

# Oxford Mayoral Candidates

*Q1. Explain how, if elected, you will work to promote sustainability in AT LEAST ONE of the following areas of opportunity identified in the EPA's Planning for a Sustainable Future: A Guide for Local Governments. For more information, download the guide here.*

*Transportation*

*Land Use Planning*

*Biological Conservation and Open Space Preservation*

*Solid Waste Generation and Recycling*

*Energy, Air Quality and Climate*

*Protecting Water Quality and Ensuring Future Supply*

*Green Building*

*Green Construction*

*Green Procurement*

## **David Eady:**

I have spent my career (28 years!) promoting sustainability in government, commerce, and communities. This work has included developing policy recommendations, creating strategic plans, forging partnerships, and demonstrating technologies that touch on each of the areas of opportunity identified in EPA's Guide for Local Governments. For example, one initiative involved facilitating sustainability planning and program development at 10 military installations and five statewide National Guard organizations within the United States and Europe. In another effort, I collaborated with a military installation and a real estate development company to secure funding that enabled us to demonstrate net-zero energy housing concepts with military family housing.

In my civic involvement, serving on the Oxford Planning Commission for 12 years and then on the Oxford City Council for the past eight years, I consistently promote sustainability principles and practices in our planning initiatives and governing decisions. For example, I chaired the Planning Commission when we sited and designed the new city hall, and we insisted on incorporating sustainable design criteria, such as energy efficiency, to minimize environmental impacts and operating costs while providing a healthy workspace and meeting place. Most recently, I successfully advocated to remove a discriminatory tax on technologies, such as solar panels, so that homeowners could reduce their energy costs and carbon footprint by installing these technologies.

If elected Mayor of the City of Oxford, I will continue to work with city council, Oxford College, civic leaders, and others to develop and implement a sustainability plan for our town. Our land use and transportation planning will continue to emphasize greenspaces, like Asbury Street Park and George Street Park, and to enable multiple ways to move about our town, especially

## Oxford Mayoral Candidates (continued)

by walking and biking as healthy alternatives. We will continue to transition our unopened streets and rights of way into thriving linear parks and natural areas, with native species and blooms to attract pollinators; and we will continue to explore ideas like community gardens and edible landscapes.

I pledge to continue advocating for renewable energy sources, which has proven cost-competitive with market rates for non-renewable resources like natural gas and coal, as part of our electric utility offering; and I will look for ways the city government can encourage and enable our citizens to invest in energy conservation and distributed power generation (e.g. solar roof panels) to reduce energy burdens and increase resiliency.

As mayor, I would continue efforts to reduce waste generated by city operations, with a goal to achieve net zero waste in city operations, and to enable more collection and diversion of recyclable and compostable materials generated by residents of the city as well. The city has taken steps to reduce toxic chemical use that might threaten the health of our community—humans, plants, animals, insects, and other living things. We've placed bat houses around town to promote these natural mosquito catchers, and we've eliminated mass, indiscriminate spraying for mosquitos around town from the "fog truck."

These are just a few examples of ways I have and will continue to promote sustainability in Oxford. We've made some good strides, but there are many more opportunities for us to pursue. As mayor, I will continue to work with the city council; Oxford College administrators, faculty, staff, students, and other partners to find ways we can make our town a more sustainable community.

## Oxford Mayoral Candidates (continued)

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**Mike Ready:**

Did not respond.

## Oxford Mayoral Candidates (continued)

*Q2. Through its electric and/or gas utilities, your city is in the energy business. What steps should be taken to ensure that your city's reliance on utility profits avoids a conflict of interest when it comes to promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in your city?*

**David Eady:**

One strategy to avoid conflict is to reduce dependence on electric utility revenue to cover revenue shortfalls in other accounts. For Oxford, General Fund revenue (annually) has fallen short of expenditures all but two of the past 13 years, with an average annual shortfall over \$300K for the five years leading up to Fiscal Year 2019. Oxford's Electric Fund revenue (annually) exceeds expenditures by over \$600K on average each year. Therefore, the city has been able to offset the General Fund deficit with the Electric Fund surplus with a transfer of funds from one account to the other—very typical and appropriate for a city to do. Overall, Oxford's total annual revenue from all accounts has exceeded annual expenditures, on average, more than \$600K per year, which affords the city opportunity to invest in capital improvements, like new parks and sidewalks, and infrastructure maintenance projects (e.g. road repair and resurfacing).

Electric utility rates are established based on anticipated costs associated with the utility itself and additional revenue to cover anticipated expenditures in other city accounts. For Oxford, the utility rate equation includes at least \$300K in General Fund costs that the city routinely offsets with Electric Fund revenue. Alternatively, the city could look for ways to reduce expenditures associated with the General Fund or increase revenue from property taxes, while (in both cases) reducing the excess revenue generated in the Electric Fund. With an increase in dependence on property tax revenue, along with a reduced tax embedded in electric utility rates, the city is incentivized to adopt policies and make investments that elevate property values. This is a departure from the current revenue structure that needs electric power consumption to stay the same or possibly increase to enable the city to achieve its financial objectives—like paying police and investing in infrastructure—so there is little incentive to promote energy conservation among electric utility customers.

Oxford currently is exploring ways to increase the amount of renewable energy the city purchases, as part of its energy resource mix, and how to offer its utility customers a renewable energy option through grid-managed power.

## Oxford Mayoral Candidates (continued)

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**Mike Ready:**

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