk" building set deep within the lot that appeared to be related to 36 South Washington.³³⁶ By 1895 a two-story brick commercial block had been built, housing a dry goods store. It had become a clothing store by 1900, likely owned by A. P. Glaspie.³³⁷

In March 1907 Oxford's newspaper, the *Oxford Leader*, moved to the "A. P. Glaspie Building" at this location.³³⁸ The paper was founded in 1898 and had outgrown its previous location. The *Oxford Leader* remained at 38 South Washington until it came under new management in 1955 and the business was relocated to a new building.³³⁹ During the newspaper years, the building underwent various changes, including the construction of a rear covered walkway that connected to a two-story warehouse that replaced the "Junk" building, circa 1909. Both the rear building and associated walkway were removed by 1926.³⁴⁰ The rear ell extant today was erected sometime after 1945. The rear wing appears to have been added in the mid-1950s, likely after the

³³⁶ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2.

³³⁷ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1895, 2; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1.

³³⁸ "The Leader moved from their..." *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C1.

³³⁹ "Progressing with the times," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C13; Jim Sherman, "Publishing dates 107 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B8.

³⁴⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

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newspaper moved to a new location. As of 2017, the building is an extension of the adjacent bar at 36 South Washington, the Oxford Tap.

The A. P. Glaspie Building retains its historic design, form, and original brick cladding. Although the building has been extended, and painted, the façade still conveys a turn-of-the-century commercial resource. Therefore, the A. P. Glaspie building is contributing to the historic district.

40 South Washington; Bakery/Downtown Salon; c. 1905, c. 1913, c. 2010; Non-Contributing

The commercial building has a rectilinear footprint, comprised of a two-story core and a one-story rear addition. Both building sections have flat roofs. The exterior walls are clad in brick, which on the façade, is a modern veneer. The south half of the façade first story is a recessed entrance bay, consisting of two glazed doors with transom lights above, the south door accessing the second story and the north door entering the first story business. North of the doors the southern display window is set at an angle inward to the recess. The two northern display windows complete the storefront fenestration. All three of the display windows rest on a brick bulkhead wall and have a shared stone sill. Above the storefront is a black glass paneled signboard. The façade second story includes a pair of double-hung twelve-over-twelve windows, topped by a multi-light segmentally arched transom. Decorative features on the façade include an arched window surround with a keystone and concrete corner pieces; a corbeled cornice with a shelf molding; and a tall parapet. The center of the parapet is arched, and within the arched section is a circular inset address plate, complete with keystone detail.

On the east elevation of the second story are two double-hung windows and a pedestrian door that provides rooftop access to the rear addition. The east elevation of the addition has a glazed pedestrian door. Adjacent to the door is a pair full-length of display windows.

The original two-story section of the building was erected between 1900 and 1909.³⁴¹ As of 1909 the building was listed as vacant on a Sanborn map. However, by 1915 the building housed a bakery, and the rear ell extant today had been added.³⁴²

In the mid-1920s the building housed a business selling monuments; owned by Ben Wright.³⁴³ Wright died in an auto accident in 1928, which likely resulted in the end of the monument company. In the 1930s the building became a bowling alley, however it returned to general retail the following decade.³⁴⁴ A circa 1935 photo shows that the façade second story was originally similar to 15 South Washington Street, including a central window with a frieze above.³⁴⁵ During the 1950s the façade was remodeled and covered in enameled panels.³⁴⁶ At the time, the building

³⁴¹ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

³⁴² Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 3.

³⁴³ "Ben Wright..." *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, C9.

³⁴⁴ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1936, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

³⁴⁵ Photograph, #175, "View of west side of Washington Street from land that became park," Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

³⁴⁶ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

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housed the Christian Science Reading Room.³⁴⁷ As of 1967 the building housed Jack's Camera Shop.³⁴⁸ In the late 1990s the building housed Willowdale Realty & Development. The metal panels were removed sometime after 1999 and the present façade was put in place. As of 2017 the building housed the Downtown Salon.

The building has been extensively altered and no longer retains its historic materials or conveys its original design. The building is lacking in integrity, and therefore is non-contributing to the historic district.

³⁴⁷ Advertisement: "What is Christian Science?" *Detroit Free Press*, 12 February 1957, 2.

³⁴⁸ Advertisement: "Extra! Bonus Photos" *Detroit Free Press*, 25 June 1967, 9.

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Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ Removed from its original location
- ☐ A birthplace or grave
- ☐ A cemetery
- ☐ A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ A commemorative property
- ☐ Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Social History

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1876-1968

Significant Dates

1876

1878-79

1957

1966-67

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles A. Fisher

William J. Fisher

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Oxford Downtown Historic District is significant at the local level under National Register Criteria A and C. The district meets Criterion A in two ways, for its association with Oxford's commercial and social history. The downtown district has been the center of Oxford's commercial activity since its settlement in the 1830s. The historic commercial buildings continue to house a variety of businesses and professionals that serve the residents of northeast Oakland County. The district's earliest extant buildings date to the 1870/1880s and are a result of Oxford's post-railroad boom period in the late nineteenth century, and the passage of the village charter in 1876. In the early twentieth century the Detroit United Railway was extend to Oxford and the downtown merchants experienced increased business; several buildings were erected in this period as well. Buildings from the mid-twentieth century demonstrate the continued importance of business activity in the downtown. Today, downtown Oxford remains a traditional commercial center in a region of the Michigan that has undergone rapid suburbanization in the

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late twentieth century. In addition to commercial enterprises, the downtown buildings have housed a library, fraternal organizations, entertainment venues, and social clubs. Groups such as the Knights of Pythias and Maccabees had meeting on the upper floors of commercial buildings. The Masonic Lodge erected its own building downtown, and Oxford's Veterans Association acquired a former residence to use as its community center. Under Criterion C, for its architectural significance, the district contains Oxford's most distinctive commercial buildings, representing primarily styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Italianate, Queen Anne, Neo-Classical, and Art Deco; as well as mid-twentieth century styles and trends, including Moderne and Mansard.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Settlement of Michigan in the early nineteenth century was somewhat restrained, due to unfavorable survey reports. The 1815 "Tiffin Report," which was conducted to identify land payments for War of 1812 Veterans, mislabeled much of the region north of Detroit as either swamp, or land not conducive to agriculture.³⁴⁹ Because of the inaccurate information, migrants from the eastern United States avoided the lands of Northeast Oakland County, eventually calling them the "barren plains of Oxford [Township]." ³⁵⁰ The area was presumed barren because the otherwise forested region opened to rolling grassy hills said to be swamps and sandy mounds, and therefore, unproductive.³⁵¹ Despite the region's poor reputation, settlers began making land purchases in the Oxford area in the 1820s.

The first land purchase in what became Oxford Township was made in 1823 by Elbridge G. Deming, with several others following in 1824.³⁵² Despite having purchased land in the township, Deming did not erect a house in the area until 1832. Located in Section 9, the log residence is considered to be the earliest home built in Oxford Township. Deming's house served as the center of township activities and location of the first post office, which was called Deming Corners.³⁵³ Also in 1832, the Territorial Road, which extended between Rochester and Lapeer, was laid out through Oxford Township following a Native American trail.³⁵⁴ The road improved regional connectivity and formed the basis for Oxford's Washington Street and present-day Michigan-24 (M-24).

³⁴⁹ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 3; Richard Lee Waddell, *A Bicentennial Historical Sketch of Oakland County, Michigan*, 1815-1876. (Pontiac: Oakland County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, circa 1976), 2.

³⁵⁰ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 3.

³⁵¹ "The 1800s before the first Oxford Pioneers," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A1.

³⁵² "The Earliest Arrivals of Oxford Township," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A6.

³⁵³ George Tunstead, "Oxford Past: George Tunstead Relates Early Oxford Happenings," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A1.

³⁵⁴ "Roads," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, A7; Dr. Aileen B. Corbit, "Early Pioneers Mentioned by Dr. Aileen Corbit," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A1.

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The village of Oxford occupies the north half of Section 27 and southeast quarter of Section 22. Patent deeds for these areas were held by Fite Rossman (Section 27) and Adam Rossman (Section 22).³⁵⁵ Dr. Corbit, a granddaughter of one of Oxford's first settlers, noted John Rossman settling on the land as well.³⁵⁶ The Rossmans settled in Oxford Township in 1833, migrating to Michigan from Genesee County, New York.³⁵⁷ More settlers came to northeast Oakland County through the mid-1830s, increasing the population enough to form Oxford Township. In 1836 area residents petitioned the territorial legislative council to separate from Oakland Township. The legislative council approved the petition the following year thus establishing Oxford Township.³⁵⁸ There are several theories on the origin of Oxford Township's name. The most commonly cited origin credits the name to Otis C. Thompson, a member of the citizen committee that petitioned for the township's formation, who claimed "nearly all of the settlers had ox-teams and probably would hold on to them for some years to come."³⁵⁹

Settlers reached Oxford Township by roads and trails, as there was no major waterway through the area. To maximize accessibility of trade in the rural township, the unincorporated community of Oxford Corners was established at the intersection of the township's main roads: Territorial Road (Washington Street/M-24) and Lakeville Road (Burdick Street).³⁶⁰ By 1838 the rural township had reached a population of 384.³⁶¹

On January 15, 1839, the seeds for downtown Oxford were planted when the township post office was moved from Deming's house to Oxford Corners, and re-designated Oxford.³⁶² That same year, the first physician settled in the community, Dr. Egbert Burdick, for whom Burdick Street is named.³⁶³ The village was platted by George Loucks six years later, in 1845.³⁶⁴ During the 1830s and 1840s, Oxford businesses included a carpenter, a bell-maker, multiple blacksmiths, a weaver, a wagon-maker, a shoemaker, a tanner, two doctors, and a foundry and

³⁵⁵ Patents. Bureau of Land Management,

https://glorerecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent&st=MI&cty=125&twp_nr=5&twp_dir=N&rng_nr=10&rng_dir=E&sec=27&sp=true&sw=true&sadv=false;
https://glorerecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent&st=MI&cty=125&twp_nr=5&twp_dir=N&rng_nr=10&rng_dir=E&sec=22&sp=true&sw=true&sadv=false; accessed, 23 April 2018.

³⁵⁶ Dr. Aileen B. Corbit, "Early Pioneers Mentioned by Dr. Aileen Corbit," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A1; Lillian Drake Avery, editor *Historic Michigan, Land of the Great Lakes*, vol. III, *Oakland County*. (Dayton, Ohio: National Historical Association, Inc., circa 1925), 42.

³⁵⁷ Dr. Aileen B. Corbit, "Early Pioneers," A2-1; Lillian Drake Avery, editor *Historic Michigan, Land of the Great Lakes*, vol. III, *Oakland County*. (Dayton, Ohio: National Historical Association, Inc., circa 1925), 42.

³⁵⁸ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 418.

³⁵⁹ Corbit, "Early Pioneers," A1; Walter Romig, *Michigan Place Names*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986), 425.

³⁶⁰ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures," 6; Romig, *Place Names*, 425.

³⁶¹ John T. Blois, *1838 Gazetteer of the State of Michigan*, (Detroit: Sydney L. Rood, Co, 1838,) 336.

³⁶² "Settlement of N.E. Oakland county," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A6; "Northeast Oakland early post offices," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A17; Romig, *Place Names*, 425.

³⁶³ Samuel Durant, *History of Oakland County, Michigan*. (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1877), 246; Dr. Aileen B. Corbit, "Early Pioneers," A2-3.

³⁶⁴ Durant, *History of Oakland County*, 245-246; Romig, *Place Names*, 425.

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implement repair facility.³⁶⁵ The first store was opened in 1842 by Samuel Phelps. Phelps's store was followed by one owned by the Axford brothers in 1844, and another owned by Joel P. Thoms in 1845.³⁶⁶

By the mid-nineteenth century, the village and township had a combined population of about 1,400.³⁶⁷ The 1850 census revealed that many of the residents of Oxford Township were native to eastern states, particularly New York, with children having been born in Michigan.³⁶⁸ Census records also reveal that other Oxford Township settlers were from states including Connecticut, New Jersey, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois. Relatively few immigrants resided in the township, with the most moving from Canada. Other countries represented included Ireland, Scotland, England, and Germany.

Although a railroad had not yet come to Oxford, the community's location on a stage coach route between Pontiac and Lapeer provided a somewhat reliable means of access.³⁶⁹ As of 1856, Oxford the commercial and social offerings of the village had expanded to include steam mills, two hotels, two general stores, two foundries, a church and a school. The 1856 *State of Michigan Gazetteer & Business Directory* listed twenty-six individual businesses or proprietors in the community.³⁷⁰

Business development in northeast Oakland County, including Oxford, accelerated after the Civil War. The increase can be attributed in part to the arrival of the railroad. Railroads had been operating in southern Michigan since the late 1830s, the first being the Erie and Kalamazoo railroad in 1836, followed by the Detroit and Pontiac Railroad in 1838.³⁷¹ Many railroad lines followed, however they all bypassed Oxford. The Detroit and Bay City Railroad was laid out through Oxford in 1872 following roughly in the same course as the Territorial Road.³⁷² Beginning in Detroit, the line extended through Orion, and Oxford Townships, running southeast to northwest. The line reached Oxford on October 31, 1872. The following month the line was completed to Lapeer, and then to Vassar in 1873, eventually reaching Bay City.³⁷³ Oxford was approximately midway on the 110-mile journey from Detroit to Bay City. The railroad made movement of local goods, such as agricultural products, both practical and economical. The village earned the nick-name "Baga-Town," for the large shipments of rutabagas exported from

³⁶⁵ "Manufacturing, commercial, and professional activities," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, A6.

³⁶⁶ Durant, *History of Oakland County*, 245-246.

³⁶⁷ H. Huntington Lee and James Sutherland, *State of Michigan Gazetteer & Business Directory for 1856-7*, (Detroit: H. Huntington Lee & Company, and James Sutherland), 174.

³⁶⁸ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Seventh Census of the United States*, (Washington, District of Columbia: Bureau of the Census, 1850), https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8054/4200035_00205?backurl=https%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2fsearch%2fdb.aspx%3fdbid%3d8054%26path%3d%26ssrc=&backlabel=ReturnBrowsing, accessed 18 June 2018.

³⁶⁹ Lee and Sutherland, *Michigan Gazetteer 1856-7*, 174.

³⁷⁰ Lee and Sutherland, *Michigan Gazetteer 1856-7*, 174.

³⁷¹ Graydon M. Meints. *Michigan Railroads and Railroad Companies*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1992,) 2.

³⁷² "The Railroad Brings Changes," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, A17.

³⁷³ "The Railroad Brings Changes," A17.

