



O-Town News - March 12, 2021

What a difference a year makes! This week marks one year since the beginning of shutdown in Ohio related to the pandemic. Now, this week, those ages 50+ will begin receiving vaccines if they so choose. A constant throughout the past year has been people looking out for one another. We thank the many workers in hospitals, schools, the municipality, agencies, churches, farming, businesses, basic services and so many more who have worked tirelessly the entire year with few or no breaks.

Challenges remain for many individuals, households, and businesses. Even while new opportunities are beginning to appear and activities resume, unmet needs continue. Some of those needs are for fresh volunteers throughout the community as well as assistance for those seeking vaccine appointments. To that end, we hope the information below is helpful.

COVID VACCINE HOTLINE AND TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Need a COVID-19 Vaccine?

Need help signing up or with transportation?

Call the City of Oxford at (513)-524-5238.

A City staff person will assist you with making an appointment and will arrange transportation for you, if needed.

Eligibility requirements include:

- * Resident of the Talawanda School District
- * Age 60+
- * Or other health reasons listed by the Ohio Dept. of Health for Phase 1B (we will help you figure this out).

The vaccine will be given by the Butler County General Health District at the Butler County Fairgrounds. When you call the City of Oxford Vaccine Hotline, the information you will need to provide includes: *your name, *date of birth, *phone number, *address, and *transportation need. **This new assistance program is a partnership between the City of Oxford, Butler County General Health District, Oxford Seniors and Butler County Regional Transit Authority.**

CDC ISSUES INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FULLY VACCINATED PEOPLE

(source: CDC website 3/8/2021)

Key Points

This is the first set of public health recommendations for fully vaccinated people. This guidance will be updated and expanded based on the level of community spread of SARS-CoV-2, the proportion of the population that is fully vaccinated, and the rapidly evolving science on COVID-19 vaccines.

For the purposes of this guidance, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 two weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or at least 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson).

The following recommendations apply to *non-healthcare* settings.

Fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing.
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing.
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic.

For now, fully vaccinated people should continue to:

- Take precautions in public like wearing a well-fitted mask and physical distancing.
- Wear masks, practice physical distancing, and adhere to other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease, or who have an unvaccinated household member who is at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease.
- Wear masks, maintain physical distance, and practice other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households.
- Avoid medium- and large-sized in-person gatherings.
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations.

Travel: At this time, CDC is not updating travel recommendations and requirements. They remain as posted on 2/16/2021. Travel increases your chance of getting/spreading COVID-19. CDC recommends you do not travel at this time. Delay travel to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

For more information and the full guidelines call 1-800-232-4636 or visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

CITY OF OXFORD ANNOUNCEMENTS

News from the City of Oxford, March 1, 2021

As reported in the 2020 City of Oxford Annual Report, Oxford City Council Identified Top Priorities:

Economic Development
Climate Sustainability
Housing for Everyone
Service Excellence
Town & Gown Relations

(“Town” refers to local/non-academic entities; “Gown” refers to university)

Despite challenges, the City continued made progress in 2020 moving toward Long-Term Goals:

- * Provided funding for a cold shelter and transitional housing program.
- * Created a new Climate Action Task Force
- * Began a Green House Gas Inventory and Climate Resilience Assessment
- * Installed new bike lanes on Chestnut Street
- * Planted 89 trees
- * Opened Phase 2 of Oxford Area Trails from Peffer Park to SR73
(10’ wide paved path 1.53 miles long)
- * Awarded \$1M for renovation of vacant Elm Street Building for future use as a Workforce and Innovation Center
- * Completed a comprehensive housing study to guide future work
- * Construction of a new road: Lake Forest Drive (off of SR27 South)
- * Created transient guest lodging (Airbnb) rules

The report included highlights of what’s coming in 2021:

- *A new City website
- *More grant applications for trails
- *New pedestrian safety projects on High Street
- *Progress toward residential housing developments
- *New targets and goals to address climate change
- *Progress toward a new Comprehensive Plan
- *Proposals for community solutions leading to improved equity

AMTRAK IN OXFORD – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CATALYTIC CHANGE

(Source: 3/9/2020 City of Oxford, Website)

The City of Oxford has been actively working toward growing its multi-modal transit operations for several years and has been working to bring an Amtrak stop to Oxford since 2017. The opportunity for an Amtrak stop in the Oxford community has huge potential as an economic growth mechanism and can serve as a catalyst toward achieving the climate goals of the community.

