

# **APPENDIX E**

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

### **2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council**

## **Background**

ITCTC staff received comments throughout the Long Range Transportation Plan update process. Numerous ITCTC partners, municipal staff, transportation providers, NYSDOT staff and other ITCTC members provided input in development of the LRTP draft. The ITCTC collected public comments during two widely advertised public meetings held on November 20, 2013 and October 1, 2014. In addition, members of the public were encouraged to telephone, mail and email comments to the ITCTC office. A web site for the LRTP update was established early in the update process and was maintained with the latest drafts of the evolving plan (see [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc)). This appendix included comments from these sources.

In addition, this appendix includes transportation related comments generated from the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan outreach process which included two public meetings on June 19, and additional meetings on June 23, 24, 25 and 26, 2014. Transportation related comments were generated in seven different topic areas for the County Comprehensive Plan: Transportation, Healthy Communities, Housing, Development Patterns, Energy and GHG Emissions, Water Resources and Natural Features. This is not surprising since, as has been explained in the LRTP, transportation issues affect and are affected by activities and initiatives in many other sectors of our community and economic activity.

Another source of comments was the Consensus Conference for Transportation of Older Adults in Tompkins County. This one day event was sponsored by the Tompkins County Office for the Aging (COFA) on August 25, 2014.

All comments are available for review at the ITCTC office – 121 E. Court St., Ithaca, NY (607-274-5570).

## **Transportation Related Comments Generated From The 2035 LRTP Development Process**

The public comments received by the ITCTC are listed below along with a response. Responses may address individual comments or related groups of comments. The comments are compiled by topic area based on their content. Comments that were similar in content were combined and received a single response. In those cases individual comments are identified. Some comments were not legible or not applicable to the LRTP. Those comments were not included below. In general the comments are presented in their original form. Some minor editing was made by ITCTC staff to improve readability.

For purpose of this report the comments generated by the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan outreach process are labeled '[TC]', those originating from the Consensus Conference for Transportation of Older Adults are labeled '[COFA]'. Otherwise the comments listed came from the LRTP public meetings and other communications with the ITCTC.

Comments were compiled into transportation related topic areas based on the contents of comments themselves. Some comments may be found in more than one topic areas. The topic areas are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| – Rail Services                                 | – Shared Transportation (beyond public transportation) |
| – Public Transportation-Funding & Service       | – Infrastructure Management                            |
| – Transportation Innovation                     | – Location Specific Issues                             |
| – Freight and Truck Movement                    | – Transportation Planning                              |
| – Active Transportation (bicycling and walking) | – Safety   |
|   | – Environmental  |

Public comments are listed below along with a response. Responses may address individual comments or related groups of comments as shown.

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### **Rail Service:**

- Revive the train station.
- Consider how closure of the power plant could threaten local rail service and the salt industry [TC]
- Rail service: although currently dominated by salt transportation, we should explore the potential for passenger service [TC]
- Are trains an option? Joint use (of rails?) [TC]

**Response RS:** The 2035 LRTP for Tompkins County does not address this form of passenger service within its time frame. Initiatives such as the restoration of rail passenger services require State and National commitment. New York State does not currently have a vision for intercity passenger service that includes Ithaca. The State rail plan focuses on

maintenance, restoration and expansion mostly along currently established rail corridors. No specific mention is made of the rail line serving Tompkins County. For a complete description of the NYS Department of Transportation's Rail Plan you may go to their web site at: [www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/planning-bureau/state-rail-plan](http://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/policy-and-strategy/planning-bureau/state-rail-plan).

The ITCTC is supportive of the existing rail line and its role in freight movement. The rail right-of-way is recognized as an important transportation resource that may play a more important role in freight movement in the future depending on freight movement strategies supported at the Federal and State level.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy G: Encourage expansion in the use of rail for freight movement.

**Public Transportation-1-Funding:**

- Transit Authority to raised funds for public transportation.
- Tax or bond to raise funds
- Need to provide adequate funding to TCAT and improve service in order to help meet the plan's reduction in drive alone trips.
- TCAT budget issues and need for subsidies – when people can't easily get to the bus they won't ride it and people don't seem to be willing to pay the full costs of a bus ride so that TCAT won't need subsidies [TC]
- Need other funding mechanisms for public transportation (ex. car share membership model) [TC]
- Can't afford to have duplicate systems (school bus and public transit) [TC]
- Programs/incentives to encourage increased TCAT ridership [TC]
- We need to develop sustainable local funding, including from municipalities, for transportation services. In addition to supporting larger providers (e.g., TCAT, Gadabout), we need to sustain other existing services (e.g., van services such as offered by Lansing, GIAC and Titus Towers, wheelchair accessible taxi) [COFA].
- Projects for Implementation: Based on the information provided, TCAT does not have any projected costs for programs that are already underway/ongoing but are in need of additional funds in the future. Some of this information probably could be pulled from TCAT's operating plan.