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the Oxford depot.³⁷⁴ A popular joke at the time stated the trains coming from Detroit were full of “pumpkins,” or excursionists coming to Lake Orion, and those going back to Detroit were full of rutabagas from Oxford.³⁷⁵ In 1881 the Detroit and Bay City Railroad was leased to the Michigan Central Railroad, to which the line was transferred in 1916.³⁷⁶ The Michigan Central Railroad system was conveyed to Penn Central Corporation in October 1978.³⁷⁷ The railroad is not extant in Oxford today.

The second key item credited with the increase in Oxford’s business community was and the passing of Oxford’s Village Charter. The economic and building activities from the railroad prompted the village to incorporate a one square mile area on January 13, 1876.³⁷⁸ The charter was credited as having assured potential businesses and industry leaders that there would be an “equitable local government, order, and proper regulation of activities.”³⁷⁹

With the railroad and charter in place, the economic boom prompted an expansion of the residential and commercial areas of Oxford. In the 1870s there were thirty to thirty-five businesses downtown, a slight increase from the twenty-six listed in 1856.³⁸⁰ Likewise, there were new residential subdivisions added to the original plat between 1870 and 1877.³⁸¹

Like many communities in the nineteenth century, Oxford was struck by fires. On December 23, 1878, a fire burned most of the southwest commercial quadrant; five buildings in total.³⁸² The cause of the fire is unknown, but it began in the store of Watson and Wait, and spread to the hardware store of W. J. Tunstead, the drug store of U. S. Hackett, a former hotel owned by S. D. Axford, and the *Oxford Journal* printing office.³⁸³ The following year, circa 1879-1880, Buildings at 1, 3, and 5 South Washington were built to replace those lost. A second fire in 1896 again ravaged multiple downtown buildings.³⁸⁴ The drug store of Paul F. Rice & Co., as well as Freeman’s dry goods store, Guest’s saloon, and the Oxford House (hotel) barn burned (all appear to be not extant). The Oxford Savings Bank (the located at 9 North Washington), Jossman’s store, and the Methodist Episcopal Church caught fire, but were not substantially damaged. An article in the *Detroit Free Press* credits the village’s new water works system as preventing a great disaster.³⁸⁵

³⁷⁴ “The Railroad Brings Changes,” A17.

³⁷⁵ “The Railroad Brings Changes,” A17.

³⁷⁶ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 58.

³⁷⁷ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 109.

³⁷⁸ “The Village,” *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A9; “Village Incorporates,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

³⁷⁹ “Business and Industry,” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, A10.

³⁸⁰ “Tunstead History,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957.

³⁸¹ Durant, *History of Oakland County*, 245-246.

³⁸² “Fires take their toll on businesses” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1.

³⁸³ “Fire in Oxford,” *Oxford Journal*, 27 December 1878, in “Fires take their toll on businesses,” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1.

³⁸⁴ “Oxford in Danger,” *Detroit Free Press*, 3 April 1896, 3.

³⁸⁵ “Oxford in Danger,” 3.

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In the 1883 the Pontiac, Oxford, and Port Austin Railroad extended to Oxford.³⁸⁶ The new railroad provided an east-west route complementing the north-south Detroit and Bay City Railroad. The new railroad's name was somewhat deceiving, as the terminus had been re-routed to Caseville rather than Port Austin. In 1889 the name was changed to the Pontiac, Oxford and Northern Railroad (P. O. & N.), and nicknamed the "Polly Ann."

The P. O. & N. came under hard times in the early twentieth century, as the rural areas it serviced were sparsely populated and it primarily carried agricultural freight. In Oxford, the line was often described as the "Poor, Old, and Neglected."³⁸⁷ The line came under control of Grand Trunk Western Railroad in 1910, and merged with the Pontiac, Oxford and Northern in 1928.³⁸⁸ As a Grand Trunk Western line, the railroad serviced primarily freight and gravel shipments. Passenger service was discontinued in 1955, but the freight line remained open until 1984.³⁸⁹ Although the railroad itself is long gone, the railroad bed has been repurposed into a multi-use trail.³⁹⁰

At the end of the nineteenth century, the village entered the modern era and bolstered civic pride with a new Municipal Electric Plant and Waterworks. Construction began on the facilities in 1895, which were built on Glaspie Street, east of downtown.³⁹¹ Pipes for the waterworks were shipped to Oxford from Alabama.³⁹² Both facilities were completed for a combined cost of thirty thousand dollars.³⁹³

By 1897, the population of Oxford had grown to some 1,200 people,³⁹⁴ and, with two railroads, was an important shipping point for the area's farm products, including grain, livestock, wool, butter, and potatoes. The village still received its main support from the surrounding agriculture, along with an industrial presence in-town; enabling Oxford to support a diverse local economy and a strong center of commerce.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Oxford's accessibility was further improved by the installation of an electric interurban railway, the Detroit United Railway, or DUR. The line was completed to Oxford on June 22, 1900.³⁹⁵ The DUR network connected Oxford with communities in southern Oakland County, including Lake Orion, Goodison, Rochester, Big

³⁸⁶ "Trail History," Polly Ann Trail, accessed 4 January 2018, http://www.pollyannrailway.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=53.

³⁸⁷ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 40.

³⁸⁸ Meints, *Michigan Railroads*, 128.

³⁸⁹ Trail History," Poly Ann Trail, http://www.pollyannrailway.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=53, accessed 4 January 2018.

³⁹⁰ Trail History," Poly Ann Trail, http://www.pollyannrailway.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=53, accessed 4 January 2018.

³⁹¹ "Edison welcomed as Municipal plant fails," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D14.

³⁹² "State Items," *Detroit Free Press*, 18 May 1895, 3.

³⁹³ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 46.

³⁹⁴ Polk. *Gazetteer and Business Directory 1897*, 1348.

³⁹⁵ "D.U.R. has colorful history," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B3.

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Beaver (Troy area), Clawson, and Royal Oak; and made additional connections to the cities of Pontiac and Detroit.³⁹⁶ Initially, downtown merchants were apprehensive of the interurban, believing that with improved access to larger cities, they might lose business. However, within the first week the opposite effect had happened, as consumers traveled from nearby towns to do business in Oxford.³⁹⁷ For the first six years of the DUR's operation, Oxford was the terminus of the line, with a turn-around formed by a "Y" track at Washington and West Burdick Streets. The line was extended north and the turn-around removed in 1906.³⁹⁸ Eventually the DUR extended as far north as Flint, some seventy miles north of Detroit.³⁹⁹

Fire continued to be an issue in the twentieth century, with eleven fires occurred in the village over a nine-month period in 1910.⁴⁰⁰ The first fire, in January of that year, burned the wood-framed commercial blocks at the southern end of the east side of South Washington Street (southeast quadrant). Among the impacted buildings were a cigar factory, and a beanery (small restaurant) with the Maccabees' Hall on the second floor, 40-42 South Washington.⁴⁰¹ The fire was an ominous start to the decade, when "a number of other fires hit the downtown."⁴⁰² The fires were considered to be "temporary setbacks to the town's expansion of services but recovery from each of the fires was rapid."⁴⁰³

In 1915 the Michigan Department of Transportation laid the groundwork for Washington Street to become a major state road. In December of that year, Frank E. Rogers, State Highway Commissioner, notified Oakland and Lapeer officials that a new state trunk-line highway would be constructed. Then known as M-36, the highway originated in Detroit, and traveled north through Pontiac, Lake Orion, Oxford, Metamora, Lapeer, Flint, Saginaw, and Bay City.⁴⁰⁴ The road was re-designated M-24 in 1926.⁴⁰⁵ As of 2007 the route of the state road extended between Interstate-75 in Auburn Hills in Oakland County north to Unionville at M-25, in Tuscola County.⁴⁰⁶

One of the industries to greatly impact Oxford's economic growth has been gravel mining and transportation. The industry came to prominence in the early twentieth century, capitalizing on the numerous gravel veins in Oxford Township. The existing railroad infrastructure, along with the establishment of M-24, provided the industry with reliable transportation means for the distribution of the product. The first rock crushing plant was built north of the village in 1908 by W. O. Smith. By 1911 his company, the Detroit and Oxford Gravel and Stone Co., had merged with Michigan Pressed Brick Company of Detroit. Operations were expanded and Smith's

³⁹⁶ Seeley, *Oakland County*, 240.

³⁹⁷ "Cars are Here," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B18

³⁹⁸ Photograph. "D.U.R. 'Y'," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

³⁹⁹ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 240.

⁴⁰⁰ "Fire takes toll," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D2.

⁴⁰¹ "Fire took top Temple floor in 1957," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D43.

⁴⁰² Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 60.

⁴⁰³ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 60.

⁴⁰⁴ "The First Quarter of the 20th Century" *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A7

⁴⁰⁵ "M-24" Michigan Highways, <http://www.michiganhighways.org/listings/M-024.html>, accessed 23 April 2018.

⁴⁰⁶ "M-24" Michigan Highways.

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company began mining 250 tons of crushed granite a day. The gravel vein deposits in the Oxford area caught the attention of others, and several gravel-producing companies were formed, including American Aggregates, the Wolverine Sand & Gravel Company, and Koenig Sand & Gravel. By the 1920s five million tons of gravel were shipped from the village annually, making Oxford the “Gravel Capital of the World.”⁴⁰⁷ The new industry, in such close proximity to the village, likely contributed to the slight population growth between 1910 and 1920 of about three hundred people.⁴⁰⁸ Gravel extraction continues to be an industry in Oxford today, and numerous gravel trucks can be seen on Washington Street daily.

In the early 1920s, Oxford sold the village municipal electric plant to Detroit Edison (today DTE Energy) after it failed to provide sufficient power for years, and was running the village into debt.⁴⁰⁹ In 1922, DTE changed the appearance of downtown by installing “boulevard lighting.” Unlike earlier lighting systems, which were suspended over the center of the street by wires, the new boulevard lighting consisted of lampposts placed along the edge of the road, within the sidewalk.⁴¹⁰ These lamps were similar to those used in downtown today.

Oxford’s village population reached 2,052 in 1930.⁴¹¹ During the Great Depression years, northeast Oakland County experienced a demographic shift, as many out-of-work city dwellers moved to the area as part of a back-to-the-farm movement.⁴¹² Vacant lots that had been held on speculation were leased for share-cropping, and gardens became prominent in town. The downtown financial institutions, Oxford Savings Bank and Farmers State Bank, held public meetings to encourage efficient farm management.⁴¹³ The region’s agricultural roots were further emphasized when, in 1930, the Smith Silo Co., relocated their concrete stave silo manufacturing company from Glendale (Van Buren County, Michigan) to Oxford.⁴¹⁴ The company’s founder, Warren Smith, made the decision to move to be closer to his source for gravel.⁴¹⁵ The company grew to be one of the largest concrete silo manufacturers in the Midwest, and an innovator in silo design and manufacturing.⁴¹⁶ Despite regional gains in population and industry, Oxford still faced Depression-era challenges.

⁴⁰⁷ George Pendle, “How a small Town in Michigan Became the World’s Gravel Capital,” last modified 8 February 8 2016, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/this-gritty-small-town-in-michigan-became-the-worlds-gravel-capital>, accessed 20 November 2017.

⁴⁰⁸ Polk, *State Gazetteer and Business Directory* 1921, 1317; Polk, *State Gazetteer and Business Directory* 1907, 1584.

⁴⁰⁹ “Edison welcomed,” D14.

⁴¹⁰ “Edison welcomed,” D14.

⁴¹¹ Works Progress Administration, *Michigan, a Guide to the Wolverine State*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), 659.

⁴¹² “Suburbia takes over,” *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A14.

⁴¹³ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 60.

⁴¹⁴ Doug Mills, “Smith Silo Closes- it’s end of an era,” *Oxford Leader*, 25 January 1984; “Oxford silo shaper, Warren Smith,” *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C11.

⁴¹⁵ “Oxford silo shaper, Warren Smith,” *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C11.

⁴¹⁶ “Oxford silo shaper, Warren Smith,” *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C11.

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After operating thirty-one years in Oxford, the DUR closed its line in 1931. The firm had faced years of stiff competition from automobile travel, and was further hindered by the Depression.⁴¹⁷ The impacts of the Depression extended well beyond the DUR, reaching into the local businesses and governments. On July 5, 1932, the Farmers State Bank in Oxford closed its doors, leaving the village government, public school systems, and numerous individuals, without access to their funds.⁴¹⁸ Fortunately, the Oxford Savings Bank was one of six Oakland County banks that was determined of “sound practice” and able to remain open after the state of Michigan bank holiday on February 17, 1933.⁴¹⁹

By 1940 the village population had reached 2,144.⁴²⁰ The village, township, and Oakland County as a whole, experienced a major population shift in the decades following World War II. Oakland County became the thirteenth-fastest growing county in the United States, gaining over 300,000 new residents between the 1940 and 1950 census.⁴²¹ Initially, suburbanization was limited to southern Oakland County, close to Detroit and the area surrounding Pontiac. However, as new residents entered the county in the 1950s and 1960s, suburbanization advanced, and over forty thousand acres were platted and developed in Oakland County’s northern and western townships. Many new houses were built in Oxford and Orion Townships, providing domiciles for commuters to Pontiac and Detroit. Subdivision development continued through the 1960s, and, by the 1970s, nearly all the region’s working farms had been converted to residential neighborhoods or designated as planned residential.⁴²² In Oxford Township alone twenty-four subdivisions were platted between 1950 and 1970, thereby increasing the number of area residents who depended on downtown Oxford for their business needs.⁴²³

During the 1960s and 1970s additional fires in downtown Oxford resulted in the loss of some of its old buildings. In 1966 a large fire downtown destroyed the three one-story buildings containing four businesses at 24-30 South Washington. The buildings shared a common roof, enabling the fire to spread quickly.⁴²⁴ Modern store buildings, including the village’s first “mall,” was erected in their place.⁴²⁵ On February 9, 1972, another fire impacted the buildings at 42-50 South Washington. The Oxford Theatre (former Opera House), 48 South Washington, and the village fire hall, 50 South Washington, were destroyed; the adjacent Reed Building, 42-46 South Washington, was damaged.⁴²⁶ The Oxford Theatre and fire hall were demolished, leaving the

⁴¹⁷ “D.U.R. has colorful history,” *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B3; Arthur A. Hagerman, editor, *Oakland County Book of History*, (Pontiac: Oakland County Sesqui-Centennial Executive Committee, 1970), 73-74.

⁴¹⁸ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 63.

⁴¹⁹ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 63.

⁴²⁰ Works Progress Administration, *Michigan Guide*, 659.

⁴²¹ Waddell, *Bicentennial Historical Sketch*, 142.

⁴²² Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 73.

⁴²³ Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, “Statewide Results for Subdivision Plats, Township 05N, Range 10E,”

http://w1.lara.state.mi.us/platmaps/rs_subs.asp?sub_name=&county_list=63&plat_nbr=§ion=%25&town_nbr=5&town=N&range_nbr=10&range=E&claim=&simple=no&Submit=Submit, accessed 2 March 2018.