The City has worked with Amtrak to identify locations for a possible stop, shared potential ridership numbers from the City and Miami University, and has made a financial commitment to help bring Amtrak to the Oxford community.

Both Miami University and the City are joint partners in this initiative and have each pledged \$350,000 toward bringing an Amtrak stop to Oxford for a total of \$700,000 pledged and a commitment to seek additional grant funds if needed.

About Amtrak and Oxford, Ohio:

The City of Oxford and Miami University have been working together to bring an Amtrak stop on the Cardinal Line that travels from Washington DC to Chicago, IL. The Amtrak Cardinal Line already goes through Oxford but does not stop.

In 2017, Amtrak confirmed that our resident and MU student population may warrant a stop with an Amtrak Platform (unstaffed platform with a ticket kiosk). Amtrak asked the City to proceed with planning and funding but did not formally commit to coordination with CSX and the stop.

In January 2021, Amtrak called the City to enquire about funding allocated and the state of plans and shared their growth and expansion plans. In February 2021, the Oxford City Council passed a Resolution supporting Amtrak and their growth plans and encouraged a stop in Oxford.

Multimodal Planning and Existing Funding:

The City of Oxford is working with Miami University and the Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA), and Amtrak, with the goal of building a multi-modal (bike-car-bus-train) facility this area.

- **Car:** This location (former high school just off of Chestnut Street) is home to an existing large parking lot

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- **Bus:** BCRTA has **\$11.4M** in funding and is beginning the process of building its new bus terminal. This terminal will also house a waiting area and restrooms for possible additional use by future Amtrak customers.
- **Rail:** The City and University have each committed \$350K toward the proposed Amtrak project for a total of **\$700K** allocated toward the proposed project.
- **Bike/Pedestrian** the City's Oxford Area Multi-Use Trail will connect to this area and there is \$10M allocated toward the entire trail project.

Planned Next Steps:

The City of Oxford is in the process of hiring a vendor to develop a formal cost and construction design estimate for the Amtrak platform. With this formal cost estimate and a commitment from Amtrak, the City may decide to either fully fund the Amtrak platform or seek grants if the costs exceed local funding ability. *Before the City can move forward with building the platform, it will require Amtrak's formal support of the program and coordination with CSX to allow for the stop.*

VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE WORLD (and Oxford) GO ROUND

Many local organizations rely on volunteers to help keep programs and services going. Some volunteer jobs are a one-time need while others are on-going. Below are some of the current Oxford area volunteer needs:

The Age-Friendly Oxford Initiative (AFO)

As an all-volunteer organization, AFO can use many talents. At this time, we are in need of volunteers to help:

- * figure out what computer technical skills and assistance we need (MAC devices) and how to get them.
- * cross-check several small data bases for duplicate names and addresses
- * help with letter writing for Ohio Rails and other public transit in Butler Co.
- * update a listing of local church names, addresses and contact person

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Butler County (BBBS)

BBBS is the oldest, largest and most effective youth mentoring organization in the United States and serves children ages 7 through 18. The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Butler County is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships. These relationships have been found to have direct and measurable impact on children's lives.

In Community-Based Mentoring, the traditional BBBS practice, Bigs and Littles get together on their own to share fun activities they both enjoy. The program allows flexibility in the time, place and frequency that suits the schedules of the Big and Little. On average, this is generally twice a month, for two or three hours at a time. All ages of mentors, or “Bigs” are needed. For more information call (513) 867-1227 or e-mail Carolyn Winslow at Carolyn.winslow@BBBSbutler.org

McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital/TriHealth Hospital

McCullough Hyde/TriHealth Hospital needs a volunteer to work periodically throughout the year with the Case Management Coordinator to update a data base of community resources for patients for when they are discharged from the hospital. The volunteer can work from home. Telephone skills and data entry skills are needed and on-boarding through the hospital’s volunteer orientation is required. Contact Sherry Callahan (513) 524-5492.