**Response PT-1:** This series of comments address the funding challenges faced by TCAT. The ITCTC describes the public transportation system, in particular TCAT, on Chapter 4. It is recognized the TCAT provides exceptional service considering the size of Tompkins County. Currently the agency is working at capacity and it is important for all stakeholders to help address the fiscal challenges of providing public transportation in a community that has high expectations for service and where there is substantial unmet demand. The ITCTC will work collaboratively with other community partners to help advance solutions in this area. The LRTP is overtly supportive of public transportation as an important component in its stated goals to reduce drive alone trips, reduce automobile dependency and increase mobility options for all travelers in Tompkins County. Maintaining existing transit infrastructure, as well as expanding and promoting new transit technologies and programs, are key implementation areas of the Action Plan in the LRTP Ch.3. In response to the last comment in this section projected cost estimates were added to the listed projects.

Comments received by COFA also express concerns with funding for the elderly and other populations with limited transportation access. The ITCTC through the Human Services-Public Transportation Coordinated Plan process identifies needs and opportunities for programming projects in this area.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

INTEGRATION, Goal I: To develop an integrated transportation system for Tompkins County that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users.

Policy A: Promote the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods through the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system, including public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and networks, infrastructure and operations planning, construction and maintenance practices.

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy A: Promote alternatives to drive-alone automobile travel including: pedestrian, bicycle, ride share, car share, paratransit, vanpools, public transit and other.

Policy C: Include planning for bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities in all bridge and road projects.

Policy J: Encourage the provision of safe and comfortable environments on vehicles and at shelters, stops and stations for public transit employees and passengers.

Policy L: Support implementation of facilities and programs that encourage a modal shift to transit such as: improved bicycling and pedestrian access to transit facilities, park and ride facilities, coordination with car share services, coordination with regional public transportation providers, etc.

### **Public Transportation-2-Service:**

- Demand for more service in rural areas.
- There is a need to find ways that people in rural areas can make a connection to and from TCAT buses. [COFA]
- Scheduling for rural transit trips needs greater flexibility.
- There is limited service in areas outside the city in evenings
- Need space to store more bicycles on and in buses.
- Need storage space in buses – particularly those routes serving retail areas.
- Help TCAT “right-size” their fleet to match vehicles to routes. [TC]
- Park and ride for TCAT. [TC]
- Express busses stop only on main roads which creates challenges. [TC]
- Suggestion for more informal pick up points, especially in more rural parts of the county (examples given of buses in India and ski buses). [TC]
- Need to keep TCAT healthy and expand its service, should have smaller buses and provide links to park and rides. [TC]
- Buses – promote to young people – grow up with using public transportation [particularly middle schoolers so they can learn to use them as an alternative to driving once they get to be driving age]. [TC]
- Provide passes to middle school students. [TC]
- Provide more bus shelters, and find a creative way to fund them. [TC]
- Install bike racks at bus stops for “Bike and Ride”, and find creative way to fund them. [TC]
- On west hill we are worried about bus service keeping pace with all the new developments being proposed. Some residents say by the time the Trumansburg run reaches the city limits it is already full.

**Response PT-2:** This series of comments provide service requests and operation ideas for TCAT. TCAT is responsible for designing and implementing public transportation services and operations in Tompkins County. Route alignments, vehicle assignments, and enhancements like Park and Ride are carefully managed by TCAT staff. Currently the county has a network of 13 well used rural park and ride lots (see Figure 4.9). TCAT is aware of the need to provide bicycle and pedestrian links and accommodations at their bus stops and park and ride facilities. The ITCTC will work with TCAT and other community partners to advance this concept.

The ITCTC acknowledges the importance of the travel issues raised in these comments and has forwarded your comments directly to TCAT for their evaluation and consideration of possible actions within the services that they provide.