⁴²⁴ “Fires take their toll on businesses” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D4

⁴²⁵ “Chronology 1955-1970,” B11.

⁴²⁶ “Fires take their toll,” D1.

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former party wall between the Reed Building and theater exposed. Four years later, in July 1976, the wall collapsed as crews were digging to construct a new multiplex theater at the site.⁴²⁷ The Reed Building was subsequently demolished.

In the latter half of the twentieth century the townships surrounding Oxford Village continued their transition from rural to suburban. Between 1970 and 1974, Oxford Township's population grew by fifteen percent while the village population only grew by 1.3 percent.⁴²⁸ With the increased population, there were an even greater number of automobiles. To accommodate all the vehicles, like much of the country, Oxford expanded its parking areas. In 1975, fifteen buildings were demolished on streets adjacent to the commercial district, to make a large parking lot to service the twelve businesses on the southwest commercial quadrant.⁴²⁹ In the ensuing years additional demolitions were made to accommodate the expansive parking areas located behind the commercial buildings in each of downtown's four quadrants.

The village of Oxford maintained a steady population into the twenty-first century, reaching 3,436 at the time of the 2010 census.⁴³⁰ The village emphasizes that the business district extends along M-24, which has continued to be an "important north-south corridor."⁴³¹ The village prides itself on maintaining a "small town look even with the addition of modern amenities."⁴³²

Commerce

The village of Oxford was established with the placement of the post office at the intersection of two major roads, Territorial Road (Washington/M-24) and Lakeville Road (Burdick Street). The commercial center that resulted served as a point of trade for the surrounding agrarian township.⁴³³ The earliest commercial buildings in Oxford were wood-framed structures with irregular setbacks, as depicted on *Sanborn-Perris* and *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*.⁴³⁴ Over time, the wood-framed structures were lost to fires or were replaced by larger brick masonry buildings. None of the settlement-era wood-framed commercial buildings are extant in downtown.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the railroad entered Oxford, resulting in a building boom and flurry of economic activity. The first of the railroads to arrive was the Detroit and Bay City Railroad, which was completed to the village in 1872. Just over a decade later, in

⁴²⁷ Steve Neef, "Wooosh! Reed Building wall collapses," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, 2.

⁴²⁸ "Oxford population up 15 percent," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1975.

⁴²⁹ "More parking coming soon," *Oxford Leader*, 4 December 1975, 17.

⁴³⁰ The American Fact Finder, "Oxford Village, Michigan."

⁴³¹ "Welcome to the Village of Oxford Michigan," Village of Oxford, <http://www.thevillageofoxford.org/index.php/about-us>, accessed 18 June 2018.

⁴³² "Welcome to the Village of Oxford Michigan," Village of Oxford, <http://www.thevillageofoxford.org/index.php/about-us>, accessed 18 June 2018.

⁴³³ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures," 6; Romig, *Place Names*, 425.

⁴³⁴ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, 1890), 2; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1895), 2.

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1883, the Pontiac, Oxford, and Port Austin Railroad was complete.⁴³⁵ Twenty-three of downtown Oxford's extant commercial buildings, erected between circa 1875 and 1899, can be attributed to this boom period.

Among the oldest of these buildings are five commercial blocks located between 25 and 35 North Washington Street. The two-story buildings were erected circa 1875 to 1885, and share similar architectural details. The earliest available business records for these buildings date to the 1890s, and reveal they were occupied by such enterprises as a millinery, a furniture store, a drug store, hardware stores, and grocery/dry goods stores. Research also suggested that the commercial enterprises changed about every decade.

Of these buildings, 25 North Washington eventually became offices for a prominent Oxford businessman, W. O. Smith. The building's first known use was a millinery at the end of the nineteenth century.⁴³⁶ As of 1909 the building had become a telephone office, and was vacant by 1915.⁴³⁷ By the mid-1930s the building housed offices for the W. O. Smith Insurance and Real Estate Company and the Ridgelawn Cemetery Association.⁴³⁸ Mr. Smith was the "pioneer of gravel mining in Oxford."⁴³⁹ In 1912 he founded the first gravel operation in Oxford Township: the Oxford and Detroit Gravel and Stone Company.⁴⁴⁰ Smith operated the gravel company successfully until he sold it to American Aggregates Corporation in 1928. After leaving the gravel industry, Smith occupied his time with other businesses, including his real estate and insurance company; and development of the Ridgelawn Cemetery (west of downtown). Mr. Smith continued his business endeavors until his death in 1948, at the age of eighty-one. His daughter, Luella Smith, took over management of Ridgelawn Cemetery, along with managing her own insurance agency.⁴⁴¹ Following the Smiths, the building at 25 North Washington housed the offices of various other realtors and insurance agents; including Eugene T. Meagher (present in 1953), C. A. Webster Real Estate (present in 1957), and Webster-Curtis Real Estate (present in 1969).⁴⁴² The building currently houses Curtis Insurance, which was established in 1948 by Ralph W. Curtis.⁴⁴³

Another prominent building from the railroad boom era is the corner commercial block of the northeast quadrant, currently with the address 2 North Washington Street. The building was erected circa 1880 and as late as 1890 it was the only brick commercial block on the east side of

⁴³⁵ "The Railroad Brings Changes," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, A17; "Trail History," Polly Ann Trail, http://www.pollyanntrailway.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=53, accessed 4 January 2018.

⁴³⁶ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1890, 2; Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁴³⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1915, 2.

⁴³⁸ Photograph: "This isn't so long ago ..." *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E8.

⁴³⁹ "The Gravel Pioneer, W. O. Smith started mining in 1912," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, E1.

⁴⁴⁰ "The Gravel Pioneer," E1.

⁴⁴¹ "The Gravel Pioneer," E1.

⁴⁴² "Real Estate Outside Detroit," *Detroit Free Press*, 2 April 1951, 33; "Open House," *Detroit Free Press*, 9 June 1957, 56; "87-Acre Parcel," *Detroit Free Press*, 28 September 1969.

⁴⁴³ "History," Curtis Insurance Agency, <http://curtisinsuranceagency.com/company/>, accessed, 16 November 2017.

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North Washington Street.⁴⁴⁴ Historically the building contained four separate storefronts, carrying the addresses of 2 and 4 North Washington, and 3 and 5 East Burdick Street. The Washington Street storefronts typically housed larger businesses such as general stores, clothing stores, and department stores, while the Burdick Street storefronts were smaller, and housed professional offices and barber shops.

For much of its history, the corner unit at 2 North Washington housed as a grocery store and later department store. In the early twentieth century the business was a grocery store owned by Brokenshaw and Olive, or B & O.⁴⁴⁵ Eventually the storefront became a clothing business owned by J. A. Arnold.⁴⁴⁶ Arnold sold the store in 1935 to J. Wesley Brower and Fred J. Streit.⁴⁴⁷ In 1954, Streit left the partnership for health reasons, and the business was known thereafter as Brower's Department Store.⁴⁴⁸ Brower's advertised carrying several national brands, including: "Samsonite, Campus, Pandora, Arrow, Haggard, and Trend."⁴⁴⁹ The department store remained in business about twenty-five years. As of 1961, Brower's was replaced by Mitchell's Drug Store.⁴⁵⁰ In 1996 the building was purchased by Brett Knapp, who remodeled the building to combine the separate store spaces into one restaurant.⁴⁵¹

Other major downtown buildings that date to the 1870s and 1880s include the buildings from 1 to 5 South Washington Street. A fire in December 1878 destroyed many of the buildings in the downtown's southwest quadrant, which were replaced by the extant buildings. The largest of the three buildings is the Tunstead Block; a three-story building at 3 South Washington Street.

The Tunstead Block was erected to house Tunstead Hardware, which was established by William J. [Billy] Tunstead. In 1861, at 21 years old, Tunstead came to Detroit from Brantford, Ontario, looking for work. While attending a show at the Bijou Theater in Detroit, Tunstead sat next to Dr. O. E. Bell from Oxford. Bell informed him that Hovey's Hardware store in Oxford was seeking a tinsmith. The next day Tunstead took the train to Pontiac, then a stagecoach to Oxford, and was hired by Hovey on the spot. The following year, June 21, 1862, Tunstead purchased the hardware store from Hovey and renamed it for himself. Under William Tunstead's leadership, the tin shop and hardware expanded. Eventually the business became a necessity for area farmers, who depended on the store's complete stock and Tunstead's willingness to special order items not in the inventory.⁴⁵²

Following the 1878 fire, area farmers helped Tunstead clear debris and get supplies for reconstruction. The farmers hauled in fieldstones for foundations of the affected buildings, and

⁴⁴⁴ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, 1890), 2.

⁴⁴⁵ Photograph, #21 Post Card, June 1912, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁴⁴⁶ Advertisement. "Since 1935..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 8.

⁴⁴⁷ Advertisement. "Since 1935..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 8.

⁴⁴⁸ Advertisement. "Since 1935..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 8.

⁴⁴⁹ Advertisement. "Since 1935..." *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 8.

⁴⁵⁰ "Oxford-Addison Sesquicentennial," *Oxford Leader*, 14 October 1987, 13.

⁴⁵¹ "Red Knapp's Restaurants History," http://redknapps.net/?page_id=2, accessed, 16 November 2017.

⁴⁵² "The Tunsteads- Billy and George," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C1.

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brought lumber from Lapeer to rebuild the store.⁴⁵³ According to the date plate on the facade, the three-story building was completed the year after the fire. The third floor of the new building housed Masonic Lodge 84, and later other fraternal clubs, including the Knights of the Maccabees.⁴⁵⁴ The lodge hall and fraternal organizations in the building are indicative of William Tunstead's own involvement in the organizations including the Masonic Order, the Knights of Pythias, and the Maccabees.⁴⁵⁵ Between 1884 and 1894 the second floor housed the Oxford Savings Bank, of which William Tunstead was a founder and vice-president.⁴⁵⁶

Tunstead's Hardware store advertised that they carried the "largest stock of hardware and agricultural implements in Oakland County."⁴⁵⁷ Patrons could purchase such things as plows, cultivators, fencing, and barbed wire.⁴⁵⁸ As the variety of items increased, so too did the need to house the merchandise, resulting in the business expanding to a warehouse constructed behind the building, built between 1900 and 1909.⁴⁵⁹ The merchandise warehouse burned down between 1915 and 1919.⁴⁶⁰ Then, in 1924, Tunstead died, leaving the business to his son, George.⁴⁶¹ George Tunstead continued as head of the company until 1946 when he sold the store to his stepson, Ralph VanWagoner.⁴⁶² George continued to work in the store for many years, still logging a few hours a week in 1962 when he was 88 years old.⁴⁶³

In 1970, after achieving 108 years as a family-owned and operated business, Tunstead Hardware was sold to A. Sherman and Francis A. Baldwin.⁴⁶⁴ Although under new ownership, the hardware store retained its historic name. Sherman and Baldwin held the business a short time before selling to Tommy P. Toteff in 1973, who rebranded the business Tom's Hardware.⁴⁶⁵ In 1975 Tom's Hardware moved to a new location outside of downtown.⁴⁶⁶ The Tunstead Block subsequently became home to a book store, known as The Book Place.⁴⁶⁷

Immediately south of the Tunstead Block, at 5 South Washington Street, was also constructed following the 1878 fire. The Hackett Block was completed in 1879, commissioned by Uriah S. Hackett who operated a drug store in the building.⁴⁶⁸ In 1881, Hackett sold the building to Charles Tunstead, William Tunstead's brother. Charles Tunstead owned and operated the

⁴⁵³ Clem Cleveland, "At 95."

⁴⁵⁴ "Fires destroyed Lodge 84 twice," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B8; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1909), 3.

⁴⁵⁵ "The Tunsteads," C1.

⁴⁵⁶ "Banks and Newspapers," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A15.

⁴⁵⁷ Advertisement: "Tunstead Hardware," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 7.

⁴⁵⁸ "Oxford was a commercial center in 1917, too," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B18.

⁴⁵⁹ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1909), 3.

⁴⁶⁰ Jim Dygert "Tunstead's Hardware is a Landmark," *Pontiac Press*, 5 June 1962.

⁴⁶¹ Clem Cleveland, "At 95."

⁴⁶² Clem Cleveland, "At 95."

⁴⁶³ Dygert "Tunstead's Hardware."

⁴⁶⁴ "State's oldest hardware store to close," *Oxford Leader*, 9 February 1973.

⁴⁶⁵ "Expanding and growing with Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 27 March 1975, 14.

⁴⁶⁶ "Expanding and growing," 14.

⁴⁶⁷ Advertisement: "The Book Place, Downtown Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A17.

⁴⁶⁸ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

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Mascott Cigar factory as well as a grocery store in the building.⁴⁶⁹ Sources vary on the exact date that the grocery store and cigar factory moved out, however sometime between 1890 and 1898, Charles opened Keystone Drug Store in the building; hiring Ed Wright as the manager.⁴⁷⁰ Two additional businesses were located within the drug store. The Western Union Telegraph had an office in one corner of the building, and a jewelry store owned by W. T. Blashill was located in another corner.⁴⁷¹ Blashill relocated his store in 1899.⁴⁷²

In 1899 the Hackett Block was expanded to the south by a two-story turret addition, historically identified as 7 South Washington Street.⁴⁷³ The addition provided a new office for Western Union Telegraph. The space changed hands a few times in the first half of the twentieth century, housing a variety of businesses including a shoe repair shop and ice cream parlor.⁴⁷⁴

The original portion of the Hackett Block, 5 South Washington, remained a drug store until the mid-twentieth century. Charles Tunstead died in an auto accident in 1906, and the building and drug store was left to his wife, Margaret Tunstead.⁴⁷⁵ Two years after Charles' death, Keystone Drugs closed and Margaret rented the building's retail space to Alston Palmer, who operated a drug store here from 1908 to 1917. He was succeeded by Ira Harris, whose drug store was part of the Rexall franchise, and operated here from 1917 to 1927.⁴⁷⁶ In 1920, Margaret Tunstead sold the building to her nephew, George Tunstead, who retained ownership until 1959 when he sold the building to his stepson, Ralph VanWagoner.

In 1927, brothers Lee and Ray VanWagoner inherited five hundred dollars, which they used as a down payment toward the purchase of Harris Rexall Drugs.⁴⁷⁷ Lee VanWagoner completed pharmacy school in 1934 and bought out his brother's interest in the business.⁴⁷⁸ In 1936, VanWagoner dropped the association with the Rexall franchise, and was renamed VanWagoner's Drug Store. In 1947, VanWagoner relocated his business to 1 South Washington.