Oxford Seniors, Inc.

Oxford Seniors, Inc. has re-reopened with daily lunch, weekly activities and on-going transportation services. Additional volunteers are not needed at this time but are anticipated for later in the Spring as participation and activities increase.

Primary Health Solutions, Vaccine Clinics – are seeking volunteers to assist at ***vaccination sites*** at their five locations around Butler County, including one held in Oxford. Volunteers will assist with way-finding, questions, and any hospitality needs while individuals are waiting before and after their vaccines. Volunteers must be 18 year of age or older, need not be vaccinated, but will need to strictly follow all safety protocols such as wearing masks (over mouth *and* nose) and maintaining a minimum of 6 feet distance. Approximately 200 people will come through the clinic in a four-hour period. Sign up at info@myprimaryhealthsolutions.org or call (513) 454-1466.

Talawanda Oxford Pantry and Social Services (TOPPS) – The mission of TOPSS is to alleviate hunger and provide nutrition information to the families and individuals in need within the Talawand School District. TOPSS has need for volunteer ***Curbside Shopping Assistants*** to take lists from clients in their cars and fill the order in the pantry. TOPPS prefers volunteers to commit to one day a week on an on-going basis, if possible. Curbside shopping hours are Monday and Tuesday 3-6pm and Saturday Noon-4pm.

UPDATES

Church Street Social is the new name for Books & Brews restaurant at 107 E. Church St. It's the same location, food and games for families and kids. A new fireside feature is installed on the patio for outdoor relaxing/dining.

Oxford Department of Parks and Recreation releases its *new Activity Guide* on Monday, the web address is www.cityofoxford.org/flipbook. If you have a smart phone, you can view the entire guide on your phone. If you need a guide mailed to you, contact Oxford Parks and Recreation and they will be happy to send you a copy at your home address (513) 523-6314 or stop by the TRI building at 6025 Fairfield Road to pick up a copy.

Oxford Community Art Center's Enchanted Winter continues through March 21. There is still a week to enjoy the lights and creativity.

Oxford Farmers Market remains open from 9-noon on Saturdays in the Oxford Uptown Park at 2 East High Street.

Spring Street Treats has reopened their newly remodeled location with a new walk-up window as well their drive-thru. 321 W. Spring Street; 11am – 10pm daily.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS, AND LEARNING EVENTS

Oxford Area PFLAG Viewing of "Gender Revolution"

Oxford Area PFLAG provides support, advocacy and education for the parents, families, friends and allies of the LGBTQ+ community. PFLAG hosts an online community meeting at 7:00pm 2nd Monday of each month. The March meeting featured a clinical psychologist speaking on Hospice Care and allies for LGBTQ individuals at the end of life. The April topic will be a panel discussion on the National Geographic documentary "Gender Revolution." PFLAG has an active Facebook page, an e-mail listserv with approximately 250 members and sponsors the Rainbow Reading Program, donating books on diversity and inclusion to Oxford area schools. For more information, please contact oxfordareapflag@gmail.com or call Sabrina at (513) 523-8100 for meeting specifics and membership opportunities.

NAACP Oxford and Coalition for a Healthy Community, Oxford Area MENTAL HEALTH TOWN HALL

On Tues. March 30, at 7:00 p.m. the Oxford Chapter of NAACP and the Coalition for A Healthy Community, Oxford Area are teaming up to host a Mental Health Town Hall. This Town Hall is open to all community members and organizations in the Oxford area and Talawanda School District. The presenters will be a diverse panel of local health providers. Participants will learn about the resources and providers available in the Oxford area. They will learn how to access mental health help when needed and how to advocate for mental health in the community. The forum will be conducted in a virtual on-line format.

*To join by ZOOM, use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/97141766737>.

*A dial-in telephone option is also available for those without access to internet. *To join by telephone dial (US) +1-669-900-9128.

Questions? Call 513-461-4055.

O-Town News is happy to share information from many sources. Please let us hear from you if you have news, announcements, and events to share.

info@agefriendlyOxford.org, or P.O. Box 206, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