### **Transportation Innovation:**

- Need electric vehicle charging stations, powered by solar energy. [TC]
- Need more car sharing, using electric vehicles rather than the ones currently available. [TC]
- Spoiled by cheap transportation is there some way to provide incentives? (Like plastic bags in Austin) [In Austin, people were charged for using plastic bags in stores, can we do something similar for transportation in Tompkins County?]. [TC]
- Park and Ride – we don’t have it in many places. [TC]
- Improve inter-city bus travel. Upgrade the inter-city bus station. Coordinate with TCAT to allow people to debark at specific locations (e.g. Green and Seneca Streets).
- Return of trolley cars (Cornell)
- Account for true cost (total cost) of less than optimal transportation (including cost borne by individuals). [TC]
- Electrical system for transportation, heating, etc. should be generated from renewables. [TC]
- Don’t support fossil fuels. [TC]
- Use crowd sourcing to raise private funds for specific projects.
- We should explore the feasibility of partnering with existing commercial transportation during off hours (e.g., limos, school buses) to increase services, and engaging businesses and medical providers to help pay for transportation provided to their clients. [COFA]
- Ways might be found to expand insurance/liability coverage so that organizations that have vehicles can allow them to be used, not only for the members/clients, but also by others when not in use. There may be an opportunity for a

county-wide program that would distribute the cost of insurance, fuel, etc. and allow more volunteers to use their own cars without affecting their private auto insurance coverage. [COFA]

- A centralized system may be a better way of handling the array of requests for transportation. With the fast pace of technology change, we need to evaluate how older adults are accessing information and availing themselves of new applications and explore ways of expanding use of new transportation options that involve technology (e.g., Zimride). [COFA]

**Response TI:** This series of comments related to the potential of innovative solutions in transportation. This includes innovation in technologies used but also in financing mechanisms and improved project implementation procedures. The LRTP recognizes the potential of innovation in the transportation sector. Many of the plan policies call allude to future technology, planning and collaboration innovations in order to address the transportation challenges in the planning area. Language in the financial plan in Ch.4 recognizes the potential of innovative fundraising strategies such as web based crowd sourcing and engaging businesses to help finance the local share of federally funded projects. Expanding and promoting new technologies and programs is one of the key implementation areas of the Action Plan in the LRTP Ch.3. The Action Plan also includes specific language addressing this issue: *“Much work is being done in the transportation sector to bring innovative technologies into use. Numerous communication technology applications are in different level of development and implementation. Vehicle and infrastructure innovations are constantly being developed. The ITCTC and its partners need monitor and take advantage of new technologies and program concepts that can serve the Tompkins County area.”*

#### **Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

INTEGRATION, Goal I: To develop an integrated transportation system for Tompkins County that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users.

Policy C: Encourage the use of existing and evolving technologies to improve transportation system coordination, convenience and reliability for all users. Examples include advanced fare collection technologies, smart phone based apps for transportation information, bus location and next bus information for customers, transit prioritization at traffic signals, etc.

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy E: Support programs, strategies and technologies that result in reduced roadway congestion and delay.

Policy N: Monitor and evaluate development of new technologies, fuels and services in the transportation sector that may have potential for local applications.

CONNECTIVITY, Goal IV: To maintain and improve transportation networks to enhance safety, multimodal and intermodal connectivity and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

Policy J: Encourage the development and maintenance of advanced communication networks that can facilitate the use of communication technology as a substitute to travel.

ENVIRONMENT, Goal VI: To work progressively towards a transportation system that will have zero-net negative impact on the environment.

Policy A: Encourage transportation initiatives that reduce or minimize the production of ozone precursors, small particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and other greenhouse gases.

Policy B: Promote alternative fuels and clean air strategies, which can be implemented in public fleets and private vehicles.

Policy C: Support the development of a transportation system that is responsive to changes in energy availability.

Policy F: Support the replacement of the bus fleet with progressively cleaner and more energy efficient bus technologies.

#### **Freight and Truck Movement:**

- Look at truck wear and tear on our roads, enforce road restrictions on trucks, and especially consider the impact on rural roads. [TC]
- Consider adverse impact on roadways by increased truck traffic if fracking is approved in Tompkins County.
- Question: can limits to truck traffic be implemented on state roads in light of the recent Simeon’s tragedy? [TC]
- Increase fines on violations by trucks to create a safer environment. [TC]
- Address loud truck brakes in communities through better enforcement. Signs are put up, but State role or local role to enforce? State poo-poo complaints, saying they don’t have a deci-meter. [TC]
- Issue: State roads with truck traffic go through villages. [but rerouting business as well if providing a bypass] [TC]
  - Reroute trucks away from villages?
  - Safety and maintenance issues.
  - Salt dust.