Following the drug store's move, the building became a clothing store. Initially the store was known as Hayes Men's Wear, but by 1957 it was the Lucille Shop.⁴⁷⁹ The Lucille Shop gave way to Noble's Suburban Shop in 1962, a Lake Orion business that opened its second location in Oxford.⁴⁸⁰ Noble's remained in at this location through 1976.⁴⁸¹ From the mid-1980s to mid-

⁴⁶⁹ Photograph: "W.J. Tunstead's hardware is well known both for its wide..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D17

⁴⁷⁰ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, 1890), 2; Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁴⁷¹ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 4.

⁴⁷² "Representative Business Men and Firms," 4.

⁴⁷³ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 3; Inventory Form: U. S. Hackett Block. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁴⁷⁴ Photograph, 680.0014 "bldg.. south of the Tunstead bldg.." Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; Photograph, "Washington Ave, Oxford", circa 1910, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁴⁷⁵ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁷⁶ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁷⁷ Advertisement: "30 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

⁴⁷⁸ Jim Sherman, "With a 'Thanks,' Lee VanWagoner Sells Store," *Oxford Leader*, 16 January, 1964.

⁴⁷⁹ Advertisement: "30 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3; Working File. U.S. Hackett Block. On file, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Lansing.

⁴⁸⁰ Advertisement: "Fashions Change," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C24.

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1990s it housed a salon, known as Oxford Hair Design.⁴⁸² Today the building is an extension of the Boulevard Boutique, which also includes the store space in the Tunstead Block at 3 South Washington.

The final buildings constructed near the junction of West Burdick and South Washington, is the northernmost, 1 South Washington. The building was erected sometime after the Tunstead Block and Hackett Block, circa 1880.⁴⁸³ Initially, the building was two stories with a rectangular footprint; the one-story ell was added later. The earliest known occupant of the building's first floor was the Corner Grocery, established in 1881 by brothers-in-law, R. R. Snyder and Charles H. Glaspie.⁴⁸⁴ The store sold groceries and stationery, including a major portion of the area's school books.⁴⁸⁵ Glaspie bought out Snyder in 1888 then around 1900, the Corner Grocery was purchased by George Olive and Stewart Howser.⁴⁸⁶

The second floor of 1 South Washington Street housed a cigar factory, which had moved out by 1900.⁴⁸⁷ The cigar factory was succeeded by the offices of Dr. Bachelor, who later moved to 23 North Washington.

In the late 1900s the grocery store was replaced by a billiards hall.⁴⁸⁸ The one-story addition was made to the north elevation circa 1912 to house the village post office.⁴⁸⁹ In the mid-1930s the building's first floor was home to the Kroger grocery store, which moved to 15 East Burdick Street in 1942.⁴⁹⁰

In 1947 the first-floor retail space became a drug store, which it remained for the next seventy years. The first drug store was owned by Lee VanWagoner, who purchased the building and relocated his pharmacy there from 5 South Washington.⁴⁹¹ Following his purchase of the building, VanWagoner carried out a renovation that included the addition of enameled panels and streamlined letters.⁴⁹² These changes have subsequently been reversed. During VanWagoner's occupation of the building, Dr. V. E. Peterson had his dentist practice on the second floor; and the one-story wing housed Carroll Crawford's jewelry store and Fred Sternberg's barber shop.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸¹ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁸² "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁸³ Photograph: "The original of this print is a tintype photo." *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, D1.

⁴⁸⁴ Photograph, #73. "Corner Grocery- Main St. and Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1.

⁴⁸⁵ Photograph, #73. "Corner Grocery- Main St. and Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1.

⁴⁸⁶ Photograph, 73 "Corner Grocery Main St. and Burdick," Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁴⁸⁷ Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford* (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Limited, 1890), 2.

⁴⁸⁸ Photograph, 111 1908 Post Card "West Side of Main Street, Oxford, Mich." Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁴⁸⁹ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 3.

⁴⁹⁰ Photograph: "Kroger was on the southeast corner of the main four corners..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D20;

Photograph: "Kroger moved off the four main corners in 1942, but not far..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D11.

⁴⁹¹ Advertisement: "30 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 3.

⁴⁹² Photograph, undated and unnumbered, Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

⁴⁹³ "Remember When" *Oxford Leader*, 20 January 1988.

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On January 10, 1964, VanWagoner Drugs was purchased by William (Bill) Patterson, who renamed the business Patterson Pharmacy. Bill owned the business for 30 years, retiring in February 1994, handing the business to son-in-law, Tim Davidson.⁴⁹⁴ Patterson Pharmacy was still present at the time of this recordation.

Notable commercial buildings from the 1890s include 9 and 11 South Washington, which have a shared history. The building at 9 South Washington was erected circa 1893 for John Lenhoff's Star Clothing House.⁴⁹⁵ Lenhoff started his clothing business in Oxford in 1871, growing larger over time before erecting the extant building. His store carried a full line of men's clothing, including "hats, caps and everything necessary for man to wear."⁴⁹⁶ By 1909 Lenhoff's store had moved out and a bakery was located in the building.⁴⁹⁷ Not long thereafter the building housed Melanoff Variety Store.⁴⁹⁸ Between 1913 and 1915 Oxford's first movie theater, the Pastime Theatre, moved from the Curry Building at 31 North Washington Street, to this building.⁴⁹⁹ The theater was short-lived and by the 1920s the building had returned to a retail function, as Smith Novelty Store.⁵⁰⁰

In July 1931, brothers Homer and James Grove, opened a five-and-dime in the building, known as "Grove Brothers 5¢ to \$1."⁵⁰¹ They heavily remodeled the building upon purchase, including installing a new storefront, removal of a stairway, installation of a steel ceiling, new shelving and other fixtures. A newspaper article references this location as the "Haddrill Building, recently vacated by the Smith Novelty Store;" indicating that the Haddrill Brothers owned this building, as well as the one that bares their surname at 7 North Washington.⁵⁰²

By the time the Grove brothers opened the Oxford store they had already established seven other stores, in Chelsea, Milan, Durand, Flushing, Vassar, Clare and Saline. Homer's wife, Leora Grove, was an integral part of the business as well. She placed the orders for merchandise in all the stores, and managed the Chelsea branch. Homer and Leora's son, Harold, moved to Oxford with his wife, Clara, in 1938 to manage the store at 9 South Washington.⁵⁰³ Homer passed away in 1939, and the Grove stores were divided between his brother and son. Harold inherited the stores his father managed, including Oxford.

Around 1947, Grove's 5¢ to \$1 expanded, under Harold's the management. To enable the expansion, the neighboring A & P Grocery at 11 South Washington was acquired, the party wall

⁴⁹⁴ Annette Kingsbury, "Bill Patterson Retires," *Oxford Leader*, 2 February 1994.

⁴⁹⁵ "Oxford's Representative Business Men and Firms," *Oxford Intruder*, 18 November 1898, 1; "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁹⁶ "U.S. Hackett Block" Working File, SHPO.

⁴⁹⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1909), 3.

⁴⁹⁸ Photograph: "The days when awnings were 'in'." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E15.

⁴⁹⁹ "First movies promised no offensive pictures like fights, vaudeville," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C7; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 3.

⁵⁰⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1926), 2; Martha Fulford, "The Dime Store is 50," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1981.

⁵⁰¹ Martha Fulford, "The Dime Store is 50," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1981.

⁵⁰² "Oxford has new 5c to \$1.00 Store," *Oxford Leader*, 24 July 1931.

⁵⁰³ Fulford, "The Dime Store."

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was knocked out to form “two large archways,” doubling the floor space. In 1965 Harold and Clara Grove’s son and daughter-in-law, Sunny and Maryann, purchased the business. The new owners remodeled the interior, removing the interior archways, and unified the exterior of two storefronts with matching cladding.⁵⁰⁴ By 1981 the Oxford and Holly locations were the only remaining Grove stores.

Commented [TAW15]: Is this really spelled with a “u”?

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Also constructed in the last decade of the nineteenth century was the circa 1893 Clark Block at 9 North Washington Street. In 1894 the Clark Block became the second home of the Oxford Savings Bank, which remained there until it moved to a new building at 1 North Washington Street in 1922.⁵⁰⁵ Following the bank’s departure, the building was home to Roy Robinson’s barber shop.⁵⁰⁶ Robinson was the third generation of a family that had been barbering in Oxford since about 1865. In 1924 Roy’s son, Stub (Lavern), joined the business, assuming ownership following Roy’s death in 1938. Stub Robinson remained in business through the 1970s.⁵⁰⁷ A circa 1995 photograph illustrates that the Robinson name continued at this location late in the twentieth century.⁵⁰⁸

The A. (Andrew) P. Glaspie building at 38 South Washington was erected sometime between 1890 and 1895. Glaspie’s first business endeavor was trading in fur and wool, which he began in 1864 after returning from service in the Civil War.⁵⁰⁹ In 1868 he opened a grocery store in downtown Oxford, but remained in the wool business as well. Glaspie suffered a major loss in 1885 when his entire stock and grocery building was lost to a fire. Not to be deterred, Glaspie, established a men’s clothing business.⁵¹⁰ Clothing was a natural transition for Glaspie, utilizing his connections to the wool trade, he established a knitting mill to supply his clothing store with gloves and hosiery, a business which he maintained for ten years.⁵¹¹

In 1895 the brick building at 38 South Washington Street was illustrated on a Sanborn-Perris map where it was noted as a dry goods store. By 1900 the space had changed to a clothing store, likely owned by Glaspie.⁵¹²

In 1907 Oxford’s newspaper, the *Oxford Leader*, moved into the A. P. Glaspie building.⁵¹³ At the time, the paper was co-owned by A. P. Glaspie’s son, A. Bird Glaspie. The *Oxford Leader* was founded in 1898 by E. Henry Congdon, then known as the *Intruder*. Six months after establishing the paper, Congdon was joined in partnership by A. Bird Glaspie and the men held a

⁵⁰⁴ Fulford, “The Dime Store.”

⁵⁰⁵ “Representative Business Men and Firms,” 4; “Oxford Savings Bank” Working File, original on file at SHPO, Lansing, Michigan.

⁵⁰⁶ “It was 1865 when Stub’s kin started barbering here.” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E2.

⁵⁰⁷ “Stub’s kin.” *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, E2.

⁵⁰⁸ Photograph, circa 1995, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁵⁰⁹ Chapman Brothers, *Portrait and Biographical Album of Oakland County, Michigan*. (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1891), 379.

⁵¹⁰ “Representative Business Men and Firms,” 1.

⁵¹¹ “Oxford Pioneer Passed On” *Oxford Leader*, 18 February 1921, 1.

⁵¹² Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁵¹³ “The Leader moved from their...,” *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C1.

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competition to rename the paper; resulting in the new name, *Oxford Leader*.⁵¹⁴ A. Bird. Glaspie took an active role newspaper production, serving in statewide newspaper organizations including president of the Wolverine Press Association, and member of the Michigan Press Association.⁵¹⁵ Glaspie had a diverse career in addition to his role with the newspaper, including partnership with Charles Webster in the department store at 2 North Washington known as Glaspie & Webster.⁵¹⁶ In 1917 Glaspie was elected to the state legislature, where he served until 1923 when he was elected to the state senate for two terms.⁵¹⁷ Locally, he served as the Post Master for eight years.⁵¹⁸

The Congdon-Glaspie newspaper partnership dissolved 1936.⁵¹⁹ In Glaspie's absence, Congdon's wife, Myrtle Congdon, joined her husband in running the business. The Congdons operated the *Oxford Leader* at this property until May 15, 1955, when James A. Sherman purchased the paper, and subsequently moved it to a new building outside downtown.⁵²⁰

In the early twentieth century, downtown businesses gained patrons from yet a third railroad entering the city. The Detroit United Railway, an electric streetcar rail service, was extended to Oxford in 1900. Initially, downtown merchants were apprehensive that the interurban would result in a loss of local business as patrons sought opportunities in the more accessible larger cities. However, within the first week the opposite effect had happened, as consumers traveled from nearby towns to do business in Oxford.⁵²¹ The improvement in business is reflected in the construction of eight extant buildings within the district between 1900 and 1909.

Among these is the commercial block at 21 North Washington Street, which was a hardware store for sixty-seven years. This building was illustrated as under construction in the 1900 Sanborn-Perris map, with the notation it was then noted as a planned to be a hardware store.⁵²² The store was owned by W. H. Smale, who had been in the hardware business in Oxford since 1885.⁵²³ In 1915, Smale sold his store to partners Tolfree and Keil.⁵²⁴ Four years later, Earl Acre entered the business, and went on to first buy out Keil, and later Tolfree.⁵²⁵ Acre maintained the business for a short time before selling to Arch Johnson in 1923.⁵²⁶ During Johnson's tenure, Carl Smith entered the business. Smith purchased the full interest of the hardware store in 1936, and renamed it Smith Hardware.⁵²⁷ Eventually, Smith's son entered the business as well, and it

⁵¹⁴ "Progressing with the times," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C13.

⁵¹⁵ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 756.

⁵¹⁶ "A. Bird Glaspie, a diverse man," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D4.

⁵¹⁷ "A. Bird Glaspie, a diverse man," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D4.

⁵¹⁸ "A. Bird Glaspie, a diverse man," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D4.

⁵¹⁹ "A. Bird Glaspie, a diverse man," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D4.

⁵²⁰ "Progressing with the times," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, C13; Jim Sherman, "Publishing dates 107 Years," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B8.

⁵²¹ "Cars are Here," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, B18.

⁵²² Sanborn-Perris, *Oxford*, 1900, 2.

⁵²³ Advertisement: "72 Years...", *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A4.

⁵²⁴ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

⁵²⁵ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

⁵²⁶ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

⁵²⁷ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

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became Smith & Son Hardware. In 1947 ownership transferred from Carl Smith to R. C. Smith and Linus Treinen.⁵²⁸ Trienen became full owner in 1953, but retained the Smith & Son name.⁵²⁹ In 1961, Neil Coulter and Fred Conley, who owned the men's clothing store at 7 North Washington, purchased the business.⁵³⁰ It became C & C Hardware and eventually expanded to include the retail space next-door at 23 North Washington.⁵³¹ Coulter and Conley were the last to run a hardware store in the building. In 1967 they moved the hardware store to 10 North Washington, selling the building at 21 North Washington.