**Response F&T:** This series of comments relate mostly to the impacts of truck traffic. While recognizing that trucks are a necessity of the current freight transportation system, the LRTP also understands the safety and nuisance aspects of that dependency. LRTP Chapter 4 includes a section on intermodal/freight in the Systems Integration section. LRTP policies are supportive of increased use of rail for freight movement as one long term strategy to reduce the number of trucks on our roads. The ITCTC will work with local partners to help facilitate implementation of safety strategies for trucks.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy F: Support, in coordination with freight haulers, programs and strategies that enhance the movement of freight throughout the Ithaca-Tompkins County metropolitan area by increasing safety and efficiency and minimizing the negative impacts of freight transport.

Policy G: Encourage expansion in the use of rail for freight movement.

CONNECTIVITY, Goal IV: To maintain and improve transportation networks to enhance safety, multimodal and intermodal connectivity and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

Policy A: Consider safety as the base component of all infrastructure design decisions with an end objective of reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.

Policy D: Work with State, County and local municipal officials to maintain the safe and efficient operation of all components of the existing transportation system.

Policy I: Support the development of an integrated countywide system of preferred truck routes in Tompkins County.

**Active Transportation (bicycling and walking)**

- Positive ways of promoting biking and walking experience
- Need to improve sidewalks in rural areas. Is there an opportunity to replicate the city's sidewalk improvement district strategy?
- Are federal funds available for sidewalk work?
- Is there a way to get some federal resources into the City's sidewalk program?
- Is there a vision for improving sidewalk networks in the County?
- Improve pedestrian safety on roads with safe shoulders (green paint mentioned) and crossings [TC]
- Multi-modal networks – walk, bike, bus [TC]
  - But increases commuter time
  - Subtracting from family time
- Trails in “the flats” if safe can be used like CWT, Austin (TX). [TC]
- Electric bicycles. [TC]
- Cultural/political challenge around building sidewalks (Hanshaw, Warren Rd. examples). The planning process needs to engage everyone, including people who would benefit from sidewalks vs. just drivers and adjacent property owners. The planning process should also provide education about the benefits of sidewalks. [TC]
- Establish a policy that whenever new roads are put in they should include sidewalks and bike paths. [TC]
- Elevate non-motorized transportation to the same level as motorized transportation in community and funding decisions. [TC]
- Bike safety on major roads (main streets and highways) is a barrier. Need bike lanes and sidewalks. [TC]
- Need room on roads for bikes and pedestrians. [TC]
- Importance of bike lanes for travel. It is difficult to travel on narrow bike lanes.
- Identify and develop dedicated bike/walk trails (separate from auto traffic) as spokes from Ithaca hub for safe bike/foot recreation and commuting. [TC]
- Safe places for pedestrians and bicyclists to use roads (wide shoulders, paint sides of roads green for traffic calming)
- Good signage on trails, like South Hill Recreation Way. [TC]
- Property values increase along Recreation Way after built. [TC]
- Provide direct support to property owners who allow public access to their land/trails that go through their property.
- Provide sidewalks with housing. Especially important for seniors and children. [TC]
- Install bike racks at bus stops for “Bike and Ride”, and find creative way to fund them. [TC]
- Concerns about crime limit walking. Walking needs to feel safe. [TC]

**Response AT:** This series of comments refer issues with active transportation, primarily defined by bicycle use and walking. Generally, comments are supportive of active transportation. Most are suggesting possible strategies to consider in order to expand bicycling and walking. The LRTP does not include support for any specific treatment or strategy as a method to increase active transport. Instead the LRTP offers full support for any ‘appropriate’ program, strategy or project that will strengthen active transportation. Bicycling and walking are two modes that can be enhanced through local efforts and thus offer the opportunity for expansion. In particular, bicycling has the greatest potential for expansion since so little has been done over the years to provide safe, dedicated facilities. Walking in Tompkins County, particularly in the urbanized area, is a mature mode with good facilities and relatively high use. Expanding the modal share of active transportation is an important component of the multi faceted LRTP strategy to reduce drive alone trips in Tompkins County in order to minimize the negative impacts of private automobile dependency.

Specific active transportation initiatives listed in the LRTP include: complete streets network (Ch.4, Figure 4.16, Ch.5) and Tompkins Priority Trails Strategy (Ch.5, Appendix B). Ch. 5 also includes bike/pedestrian promotion and bike/pedestrian facilities planning and improvements and projects for implementation. Expanding and promoting active transportation is one of the key implementation areas of the Action Plan in the LRTP Ch.3. There are a number of federal surface transportation funding lines that are available for bicycle and pedestrian projects, for example Transportation Alternatives Program, Safe Routes to School, Surface Transportation Program-flexible funds. Over the years there have been numerous projects that included primary or secondary active transportation benefits. The ITCTC will continue to work with local partners to continue to provide for active transportation facilities.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

INTEGRATION, Goal I: To develop an integrated transportation system for Tompkins County that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users.

Policy A: Promote the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods through the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system, including public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and networks, infrastructure and operations planning, construction and maintenance practices.

Policy B: Support implementation of municipal bicycle plans and initiatives such as the Bicycle Boulevard Plan of the City of Ithaca.

Policy D: Study, develop, and implement feasible transportation projects and programs that provide options to and reduce dependence on the private automobile.

Policy H: Promote participation in promotional and educational activities to encourage the increased use of walking and bicycling as modes of transportation.

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy A: Promote alternatives to drive-alone automobile travel including: pedestrian, bicycle, ride share, car share, paratransit, vanpools, public transit and other.

Policy B: Encourage increased bicycle use for different trip purposes, and work to increase the skill levels of bicyclists.

Policy C: Include planning for bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities in all bridge and road projects.

Policy D: Promote adding multimodal enhancements to the ITCTC designated Complete Streets network for the Ithaca urbanized area.

Policy L: Support implementation of facilities and programs that encourage a modal shift to transit such as: improved bicycling and pedestrian access to transit facilities, park and ride facilities, coordination with car share services, coordination with regional public transportation providers, etc.

Policy M: Encourage innovative collaborations and coordination of public and private resources to increase the availability and effectiveness of alternative transportation modes.

PROXIMITY, Goal III: To achieve land development patterns that enable the efficient provision of multimodal transportation services.

Policy F: Encourage review of land use plans and site designs to ensure the accommodation of pedestrian, bicycle, shared transportation and public transportation links and facilities.

Policy G: Promote compact, walkable, mixed-use land development patterns for communities in Tompkins County.

Policy H: Encourage innovative and best practice solutions in car and bicycle parking management.

CONNECTIVITY, Goal IV: To maintain and improve transportation networks to enhance safety, multimodal and intermodal connectivity and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

Policy B: Improve the existing and proposed road network to safely accommodate bicycling, pedestrian and public transportation uses.

Policy C: Advance the planning and development of a coordinated countywide system of bicycle routes.

Policy G: Utilize sidewalks, multiuse trails and paths, pedestrian bridges, roadway shoulder improvements, and other pedestrian facilities to provide needed pedestrian network links.

Policy H: Maintain a multiuse trail network plan for Tompkins County and provide assistance and incentives for its implementation.

#### **Shared Transportation (beyond public transportation):**

- How can we organize carpools? [TC]
- Expand Zimride type of services – ridesharing
- People in rural areas and many others in the county, especially the increasing numbers of those age 85+, need improved, affordable access to regional medical services. We need to explore more regional and multi-county solutions so that residents in rural areas can get to locations in neighboring counties

**Response ST:** Depending on the definition shared transportation can include public transportation, taxis, van pools, and car share and ride share services. All of these options are currently available in Tompkins County. The latter two, ride and car share, are rapidly evolving services. New business formats and strategies are being developed and mobile technology continues to grow and expand in reach and capability. The ITCTC along with Way2Go, Ithaca Carshare and the Tompkins County Rideshare Coalition are actively monitoring and adapting the existing services to be able to provide the best possible options for Tompkins County within financial and capacity limitations. Expanding and promoting shared transportation is one of the key implementation areas of the Action Plan in the LRTP Ch.3.

#### **Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

PROXIMITY, Goal III: To achieve land development patterns that enable the efficient provision of multimodal transportation services.

Policy F: Encourage review of land use plans and site designs to ensure the accommodation of pedestrian, bicycle, shared transportation and public transportation links and facilities.