Another prominent building erected during the early twentieth century is the corner building of the southeast quadrant, 2-10 South Washington. The large two-story commercial block was constructed circa 1905. The corner storefront, 2 South Washington, was first occupied by Jossman's Dry Goods, owned by Joseph A. Jossman.⁵³² In addition to the dry goods store Jossman's business interests included a partnership with Millard S. Howland in operation of Oxford's grain elevator.⁵³³ Jossman was the son of German Jewish immigrants who came to Detroit in the 1840s.⁵³⁴ He learned the mercantile trade from his parents, and came to Oxford in 1883 to open a general store. His business was located in the subject building by 1905. Shortly thereafter Jossman's corner store was replaced by Baxter's Department Store, and the adjacent 6 South Washington was Blashill's Jewelry Store.⁵³⁵ The department store was owned by James H. Baxter of Davison, who eventually sold the store to his sons, Arthur and Clarence Baxter. The Baxter store was moved to the Masonic Building at 20-22 South Washington in 1913.⁵³⁶ The following year, the Baxter Brothers sold the business in to W. B. Clark, so they could focus on horse breeding.⁵³⁷ Between circa 1917 and 1920, 2 South Washington had a brief stint as a grocery store, owned by brothers C.A. and D. A. Webster, known as Webster Grocery.⁵³⁸

By the early 1920s the corner unit was again a department store, Glaspie (A. Bird) and Webster (C. A.).⁵³⁹ The pair remained in business together until 1927.⁵⁴⁰ Eventually, the corner unit housed Eggleston Department Store, as illustrated in a circa 1940 photograph.⁵⁴¹ In November 1960, Russell Medaugh and his two sons purchased Eggleston's store.⁵⁴² The following year

⁵²⁸ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

⁵²⁹ Advertisement: "72 Years...", A4.

⁵³⁰ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

⁵³¹ Advertisement. *Detroit Free Press*, 17 April 1964, 19; Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

⁵³² Photograph, "A Business Block of Oxford Mich., circa 1905," Oxford Street Scenes #2, NOHS.

⁵³³ Polk, *State Gazetteer and Business Directory 1907*, 1585.

⁵³⁴ Chapman Brothers, *Portrait and Biographical Album*, 768.

⁵³⁵ Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B13

⁵³⁶ "Impressive Masonic Ceremonies to Mark Dedication of Oxford's New Temple," 20 June 1913, 1.

⁵³⁷ "Automobiles" *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A23.

⁵³⁸ Photograph, 11 "ca. 1920 post card, Oxford, Mich" Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS; "Oxford was a commercial center in 1917, too," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B18

⁵³⁹ "Before curbs and gutters," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C14.

⁵⁴⁰ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A9

⁵⁴¹ Photograph, circa 1940, Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁵⁴² "Chronology 1955-1970," B9.

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Medaugh's expanded to include 6 South Washington, which had been Crawford Jewelry.

Medaugh's Department Store remained in business through the mid-1970s.⁵⁴³

The south half of the building includes 8-10 South Washington, which has been divided into a separate parcel and is now known individually as the Rolando Building. The first known tenant of this half of the building was Price Brothers Drug Store, at 8 South Washington, owned by Roy and Elisha Price.⁵⁴⁴ Pharmaceuticals was a family business for the Prices, as Roy and Elisha's parents, Hiram H. and Lorissa J. Smith Price, had established a drug store circa 1892.⁵⁴⁵ In 1894 Hiram Price died and his wife, Lorissa, took over the business until Roy could complete pharmacy school in 1906. The following year Lorissa Price died and Roy's brother, Elisha, entered the business. In 1912 Elisha retired from the store, leaving Roy sole proprietor.⁵⁴⁶ Price's Drug Store remained in business until 1946 when it was sold to Harry Borgne.⁵⁴⁷

On the opposite side of the wall, at 10 South Washington Street, Dr. Cole had an office from circa 1910 through 1923.⁵⁴⁸ From 1929 through the late 1950s, the storefront housed Don's Barber Shop, owned by Don Awery.⁵⁴⁹

The second of Oxford's two banks opened in 1905; Farmers State Bank, located at 12 South Washington Street.⁵⁵⁰ The founding parties included G. W. Mackinnon, president; J. B. Shoemaker and M. L. Hagle, vice-presidents; and W. W. Lyons, cashier. By 1912 the bank had a capital stock of twenty thousand dollars, surplus and profits of 3,735 dollars, and deposits of 155,284 dollars. The bank remained open in this location for several decades, until it was impacted by the Great Depression. On July 5, 1932, the bank closed its doors, leaving the village government, public school systems, and numerous individuals, without access to their funds. Full payments to account holders were not completed until May 1937, five years after closing.⁵⁵¹

Following the bank closure, Acheson Jewelers moved into the building.⁵⁵² The business was founded by watchmaker Harvey Acheson and his wife Edith in July 1928, and had previously located in the Oakland Hotel on North Washington Street (not extant). By 1933 the growing business required more space. The Achesons seized the opportunity when Farmers State Bank closed and relocated to 12 South Washington. In 1949 the Acheson's son Ken joined the family

⁵⁴³ Advertisement in "Gravel Edition," *Oxford Leader*, 3 July 1975.

⁵⁴⁴ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 709.

⁵⁴⁵ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 709.

⁵⁴⁶ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 709.

⁵⁴⁷ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11

⁵⁴⁸ "Before curbs and gutters," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, C14; Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B12.

⁵⁴⁹ Advertisement, *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957.

⁵⁵⁰ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 247.

⁵⁵¹ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 63.

⁵⁵² Neef, "Acheson Jewelers."

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business.⁵⁵³ The successful jewelry store again needed to expand by 1967, requiring a second move to a new location down the street, 28 South Washington.⁵⁵⁴

Farther south on Washington Street, the C. L. (Charles LeRay) Randall building was erected in 1908.⁵⁵⁵ Historically the building had the address 19 South Washington, however today it forms the north half of 21 South Washington. When it was first erected, the building housed the C. L. Randall Co. Bean Elevator.⁵⁵⁶ The building was the “longest in town” at 30 feet wide by 106 feet long, and storage capacity of 7,000 bushels.⁵⁵⁷ C. L. Randall had his office in the front of the building, and allocated rooms upstairs for the Bell Telephone exchange.⁵⁵⁸ Mr. Randall’s office was described as an “airy room, decorated in green,” while the telephone office was “finished in antique oak of a green hue.”⁵⁵⁹

The C. L. Randall Company was established circa 1882 as a produce business.⁵⁶⁰ At the time the building was erected, the company was led by brothers C. L. and Leon Randall as well as Philo B. Glaspie (brother to A. B. Glaspie).⁵⁶¹ As a buyer and seller of produce, the company dealt primarily in apples, potatoes, rutabagas, onions, carrots, cabbage, beans and hay. In addition to their Oxford location, they had facilities in Washington Township (Macomb County) and Milford (Oakland County). Aside from elevators, the company owned an apple dryer and a creamery.⁵⁶² Although the company traded all types of produce, their main income came from potatoes, as was illustrated by their ownership of a number of potato cellars at “more than 40 [train] stations in this district.”⁵⁶³ C. L. Randall was the largest employer in town, and was in the top ten of most-taxed individuals.⁵⁶⁴ He was reputed to be the second-largest produce dealer in the country.⁵⁶⁵ It was the Randall Company that earned Oxford the nick-name, “Baga Town,” for having shipped large numbers of rutabagas out of depots in Oxford and nearby Thomas (four miles north of Oxford). Area farmers counted on advice from C. L. Randall to plant the most profitable crops. The bean elevator was a good investment by the company, since by 1912 beans led the market over other grain crops.⁵⁶⁶ C. L. Randall retired in 1923, and the company left the downtown building.⁵⁶⁷ After Randall retired, the first floor of the building housed a store and second floor continued as the telephone exchange.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁵³ Neef, “Acheson Jewelers.”

⁵⁵⁴ Neef, “Acheson Jewelers.”

⁵⁵⁵ “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D1.

⁵⁵⁶ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 3.

⁵⁵⁷ “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D6.

⁵⁵⁸ “Oxford Loses Highly Respected Citizen,” *Oxford Leader*, 25 March 1932, 1.

⁵⁵⁹ “Occupy New Office,” *Oxford Leader*, 16 October 1908, 1.

⁵⁶⁰ “Occupy New Office,” 1.

⁵⁶¹ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 427; Chapman Brothers, *Portrait and Biographical*.

⁵⁶² “C. L. Randall did things in a big way” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D8.

⁵⁶³ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 427.

⁵⁶⁴ “C. L. Randall,” D6.

⁵⁶⁵ “C. L. Randall,” D6.

⁵⁶⁶ Seeley, *History of Oakland County*, 427.

⁵⁶⁷ “C. L. Randall,” D8.

⁵⁶⁸ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2.

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In the 1910s a new transportation method again affected businesses in downtown Oxford, the automobile. In the 1910s and 1920s there were five automobile dealerships in downtown Oxford. The first of these was built in 1910 at 22 North Washington, for "Roy Howland's Olds, Packard and H-C Gasoline Garage."⁵⁶⁹ Initially the garage had a capacity of forty cars, however as the business evolved, it was reduced to twenty cars to accommodate a showroom in the front half of the building, and a repair garage in the rear.⁵⁷⁰ An auto dealership remained in this building through 1945.⁵⁷¹ Production Gear Manufacturing was located in this building by the mid-1960s.⁵⁷²

The second dealership constructed in Oxford was in the Meriam Building, at 10 North Washington Street; which started out as a harness shop. C. A. (Chester Adams) Meriam erected the building in 1912 during the transition period from complete reliance on horses, to automobiles. Meriam was a harness maker by trade who moved to Oxford from Mackinaw City in 1893, following his purchase of a harness shop on North Washington Street.⁵⁷³ Initially Meriam sold harnesses and agricultural implements, and had an adjacent ancillary building used as a feed barn.⁵⁷⁴ Eventually, Meriam's business expanded to include automobiles and auto parts. A 1917 *Detroit Free Press* ad for Miller tires noted that C. A. Meriam was selling them in Oxford.⁵⁷⁵ By the mid-1920s the first floor of the building housed a Pontiac Oakland dealership that incorporated a one-story brick addition at 14 N Washington (not extant).⁵⁷⁶

Although his business included car sales C. A. Meriam continued the harness trade well into the 1930s.⁵⁷⁷ He identified as a "leather artist" and at seventy-three years old he and his assistant, George Case, were still manufacturing harnesses in 1936. In a *Detroit Free Press* article from that year, Meriam noted that "the horse is more in demand than ever..." in rural Michigan.⁵⁷⁸ According to Meriam, a single harness took three to four days to make and cost \$50-\$75.⁵⁷⁹ Meriam died not long after the *Detroit Free Press* article ran. In April 1936 he suffered a heart attack while driving and struck a tree. His obituary noted that he was former village president, former president of the Farmers State Bank, and in the harness business for forty-three years.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁶⁹ "The Northeast Quadrant in 1939," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D16.

⁵⁷⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2.

⁵⁷¹ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945, 2.

⁵⁷² Michigan Bell Co., *Telephone Directory Rochester-Clarkston-Lake Orion-Leonard-Oxford* (Michigan Bell: October 1950), 55; Michigan Bell Co., *Michigan Bell Telephone Directory for Oxford-Leonard*. (Michigan Bell: October 1966), 20.

⁵⁷³ "The Leather Artist, C. A. Meriam," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D12-13.

⁵⁷⁴ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 2; "The Leather Artist, C. A. Meriam," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D12-13.

⁵⁷⁵ Advertisement. "Miller Geared to the Road Tires," *Detroit Free Press*, 7 October 1917.

⁵⁷⁶ Photograph: East side of M-24 North of Burdick. Oxford Street Scenes #1, NOHS.

⁵⁷⁷ "State Briefs," *Lansing State Journal*, 28 April 1936.

⁵⁷⁸ "Leather Artist," *Detroit Free Press*, 19 April 1936, 10.

⁵⁷⁹ "Leather Artist," 10.

⁵⁸⁰ "State Briefs," *Lansing State Journal*, 28 April 1936.

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He was highly regarded by the Oxford civic and business community, and all downtown businesses closed during his funeral.⁵⁸¹

After Meriam's death, the building was occupied by a Chevrolet, Pontiac, and Oldsmobile dealership, owned by Al Case; who is may be related to George Case, Meriam's former business partner.⁵⁸² In 1954 Homer Hight purchased the dealership from Case.⁵⁸³ As of 1957 the building housed one of two locations for Jeffrey Ford Sales.⁵⁸⁴ In 1967 the first floor ceased to house an auto dealership, when it became occupied by C. & C. Hardware, which relocated to the building from 21 North Washington Street.⁵⁸⁵

Other buildings that housed auto dealerships in downtown Oxford include the Masonic Block, 20-22 South Washington Street; 35 North Washington Street; 14 North Washington Street; and the Reed Building, 42-46 South Washington (not extant).⁵⁸⁶

Only two extant buildings were erected in the downtown historic district during the 1920s, the Haddrill Block at 7 North Washington Street, and the Oxford Savings Bank at 1 North Washington Street. The Haddrill Block was built in 1921 for the Haddrill Brothers Clothing Store. The brothers, Lew and George Haddrill, were originally located across the street at 4 North Washington. In addition to Lew and George, a "Mrs. Haddrill and daughter" worked in the store as well.⁵⁸⁷ The store was sold in December 1923 to the G. W. Carpenter Company of Lapeer who took possession on January 1, 1924.⁵⁸⁸ As a result of the sale the business became known as the Haddrill-Carpenter store, which it remained through 1948 when it was purchased by Fred Conley and Neil Coulter of Lapeer.⁵⁸⁹ The store was renamed Coulter and Conley, and remained in business through 1974.⁵⁹⁰

The Oxford Savings Bank built the iconic Art Deco-style building at 1 North Washington Street in 1922. Prior to the bank locating here, the property included a two-story building with a similar footprint, occupying 1 and 3 North Washington Street.⁵⁹¹ The Oxford Savings Bank, founded in 1884, began construction on this, its third location, in 1922. When the new building opened in 1923, the bank was touted as having over one million dollars in assets, and noted as the oldest bank in Oakland County.⁵⁹² The bank's board included downtown businessmen: William J. Tunstead, president for thirty years and one of the founders; and C. L. Randall, vice president for twenty-five years.

⁵⁸¹ "Chester A. Meriam Dies Suddenly" *Oxford Leader*, 1 May 1936, 1.

⁵⁸² Photograph: "Chevrolet, Pontic, Olds and Packard Sales were all..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D23.

⁵⁸³ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11.

⁵⁸⁴ Advertisement: "Jeffrey Ford Sales," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, A5.

⁵⁸⁵ Jim Sherman, "Main street fixtures are gone," *Oxford Leader*, 11 March 1981, 3.

⁵⁸⁶ "Automobiles" *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, A23; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1915), 2; Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1926), 2

⁵⁸⁷ Photograph: "The Haddrill Brothers" *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B14

⁵⁸⁸ "Thumb Briefs- Lapeer," *Times Herald*, Port Huron, Michigan, 12 December 1923.

⁵⁸⁹ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A11

⁵⁹⁰ Sherman, "Main street fixtures," 3.

⁵⁹¹ Photograph: "1910," *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, B12

⁵⁹² "New Home, Oxford Savings Bank to be Opened Mon.," *Oxford Leader*, 19 January 1923, 1.

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Unlike its downtown competitor, the Farmers State Bank, the Oxford Savings Bank survived the Great Depression. The Savings Bank closed on the mandated Michigan Bank Holiday, in February 1933, and was able to reopen shortly thereafter. The institution held the distinction as one of six banks in Oakland County that were deemed of "sound practice" and could therefore reopen after the holiday without reorganization.⁵⁹³ The bank moved to a new location outside of downtown in 1966, leaving the building empty until 1971 when it was donated to the Village of Oxford to house the Northeast Oakland County Historical Society.⁵⁹⁴

During the 1930s no new buildings were constructed in downtown Oxford. However, changes came to the commercial landscape. More chain stores were present by the mid-1930s, including Kroger Grocery, A & P Grocery, Rexall Drugs, and Gambles Hardware. In 1936, Marshall Grocery, located at 34 South Washington, closed after thirty-eight years in business. According to a local newspaper retrospective, it was the last home-owned local grocer in Oxford.⁵⁹⁵ The retail pattern in Oxford followed national trends. By the 1930s, chain stores had gained a prominent place in American Main Streets. Chain stores provided the wealth and resources needed to implement modern store designs, which made it difficult for many local shop owners to compete.⁵⁹⁶ Shoppers across the economic spectrum gravitated toward chain stores, as they gained a reputation for dependability of merchandise, efficiency of operations, and economy of buying in large volumes.⁵⁹⁷ In Oxford, the A & P and Rexall Drug stores were eventually bought out by small business owners, the Kroger store and Gambles went on to erect new buildings in the downtown.

In 1942, Kroger moved out of the corner store at 1 South Washington and built a new modern building at 15 East Burdick.⁵⁹⁸ Research suggests that the Kroger was replaced by another chain in 1965, an IGA.⁵⁹⁹ Gambles erected a new building in 1956 at 21 South Washington Street.⁶⁰⁰ Previously, it had been located at 4 North Washington Street, and in the Oakland Hotel (not extant). By the mid-1970s the franchise had over three thousand locations.⁶⁰¹

In 1966 a fire destroyed three buildings between 24 and 30 South Washington Street.⁶⁰² The fire provided an opportunity to construct modern commercial buildings in a traditional downtown setting. The northern-most of the buildings, 24 South Washington, was replaced by a modern building, housing Parrish Insurance Agency and Real Estate Company.⁶⁰³ The remaining

⁵⁹³ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 63.

⁵⁹⁴ Oxford CDA, "Inventory of Sites and Structures."

⁵⁹⁵ "Area Business and Professional Activities," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, A9.

⁵⁹⁶ Treau, *Signs Streets and Storefronts*, 147.

⁵⁹⁷ Gabrielle Esperdy, *Modernizing Main Street: Architecture and Consumer Culture in the New Deal*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 28.

⁵⁹⁸ Photograph: "Kroger moved off the four main corners in 1942, but not far..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, D11

⁵⁹⁹ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9.

⁶⁰⁰ Photograph: "These are Henry Houck's auto sales and service buildings..." *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C22.

⁶⁰¹ "More than Nuts and Bolts at Gambles," *Oxford Leader*, 27 March 1975, 3

⁶⁰² "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B9. "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B11.

⁶⁰³ Advertisement: "Congratulations Oxford," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, A7.

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buildings were replaced by the Oxford Mall at 28 South Washington.⁶⁰⁴ The pedestrian mall housed five businesses, which were accessed by a sidewalk that extended between Washington Street and the parking lot behind the building; providing a greater accommodation for automobiles. Construction of the mall was announced in February 1967, supported by five Oxford business leaders.⁶⁰⁵ An editorial in the *Oxford Leader* considered the construction of the new mall to be a major success of private investment in the era of urban renewal. The editorial further indicated that the renewed interest in off-street parking was a contributor to new downtown business interests as well.

Large shopping malls had been in the region since Detroit's Northland Center opened in 1954.⁶⁰⁶ Closer to Oxford, the Pontiac Mall opened in Waterford Township 1962.⁶⁰⁷ These malls were marketed to consumers as comfortable places to shop, with temperature-controlled corridors between anchor stores that allowed for easy year-round shopping. The small pedestrian mall in Oxford can hardly compare to a large enclosed shopping center, however the design of the building, with multiple stores oriented to a pedestrian path rather than the street, as well as its naming as a "mall," reflect the desire for the village to compete with the major suburban shopping centers of the day.

Downtown Oxford has remained a regional commercial center. In the twenty-first century, the majority of storefronts within the downtown historic district are occupied. These include a variety of small businesses, including restaurants, gift shops, specialty stores, professional offices, and a pharmacy.

Social Organizations and Fraternal Clubs

In addition to the traditional houses of business, downtown Oxford also provided a central meeting point for a variety of social organizations and fraternal clubs. Organizations such as the Masonic Lodge, the Knights of the Maccabees, Knights of Pythias, Oxford Veterans Association, American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars all found a place to meet the buildings of the historic district. Among the locations where these groups gathered were the Tunstead Block (3 South Washington), the Masonic Temple (20 South Washington), the Meriam Building (10 North Washington), and the Veterans' Building, (28 North Washington). Less frequently used, but also known gathering places for social organizations are the buildings at 9-11 South Washington, 4 North Washington, and 35 North Washington.

Fraternal organizations came to popularity in Oxford in the latter half of the twentieth century. These included the Masonic Lodge, Knights of Pythias, and Knights of the Maccabees. Nationally, fraternal orders were exceptionally popular in the late nineteenth century, known as

⁶⁰⁴ "Chronology 1955-1970," *Oxford Leader*, 19 August 1976, B11.

⁶⁰⁵ "Leader Editorial, Interest Stimulated Downtown," *Oxford Leader*, 23 February 1967, 4.

⁶⁰⁶ Martin Treau, *Signs Streets and Storefronts, a History of Architecture and Graphics Along America's Commercial Corridors*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 258.

⁶⁰⁷ "Pontiac Mall--- Architect Dream," *Detroit Free Press*, 25 March 1962, 23.

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the Golden Age of Fraternalism, 1870-1910.⁶⁰⁸ In 1896 it was estimated that fraternal orders held a combined membership of 5,400,000 comprised of one-eighth to one-fifth of the male population.⁶⁰⁹ At the time, the three largest orders were the Odd Fellows, Masonic Lodge, and Knights of Pythias.⁶¹⁰ Fraternal organizations rose to prominence following the Civil War, attracting members for their beneficiary practices, secret nature, and fraternal element. These organizations were known for charitable acts toward its members, including caring for the sick, supporting windows and orphans, and offering life insurance. Insurance was particularly attractive to working-class members, as they had no other way of obtaining such benefits.⁶¹¹ Although popularity of these organizations peaked in the early twentieth century, they continued to have a strong presence in communities, such as Oxford through the mid-twentieth century. In Oxford, the Masonic Lodge, Knights of Pythias, and Knights of the Maccabees were all still operating in the mid-1970s. However fraternalism declined across the country in the late twentieth century, and by the turn of the twenty-first century membership of surviving organizations had hit an all-time low.⁶¹² As of 2018 no fraternal orders meet in downtown Oxford, however their former buildings remain extant.

The oldest of Oxford's social organizations is the Oxford Masonic Lodge No. 84 of Free and Accepted Masons, which was established in 1856.⁶¹³ The earliest records of the organization were unfortunately lost in the 1878 fire that destroyed the southwest quadrant of the business district. Following the fire the lodge moved its meeting room to the third floor of the newly constructed Tunstead Block.⁶¹⁴ This fact is immortalized by the carving on the third story of the façade which reads "MASONIC TEMPLE." Various sub-groups of the masons were formed and met here as well. For example, a meeting on February 20, 1900, organized the Oxford chapter of the Order of Eastern Star.⁶¹⁵ Unlike the Masons, which were strictly men, the Eastern Star was co-gendered, and much of the membership and leadership positions were held by women. The first official meeting of the Eastern Star was held the following month. In its early years, social events with the Eastern Star often included excursions with other Orders in the region, including those located in Detroit and Rochester. Other groups to meet on the third floor of the Tunstead Block include the Knights of the Maccabees, American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.⁶¹⁶

⁶⁰⁸ W. S. Harwood, "Secret Societies in America." *The North American Review* 164, no. 486 (1897): 623; Harriet W. McBride, "The golden Age of Fraternalism: 1870-1910," last updated 2005, <http://phoenixmasonry.org/Golden%20Age%20of%20Fraternalism.pdf>, accessed 18 June 2018.

⁶⁰⁹ Harwood, "Secret Societies." 617.

⁶¹⁰ Harwood, "Secret Societies." 620.

⁶¹¹ McBride, "Golden Age."

⁶¹² Burke Gray, "Fraternalism in America (1860-1920)," Phoenixmasonry Masonic Museum and Library, http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/masonicmuseum/fraternalism/fraternalism_in_america.htm, accessed 19 June 2018.

⁶¹³ "Oxford Masonic Lodge Celebrates Centennial 1956," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 4.

⁶¹⁴ "Fires destroyed Lodge 84 twice," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, B8

⁶¹⁵ "Oxford Eastern Stars Date to 1900 over Tunstead Building," 27 February 1957, 6.

⁶¹⁶ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3; Alicemae Everett, "Girls State one of many projects supported by Legion Auxiliary 108," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D19; "VFW Auxiliary supports Post and has Projects of its own," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D20.

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By the second decade of the twentieth century, the Masonic Lodge, and its associated organizations, had outgrown the Tunstead Building. This may have been related to the fact that circa 1909-1910, they began sharing the space with the Knights of the Maccabees.⁶¹⁷ Local businessman, Joseph A. Jossman, is credited for suggesting a new building to house the Lodge in 1910.⁶¹⁸ On December 11, 1911, members held a meeting to “appoint a committee to investigate the proposition of building a new Masonic Temple.”⁶¹⁹ A few months later, on September 4, 1912, a special meeting was called for laying the cornerstone of the new Masonic Temple building at 20-22 South Washington Street. The building was completed the following spring, but not dedicated until June 26, 1913.⁶²⁰ Because of the delay in the dedication, both the Masonic Lodge and Order of Eastern Star received a special dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Michigan to meet in the new building prior to its dedication.

The building was completed for eighteen thousand dollars, and was owned by a group of stock holders, all of which were Masons.⁶²¹ The completed building was described as three stories, with a full basement, and hidden fourth floor that served as a storage attic. The first-floor storefront was trimmed in copper and featured prism glass windows. The first commercial tenant was Baxter’s Department Store, formerly located at 2 South Washington Street. The upper floors were occupied by the Masons. The second floor contained a club room, dining hall, and restrooms; featuring paneled ceilings and stenciled walls. The third floor housed the lodge room, including an amphitheater encircled by a corridor “set off by oak pilasters.”⁶²² The lodge room was touted for its electrical system, which was noted for having the same type of dimmer used in the Detroit Opera House.

The Masons and Eastern Star continued to meet in the new building through the 1960s, despite the 1957 fire that damaged the building, resulting in removal of the third-floor meeting hall and attic.⁶²³ As of 2017 Masonic Lodge 84 held meetings in Lake Orion, and was no longer associated with their original building.⁶²⁴

Another fraternal order that met in downtown Oxford was the Knights of Pythias. The organization was conceived by Michigan-native Justus H. Rathbone from Eagle Harbor, Keweenaw County.⁶²⁵ During the Civil War, Rathbone saw a need to create a sense of unity and brotherhood between the North and South. Rathbone formed the Knights of Pythias ritual based on the ancient Greek story of the friendship between Damon and Pythias, which happened to have been a story studied by President Lincoln. Rathbone presented the idea to President

⁶¹⁷ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1909, 3.

⁶¹⁸ “Impressive Masonic Ceremonies to Mark Dedication of Oxford’s New Temple,” 20 June 1913, 1.

⁶¹⁹ “Oxford Masonic Lodge Celebrates Centennial 1956,” 27 February 1957, 4.

⁶²⁰ “Oxford Masonic Lodge Celebrates Centennial 1956,” 27 February 1957, 4; “Oxford Eastern Stars Date to 1900 over Tunstead Building,” 27 February 1957, 6.

⁶²¹ “Impressive Masonic Ceremonies to Mark Dedication of Oxford’s New Temple,” 20 June 1913, 1.

⁶²² “Impressive Masonic Ceremonies,” 1.

⁶²³ “Fires take their toll on businesses” *Oxford Leader*, 3 June 1976, D4.

⁶²⁴ “Lodge Info, Oxford Lodge No. 84,” Michigan Masons.

⁶²⁵ “Knights of Pythias Here in ’89, Sisters in ’02,” *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 5.

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Lincoln, who was impressed and recommended that Rathbone and his colleagues request an organizational charter from the U.S. Congress. Their request was granted and the first Pythian Order was established in Washington, D.C. 1864.⁶²⁶

The Oxford chapter of the Knights of Pythias was established in 1889 by a group of nineteen men, known as Oxford Lodge No. 108.⁶²⁷ A second Pythian order for women, the Pythian Sisters, was founded May 20, 1902.⁶²⁸ The local Pythian Order's mission, or as they called it, their "highest purpose," was "the elevation, the happiness, the betterment of mankind."⁶²⁹ To carry out their mission, the Order sponsored children's clubs and athletic teams, a public speaking contest for high school students, and a variety of other community projects, including "Christmas baskets for needy families, flood relief, disaster relief, war relief, and other relief for needy persons."⁶³⁰

The Pythian Sisters had a lengthier mission statement, they were organized

...with the sincere desire of promoting the moral, mental and physical elevation of its members; cultivating a spirit of Fraternal Love which shall permeate and control their daily lives; ministering in all ways the wants of the sick, distressed or needy; watching at the bedside of the dying, paying the last and tribute of love and respect to the dead, comforting and providing for the widow in her afflictions and daily exemplifying in every possible way the Golden Rule.⁶³¹

The Oxford Temple No. 60 of the Pythian Sisters carried out their mission in several ways. They established a relief fund for members in need, as well as an Educational Loan Fund for any young person who wanted to attend college. The Sisters also made contributions to funds to assist those suffering from polio and provided support to veterans hospitals.

A history of the Pythian organization in Oxford noted that the Knights and Sisters originally met "above Grove's Store," which at the time, included the buildings at 9 and 11 South Washington Street. In 1926, the organization outgrew its original space and moved to a new meeting room on the second floor of the Meriam building. The so-called Pythian Castle Hall included partition walls made by Do-Hikey Folding Door Company, which enabled the entire lodge room to be opened for a large dance floor.⁶³² The Knights and Sisters remained in this location until 1974, when they relocated to the Veterans Building at 28 North Washington.⁶³³

⁶²⁶ "Knights of Pythias," 5.

⁶²⁷ "Knights of Pythias," 5.

⁶²⁸ "Knights of Pythias," 5.

⁶²⁹ "Knights of Pythias," 5.

⁶³⁰ "Knights of Pythias," 5.

⁶³¹ "Knights of Pythias Here in '89, Sisters in '02," *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 5.

⁶³² "K of P's to Open New Hall April 15," *Oxford Leader*, 2 April 1926, 1.

⁶³³ "Top Pythian officer from Oxford in '53," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, E2.

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Research did not reveal when the Knights of Pythias stopped meeting in Oxford. A lack of newspaper documentation indicates that the organization may have quietly died out. A review of the online directory for Knights of Pythias lodges indicates that there are no active lodges remaining in the state of Michigan.⁶³⁴

Another fraternal organization in downtown Oxford was the Knights of the Maccabees (KOTM); an organization with strong ties to Michigan. The KOTM was founded in London, Ontario in 1878, established to care for widows and orphans.⁶³⁵ Overtime, the KOTM expanded their programming including providing life insurance to its members.⁶³⁶ The KOTM grew quickly, with branches in all Canadian provinces, and several states, by 1880.⁶³⁷ The KOTM grew faster than its leadership could manage. In 1880 it held a meeting to reorganize the management structure, which resulted in the separation of American and Canadian Maccabee organizations. Ultimately, Michigan leaders held a strong position in organization, organizing the Great Camp of Michigan to lead the “tent” branches in the communities. In 1881 the Michigan legislature passed Act 143, which provided for the incorporation of “subordinate tents of the Knights of the Maccabees of the World.”⁶³⁸ The Great Camp was first in Port Huron and later in Detroit, serving as the headquarters for the KOTM.⁶³⁹ Membership remained particularly large in Michigan, with one-third the total membership residing in the Wolverine state.⁶⁴⁰

In early 1891, Knights of the Maccabees Lodge No. 293 was established in Oxford.⁶⁴¹ Initially the lodge only accepted men as members, but on April 25, 1891, a women’s “hive,” known as Ladies of the Maccabees, was organized.⁶⁴² A charter for the Oxford Maccabees, presumably both men’s and women’s branches, was drawn on December 10, 1891.⁶⁴³ At that time the club included thirty-six members. Together, the two local installations were known as Empire Hive No. 69. The first meetings were held “above the dime store,” presumably at 9 or 11 South Washington Street, where the Knights of Pythias had met as well. Another source notes that the Maccabees met on the second floor of a beanery on the east side of South Washington (not extant).⁶⁴⁴ By 1909 the Maccabees and the Masonic Lodge were sharing the hall on the third

⁶³⁴ “Lodge Websites.” The Pythians, <http://pythias.org/index.php/lodge-websites>, accessed 19 June 2018.

⁶³⁵ Knights of the Maccabees (KOTM), *Historical Sketches of the Ancient and Modern Knights of the Maccabees*, (Port Huron, Michigan: Huronia Printing Company, 1889), 19.

⁶³⁶ “Maccabees.” Argus Foundation, http://www.stichtingargus.nl/vrijmetselarij/maccabees_en.html accessed, 22 May 2018.

⁶³⁷ KOTM, *Historical Sketches*, 19.

⁶³⁸ Knights of the Maccabees of the World, State of Michigan Legislative Council, 1881, (11 May 1881), Amended (19 April 1982).

⁶³⁹ KOTM, *Historical Sketches*, 21; “Maccabees & Ladies of the Maccabees.” Phoenixmasonry Masonic Museum and Library, <http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/masonicmuseum/fraternalism/maccabees.htm>, accessed 19 June 2018.

⁶⁴⁰ Phoenixmasonry, “Maccabees & Ladies of the Maccabees.”

⁶⁴¹ “Oxford Maccabees Start in 1891 with 36 Members. *Oxford Leader*, 27 February 1957, 2.

⁶⁴² “Oxford Maccabees, 2.

⁶⁴³ “Oxford Maccabees, 2.

⁶⁴⁴ Young, *Northeast Oakland County*, 60.

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floor of the Tunstead Block.⁶⁴⁵ Meetings were held there for several years, however by 1957, the organization was meeting in the Veterans Building, 28 North Washington.⁶⁴⁶

Research did not reveal when the Maccabee Lodge stopped meeting in Oxford. In 1961, the KOTM shifted its focus from the fraternal order to its insurance endeavors, becoming a mutual life insurance company.⁶⁴⁷ The KOTM retained some of the fraternal organizations for its long-time members; however, research has not revealed any such lodge practicing in the twenty-first century.

In addition to fraternal orders, veterans' organizations also met in downtown Oxford. This includes the Oxford Veterans Association, the American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. One building in downtown Oxford was repurposed specifically for the veterans' organizations, the Veterans Memorial (commonly referred to as the Veterans Building), at 28 North Washington Street. The facility was established by the Oxford Veterans Association in 1951.⁶⁴⁸ Planning for the hall came about at the close of World War II, when the association accumulated seven thousand dollars for the construction of a "suitable memorial building." Additional funds were raised, totaling fifteen thousand dollars, but it was still not enough for the organization to build a brand-new building. The owner of 28 North Washington, Eugene Meagher, allowed the association to purchase the house with the cash at hand and a small mortgage. The Veterans recognized that their membership was going to increase in the coming years, as servicemen and women came home from the Korean Conflict. The association felt a memorial in the form of a building would be both honorific and useful to veterans, as well as community organizations who were able to share the building. In 1980 the building was purchased by Oxford Township, which used it as a community center; the Veterans Memorial Civic Center.⁶⁴⁹ The township retained ownership until 2015 when it was sold to HomeGrown Brewing and became a micro-brewery and restaurant.⁶⁵⁰ Other organizations that used the building included the Maccabees, Knights of Pythias, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The American Legion is an organization chartered by Congress in 1919 to provide service to veterans and their communities, after returning from World War I.⁶⁵¹ The Oxford chapter, was established September 2, 1919.⁶⁵² Known as the Walter Fraser Post 108 of the American Legion, the chapter was named in memorial of World War I Veteran, PFC Walter W. Fraser of Oxford,

⁶⁴⁵ Sanborn, *Oxford, Oakland County, Michigan* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1909), 3.

⁶⁴⁶ "Oxford Maccabees, 2.

⁶⁴⁷ "Maccabees." Argus Foundation, http://www.stichtingargus.nl/vrijmetzelarij/maccabees_en.html accessed, 22 May 2018.

⁶⁴⁸ "Veterans buy McVey property for Memorial," *Oxford Leader*, 1 July 1976, C9.

⁶⁴⁹ C.J. Carnacchio, "Business is Brewing: Oxford's 1st craft brewery hosts open house, gets rave reviews." *Oxford Leader*, 5 April 2017.

⁶⁵⁰ C.J. Carnacchio, "Business is Brewing: Oxford's 1st craft brewery hosts open house, gets rave reviews." *Oxford Leader*, 5 April 2017.

⁶⁵¹ "History," The American Legion, <https://www.legion.org/history>, accessed 23 April 2018.

⁶⁵² Walter Fraser Post 108, "Post History," <http://www.americanlegionoxford108.org/index.php?id=2>, accessed 2 March 2018;

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who died on February 9 of that year.⁶⁵³ The Legion's auxiliary arm was organized in 1925.⁶⁵⁴ The Post's membership was comprised of men and women who served in the Armed Forces, while the auxiliary was comprised of women who were close relatives to Post members. The Legion's auxiliary raised money and supported projects concerning veterans' hospitals and women and girls of veteran families. Historically the organization met successively in the non-extant Fire Hall, the third-floor of the Tunstead Block, and later the Veterans Memorial Building.⁶⁵⁵ As of 2017 the post had a meeting hall at 130 East Drahn Road, a short distance south of the historic district.⁶⁵⁶

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) was established in 1899 as a national nonprofit to advocate for veterans' rights and services.⁶⁵⁷ Research did not reveal when the Oxford chapter was organized. However, the local auxiliary arm, VFW Auxiliary 4036, was established November 8, 1953.⁶⁵⁸ The auxiliary sponsored boy scout troops, and supported the VFW National Home for children of veterans, and various other civic and charitable organizations. During the 1950s the VFW and Auxiliary met in the Tunstead Building, and later moved to the Veterans Memorial building. As of 2017 the organization was known as North Oakland VFW Post 334, with meetings held at Christ the King Church, 1550 W Drahn Road, southwest of the historic district.⁶⁵⁹

Two other buildings in downtown Oxford have had meeting halls on their upper floors. Sanborn maps note a "Hall" on the second floor of 4 North Washington in 1926 and 1937; and a "Lodge Hall" on the second floor of 35 North Washington Street between 1926 and 1945.⁶⁶⁰ Background research did not reveal what organizations met in these buildings. The most likely organization to have met in the Lodge Hall at 35 North Washington Street were the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, which were active in Oxford during those years.⁶⁶¹

Architecture

The contributing buildings in the Downtown Oxford Historic District were constructed between the 1870s and the late 1960s. The district includes distinctive commercial buildings that range from one to three stories high, with some of the larger buildings divided to include as many as four storefronts. Stylistically, the buildings represent popular late nineteenth through mid-twentieth century architectural trends and design elements. These buildings are significant as

⁶⁵³ Walter Fraser Post 108, "Post History."

⁶⁵⁴ Alicemae Everett, "Girls State one of many projects supported by Legion Auxiliary 108," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D19.

⁶⁵⁵ Alicemae Everett, "Girls State one of many projects supported by Legion Auxiliary 108," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D19.

⁶⁵⁶ Walter Fraser Post 108, "Post History."

⁶⁵⁷ "Who we Are," Veterans of Foreign Wars, <https://www.vfw.org/about-us>, accessed 23 April 2018.

⁶⁵⁸ "VFW Auxiliary supports Post and has Projects of its own," *Oxford Leader*, 6 May 1976, D20.

⁶⁵⁹ VFW Post 334, "North Oakland VFW Post 334," <https://sites.google.com/site/vfw334/home>, accessed 2 March 2018.

⁶⁶⁰ Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1926, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1937, 2; Sanborn, *Oxford*, 1945), 2.

⁶⁶¹ "Imlay City, Romeo Visit Oxford Lodge," *Times Herald*, Port Huron, Michigan, 30 October 1923, 8.

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examples of architectural styles, application of materials, methods of construction, and the architects who designed them. Architectural styles in downtown Oxford include: Italianate, Queen Anne, Neo Classical, Art Deco, Art Moderne, Colonial Revival, and Mansard. Brick masonry is the principle exterior material in the district, and its application is expressed in decorative features that are reflective of the buildings' period. Two architects are known to have worked in the district, Charles A. and William J. Fisher, brothers who were based in nearby Pontiac.

The earliest extant commercial buildings in downtown Oxford embody characteristics of the commercial Italianate style. The Italianate style reached popularity during the 1860s. Residential Italianate architecture popularity faded during the 1880s, however, commercial Italianate lasted well into the 1890s.⁶⁶² The period of popularity of the Italianate style aligns with Oxford's period of economic growth following the railroads entering the community.

Among the earliest and most prominent of these Italianate-style buildings is the commercial block at 2 North Washington Street, built circa 1875-1885. As the corner building in the northeast quadrant, the large building includes two storefronts on both Washington and Burdick Streets. The two street-facing elevations of the building are punctuated by numerous windows on both the first and second stories. The second story windows retain Italianate ornamentation, including pediments on the Washington Street façade, and segmental arches on the Burdick Street elevation. The building is further adorned by decorative brickwork; including pilasters between the historic storefronts and corbeled cornice modillions. The parapet on the south elevation includes brick panels and dentils.

Other prominent Italianate-style buildings include 1 South Washington (constructed circa 1880); the Tunstead block at 3 South Washington (constructed 1879), and the Hackett Block at 5 South Washington (constructed 1879). The building at 1 South Washington expresses the Italianate style in its tall windows with ornamental hoods and sills, and decorative cornice. The window hoods on the façade have a segmental arch shape which are adorned by keystones and etched patterns. On the north elevation the windows are set into segmental arched openings. In keeping with the Italianate style, ornamental details are added to the cornice. A decorative brick frieze with layers of corbeling that includes dentils and saw tooth patterns is located within the cornice. This decorative brickwork is continued on the Burdick Street (north) elevation. Above the brick frieze is wood paneling and a row of small brackets. Broad brackets with fluting frame the outside edges of the parapet. The added wing on the north elevation mimics the Italianate-style elements of the original building, including brick dentils on the cornice, and window hoods that feature keystones and dripstones.

The Tunstead and Hackett Blocks, at 3 and 5 South Washington respectively, were erected in 1879 following a fire.⁶⁶³ The Tunstead Block is three stories and constructed of a light orange

⁶⁶² "Italianate Blocks," University of Vermont Landscape Change Program, https://www.uvm.edu/landscape/dating/commercial_architecture/italianate.php, accessed 13 April 2018.

⁶⁶³ "Fire at Oxford." *Detroit Free Press*, 24 December 1878, 4.

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brick, while the original section of the Hackett Block is two stories and constructed of a red brick. Although the buildings differ in height and color, their shared construction history has resulted in their exteriors have similar stylistic details. Both buildings have identical ornamental hoods surmounting the tall narrow window openings on the upper floors. These hoods are arched and feature keystones and decorative etchings. The buildings also share decorative brickwork including pilasters with recessed panels that enframe the building's upper stories and an arched brick architrave below the cornice and parapet. Both buildings are surmounted by decorative cornices, however the cornice on the Tunstead Block is more ornate. The Tunstead Block cornice features an arched center and decorative moldings, including thin brackets, square panels, and dentils. In contrast, the Hackett Block, has a simpler cornice, with more delicate brackets.

The Hackett Block has a circa 1890-1895 addition, which is built in the Queen Anne style. The addition, historically known as 7 South Washington, consists of one fenestration bay appended to the south side of the façade. Despite being narrow in width, the addition is highly ornamental, as is illustrated by its round turret. The turret, positioned over the first story door, has a fluted base with a pendant drop. The walls of the cylindrical turret include a wood-paneled bulkhead below three windows surmounted by multi-light stained glass transoms, with decorative mullions between. The turret also features decorative brick corbeling including checkered panels, dentils, and modillions. A small bracketed cornice is positioned below the steep conical roof. The Queen Anne-style turret adds height and dimension to an otherwise an otherwise symmetrical facade.

A second Queen Anne-style building is located at 2-10 South Washington; the corner building of the southeast quadrant. The building, which historically housed a number of large general stores, department stores, and drug stores, was built circa 1905. Although predominately stylistically Queen Anne the building also includes Neo-Classical elements. The Queen Anne elements are expressed through the irregular massing and fenestration configurations. The storefronts on the north half of the west-facing facade have an off-center recessed entry while the two southern storefronts are and regularly spaced. The northwest corner of the building is cutaway and a cylindrical oriel window is placed on the second story, creating the illusion that the building extends into the intersection. Mirroring the corner oriel is a canted oriel in the southern-most bay of the façade. In keeping with the Neo-Classical style, the building includes classical ornamentation. The first story storefront fenestration bays are divided by brick pilasters with Doric capitals. Windows on the second story include ornamental arches with keystones, and a fan-light molding above the individual windows. The building has a tall parapet, which, based on historical photographs, appears to have been reconstructed. However, the parapet retains the original form. The base of the parapet is wrapped by a dentiled cornice on the 2-6 South Washington section of the building. The cornice is pedimented at the center of the building and raised at the cutaway corner to accommodate a modern clock.

In 1922-1923 the only Art Deco-style building in downtown Oxford was constructed, the Oxford Savings Bank, 1 North Washington. The building is positioned at the southern corner of the northwest quadrant, and has become a landmark in the community for its architectural design and decorative elements. Unlike most of the other downtown buildings, which are clad

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principally in brick, the former bank building has an Indiana limestone veneer that incorporates numerous Art-Deco stylistic elements and ornamentation.⁶⁶⁴ Among the building's features are a corniced parapet, architrave, and a watertable. Detailed decorative stonework is concentrated around the fenestration, including pilasters that rise from the ground to the architrave and terminate in Art Deco-inspired straight-lined details, accented by fleur-de-lis. Bas relief sculptures provide decorative lettering with the bank's name, founding date, and date of building construction. The most iconic decorative feature is the sculptural element on the southeast cutaway corner and facing the intersection. At the base of the corner is a carved urn and pedestal that forms a base for abas relief pilaster. The pilaster is carved in a geometrical pattern of straight lines and cascading triangles. The pilaster is surmounted by a three-dimensional carved eagle perched on a shield. Above the eagle, a broad platform extends from the parapet and serves as the base for a bronze flag pole which is surmounted by a five-point star medallion finial.

The Oxford Savings Bank building replaced a commercial block that was constructed by Alfred Hagerman in 1900.⁶⁶⁵ The old Hagerman Block included a saloon with a marble bar and tiled floor; local historians suspect that both were repurposed in the interior of the new bank building.⁶⁶⁶ Other interior fixtures and the vault door were purchased from the Pontiac Commercial Bank.⁶⁶⁷ Heating and plumbing in the building was provided by one of the bank's founders, and local hardware merchant, W. J. Tunstead. Other elements purchased for the new bank included additional marble for the interior, and a bronze front door. Woodwork in the building was primarily mahogany, which was used extensively in the cashier's office. A women's rest room include oak tables and chairs and Southern pine moldings. The entire building was erected for thirty-five thousand dollars.⁶⁶⁸

Few buildings were constructed in Oxford during the late 1920s and the 1930s. In the 1940s the first elements of modernism entered the community. Based on historical photographs, storefronts were altered and modernized during this period. Renovations include metal or enameled paneling, new display windows, and new signage. Many of these alterations have subsequently been reversed or replaced.

In 1942, the Kroger grocery store relocated from the Italianate-style commercial block at 1 South Washington to their new Art Moderne building at 15 East Burdick Street. Chain stores, such as Kroger, could afford to implement commercial modernism because the cost of designing stores could be spread more broadly.⁶⁶⁹ The Oxford Kroger building is a modest one-story Art Moderne building has a flat roof and a façade with horizontal lines created by recessed brick. The horizontal emphasis is reinforced by a string of display windows centered on the façade. Art Moderne buildings are often distinct in a downtown the age of Oxford, with the horizontality of

⁶⁶⁴ Inventory Form: Oxford Savings Bank Building. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁶⁶⁵ Inventory Form: Oxford Savings Bank Building. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁶⁶⁶ "Oxford Savings Bank" Working File, SHPO.

⁶⁶⁷ "Oxford Savings Bank" Working File, SHPO.

⁶⁶⁸ "New Home, Oxford Savings Bank to Open Mon.," *Oxford Leader*, 19 January 1923, 1.

⁶⁶⁹ Treau, *Signs Streets and Storefronts*, 134.

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the design details form a strong contrast to the vertical emphasis of the adjacent Italianate and Queen Anne buildings.

Although modernism was a new and popular movement in architecture in the mid-twentieth century, it was not the only style expressed in new construction. The building at 18 South Washington was erected circa 1957 in the Colonial Revival style. The one-story building mimics the Cape Cod form, which was especially popular in residential buildings. The façade is surmounted by a tall pent roof that creates the illusion the building has a side-gable roof from the street. An additional character-defining feature are the three front-gable dormers. Even the nine-light wood-sash windows and the paneled bulkhead walls convey stylistic details associated with Colonial Revival buildings.

In 1967 the Oxford Mall was erected at 28 South Washington Street. Unlike all the other commercial buildings in Oxford, the shopping center is oriented perpendicular to the main road to front on a pedestrian walkway that passes north of the building and provides connectivity between Washington Street and the parking lot to the east. The two-story building was erected with the Mansard style that was popular during the final third of the twentieth century.⁶⁷⁰ Unlike the nineteenth century French-inspired Second Empire-style buildings with Mansard roofs twentieth century Mansard buildings are more restrained. The use of the Mansard roof was seen in the twentieth century as not only as a traditional feature, in modern applications, it provided a convenient place to hide heating, ventilation, and air conditioning mechanical equipment. True to the style and period of its construction, the Oxford Mall embraces different building materials than earlier buildings present in the downtown. The mall building avoids traditional brick in favor of wood shingles, stucco, and a stone veneer watertable. The developers of the Oxford Mall embraced the popular style, which was selected in part because of its similarity to the newly constructed Civic Center at 22 West Burdick Street.⁶⁷¹

Shopping centers and malls came into popularity across the country in the mid-twentieth century. They were automobile-centric in design and typically included a number of stores under a single roof. Shopping centers of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as 28 South Washington, removed distinctive architectural details from individual storefronts to have a cohesive look for the full building.⁶⁷² This approach to both design and commerce is illustrated in the Oxford Mall. None of the storefronts stand out and the single street-side sign employs consistent font and colors for multiple businesses operating within the mall. The sign itself is an architectural feature, mimicking the main building with its own mansard roof.

Many of the buildings in downtown Oxford are not high-style but rather examples of popular architecture that express the stylistic trends of their time through decorative elements and materials. Brick, whether it was load-bearing masonry walls or an applied veneer, was the principal construction material in downtown Oxford from the last quarter of the nineteenth

⁶⁷⁰ "Mansard." docomomo_WEWA, http://www.docomomo-wewa.org/styles_detail.php?id=30, accessed 24 April 2018.

⁶⁷¹ "Rebuilding of burned stores announced." *Oxford Leader*, 16 February 1967, 1.

⁶⁷² Treau, *Signs Streets and Storefronts*, 242.

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century through the mid-twentieth century. The Late Victorian-era commercial blocks utilized brick to add decorative elements to the façade, particularly on the upper floors and parapets.

One of the best examples of this practice is illustrated by the circa 1898 building at 23 North Washington Street. The second story façade windows are topped by brick hoods, and a belt course of soldier course diamond point brick extends below the hoods. Above the window hoods the same diamond point brick technique is used to create a series of short vertical stripes. A dentilated cornice extends below the brick parapet that features three panels of corbeling; each displaying a checkered pattern created by placing half bat bricks in each course at a 45-degree angle.

Less ornate buildings at 27 through 33 North Washington Street display consistency in design elements that indicate they were likely constructed by the same mason. Although the building storefronts have been altered numerous times the second story façade features remain mostly intact. All four of the buildings include a distinctive brick corbeling pattern on the second story windows. Stepped corbeling is placed at the base of the windows, resting on the sills, for 29, 31, and 33 North Washington. A similar stepped brick technique is applied to the ear moldings on the window hoods of 27 and 29 South Washington. All four buildings feature a band or corbeling across the cornice, however 27 and 29 South Washington have identical T-patterned brick. Also of note is a wood cornice that surmounts the parapet of 29 South Washington, which features a paneled frieze, dentils, and consoles.

In the early twentieth century the ornate brickwork begins to fade in favor of an emphasis on straight vertical and horizontal lines. The transition is clearly illustrated at 7 North Washington Street, which includes ornate brickwork on the 1897 original portion of the building and much simpler brickwork on the 1920 addition. The original building includes numerous Late Victorian brick details, such as corbeled arches, panels, saw-tooth bricks, and a terra cotta bands in saw-tooth or beaded patterns. In contrast, the West Burdick elevation features only ornate brick patterns within the parapet. Recessed panels of brick are embellished with an inset H-pattern. A dentiled cornice extends across the parapet above the panels.

The Meriam Building at 10 North Washington was erected in 1912. Between the building's façade fenestration bays are brick pilasters, which rise to the top of an exceptionally tall parapet, which gives the illusion of a third story. A belt course of soldier bricks, with every other brick slightly recessed, extends across the façade at the base of the parapet. The parapet, which is taller at the center fenestration bay, includes a frieze of saw tooth brick, and corbeled modillions forming a cornice.

The 1921 Haddrill Block, 7 North Washington, also has a tall brick parapet that creates the illusion of a third story or large attic space. Within the parapet, brick work creates vertical and horizontal bands through the use of soldier courses corbeled bricks. Additional detail includes projecting brick crosses and a basketweave band course. Brickwork is also utilized in window surrounds and as a band course with recessed and corbeled soldier courses between windows.

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A few modern non-contributing buildings are in the historic district. The most prominent, because of its size, is the building at 23 South Washington. The building echoes earlier design motifs with a brick and concrete/stone exterior, regular fenestration pattern with storefronts on the first story and broad arched windows on the second story, as well as a roof encircled by a decorative cornice. Other buildings have been remodeled to reflect earlier styles, such as 40 South Washington, which resembles a vernacular commercial building from the early twentieth century, and 18 North Washington, which is a modern interpretation of Romanesque style.

While there were likely many architects and skilled artisans and builders who contributed to the fabric of downtown Oxford, few are well-documented in available sources. The exception is the Oxford Savings Bank, 1 North Washington, which was designed by brothers Charles A. and William J. Fisher. The brothers owned and operated an architecture and engineering firm in Pontiac, Michigan.⁶⁷³ The Fisher Brothers both attended the University of Michigan and began practicing architecture together in 1895.⁶⁷⁴ They designed many buildings in Oakland County, including schools, houses, and commercial buildings. Some of their most prominent creations are located in the county seat, Pontiac. These include the Fisher Block, a six-story office building erected in 1913; the Waite Building, that was in 1915 the largest department store and office building in the city.

Construction of the Oxford Savings Bank building was led by contractor Myron B. Hungerford, also of Pontiac.⁶⁷⁵ Prior to locating in Pontiac, Hungerford was a contractor in Traverse City.⁶⁷⁶ He continued working as a contractor in Pontiac as late as 1955, although research did not reveal other buildings he erected.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷³ Inventory Form: Oxford Savings Bank Building. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁶⁷⁴ Charles Moore, *The History of Michigan*, Vol. 2. (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1915), 1020-1021.

⁶⁷⁵ Inventory Form: Oxford Savings Bank Building. SRHS, original on file, SHPO.

⁶⁷⁶ "Michigan News Brevities." *Lansing State Journal*, 10 June 1918, 5.

⁶⁷⁷ R. L. Polk, *Polk's Pontiac (Oakland County, Mich.) City Directory 1955*. (Detroit: R. L. Polk & Company, 1955), 267.

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Oxford Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Oakland, MI
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

2. Geographical Data

Acres of Property 7.17

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

Oxford Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Oakland, MI
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☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 N | Easting: 314740.6982 | Northing: 4743935.1743 |
| 2. Zone: 17 N | Easting: 314781.1208 | Northing: 4743959.3269 |
| 3. Zone: 17 N | Easting: 314859.442 | Northing: 4743967.4249 |
| 4. Zone: 17 N | Easting: 314917.7585 | Northing: 4743891.2993 |
| 5. Zone: 17 N | Easting: 314931.7397 | Northing: 4743842.0601 |
| 6. Zone 17 N | Easting: 314979.7813 | Northing: 4743757.523 |
| 7. Zone 17 N | Easting: 314881.1534 | Northing: 4743695.6267 |
| 8. Zone 17 N | Easting: 314858.4339 | Northing: 4743729.7948 |
| 9. Zone 17 N | Easting: 314793.0729 | Northing: 4743844.4964 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Oxford Downtown Historic District boundary begins at the point (pt) where the sidewalk and municipal parking lot meet, aligned with the lot line between 35 and 37 N Washington. From here, the boundary extends ENE following the said (sd) lot line, extending to the centerline of N Washington. Thence (th) the line extends SSE along the centerline of N Washington to a pt aligned to the N lot line of 28 N Washington. Th ENE along sd lot line 235.5 feet (ft) to a pt aligned with W lot line of 18 N Washington. Th SE at an 87-degree angle, essentially aligning to the sidewalk/parking lot line, to the N lot line of 15 E Burdick. From here, the boundary extends E and S along the N and E lot lines of 15 E Burdick, to a pt at the centerline of E Burdick Street. From here the boundary extends E to a pt aligned with the E lot line of 10 E Burdick, th S along sd property line 102.6 ft to a pt aligned with the E lot line of 18 S Washington, th SE at a 135-degree angle, following the sidewalk/parking lot boundary. Th the boundary extends at a 136-degree angle for 237 ft to a pt aligned with the S lot line of 40 S Washington. The boundary continues SW along sd lot line to a pt at the centerline of S Washington. From sd pt, the line extends S 9.7 ft to a pt aligned with the S boundary of Centennial Park, th continues SW 174.6 ft. From this pt, the boundary turns NNW, along the W park boundary, to a pt at the juncture of the NW corner of the park and sidewalk S of 23 S Washington. From this pt, the boundary extends WSW to the SW corner of the property boundary for 23 S Washington. Then, the boundary turns 90-degrees to extend NNW along the W lot line of the properties that front on the W side of S Washington to a pt at the centerline of W Burdick Street. The line extends 30.3 ft W along sd centerline before turning 119-degrees and continues NNW for 343.8 ft to the pt of beginning.

Oxford Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Oxford Downtown Historic District boundary was drawn to encompass the historic commercial core area and exclude the adjacent modern commercial development and parking lots. The boundary encompasses essentially a two-block area of commercial buildings that front on North and South Washington Street, and the adjacent commercial buildings on East Burdick Street.

North and south of the district's boundary are modern or highly altered commercial buildings; beyond which are residential resources. East and West of the district's buildings on North and South Washington, as well as East Burdick, are paved parking lots that form a buffer between the commercial district and adjacent residential neighborhoods, and are excluded from the historic district.

3. Form Prepared By

name/title: Scott Slagor, Architectural Historian and Elaine H. Robinson, Senior Architectural Historian

organization: Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.,

street & number: 3215 Central Street

city or town: Dexter state: Michigan zip code: 48130

e-mail: ehrobinson@chg-inc.com

telephone: (734) 253-2789

date: 11 May 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Oxford Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Oakland, MI

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of ____.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.