#### **Infrastructure Management:**

- Real controls in real time (traffic light technology)
- [Traffic] Light timing, train timing. [TC]
- On demand control of traffic lights at school crossings
- Possibility of not maintaining roads (Danby discussing) [Note: don't try to maintain all roads to the same level, a concept being discussed in Danby]. [TC]

**Response IM:** The first three comments above all address the management of traffic light technologies for safety and efficiency. The principal traffic light system in Tompkins County is in the City of Ithaca. The City has been involved in a federally funded upgrade of their traffic signal hardware. Future phases will allow of integrated management of the system. The ITCTC has been supportive of these efforts and recognizes the numerous safety, air quality and congestion management benefits of having a responsive traffic signal system. The ITCTC will continue to work with the City of Ithaca and NYSDOT in future traffic signal enhancement efforts. The System Intergration section of Ch.4 of the LRTP includes a section of transportation system management (TSM), which is a series of strategies, including traffic signal optimization, that seek to improve transportation network operations through management of the infrastructure.

We respect local decisions and challenges to manage transportation infrastructure. A key component of the Action Plan in Ch. 3 is 'Maintain Existing Critical Transportation Infrastructure and Systems'. The ITCTC will work with local and state partners to help identify and maintain the critical components of the transportation networks.

#### **Transportation Planning-1-Multijurisdictional Coordination:**

- Strengthen communication between the County and Towns on road infrastructure planning to address disconnect. [TC]

**Response TP-1:** The ITCTC supports and encourages enhance communication between all transportation sector project sponsors. The Tompkins County Highway Division coordinates its work and its municipal partners. In addition, there are numerous agreements between municipalities and the county and the state to address road maintenance tasks. The LRTP

chapter 5, 'Projects for Implementation', includes an initiative for the ITCTC to assist in intermunicipal local resource sharing.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

PROXIMITY, Goal III: To achieve land development patterns that enable the efficient provision of multimodal transportation services.

Policy D: Promote intergovernmental cooperation and legislative initiatives that coordinate land use and transportation infrastructure.

**Transportation Planning-2-Populations with Special Transportation Needs:**

- In rural areas, no connection between places except roads – promote shared use [of roads]. [TC]
- Support access to playgrounds, walking, and elderly mobility in housing developments. [TC]
- Encourage privately run van transport to get kids to after school activities by researching its economic viability and model programs, including using volunteer drivers. [TC]
- Address the need to have an effective and efficient program for medical trips.
- We need to look at the needs of students, working families, and low income folks and ask the question: “Where do their needs intersect with the needs of older adults?” and explore economies of scale to meet common needs. [COFA]
- We need to support aging drivers and those retiring from driving. [COFA]
- People in rural areas and many others in the county, especially the increasing numbers of those age 85+, need improved, affordable access to regional medical services. We need to explore more regional and multi-county solutions so that residents in rural areas can get to locations in neighboring counties. [COFA]
- We need to insure that transportation needs are being considered when new housing is being developed for older adults.[COFA]
- Page 4.7 (e. Coordinated Plan): This section references the coordinated plan as a requirement. I think it would be beneficial to the audience to know where this federal requirement is listed and which program(s) the requirement applies to.
- The recent funding of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects in Dryden, Trumansburg, and Ithaca highlight SRTS as an interest in the County. These projects connect schools to neighborhoods with bike and walk friendly transportation networks. It would be helpful to have direct language that supports these initiatives in the LRTP. This language could be leveraged in grant applications and other fundraising efforts related to SRTS. Here is suggested policy language: Support schools and municipalities in establishing long-term Safe Routes to School programs that provide children with safe and convenient opportunities to walk or bike to school through investments in pedestrian/bike infrastructure, traffic-calming and youth bike and walk encouragement.

**Response TP-2:** The above comments address the needs to different populations – rural, elderly, children/youth. These and other subgroups, such as differently abled persons and those needing to meet their medical needs, have individual needs and place different demands on the transportation system. The ITCTC recognizes the need to support a transportation system that works for all. The need for collaboration is highlighted in the action plan in chapter 3. The LRTP Projects for Implementation include the *Study of Transportation Needs of Mobility Limited Population*. The mobility limited population includes those persons with inadequate access to transportation resources. In general, these include segments of the elderly, disabled, youth and economically disadvantaged populations.

The ITCTC works in coordination with a variety of transportation service providers in the community to ensure that all in the community have access to the transportation they need. This is a work in progress. The Tompkins County Coordinate Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) describes an active and ongoing process for coordination of transportation services for a wide range of human services agencies in the community (see <http://www.tccoordinatedplan.org/> for more information). The ITCTC and its partners seek to implement ideas and best practices to help address local and regional transportation challenges. The LRTP chapter 4 includes a section on the Coordinated Plan and another on collaboration that provide more details. Based on comments, text was added to the plan explaining that the Coordinated Plan is required under the Federal Transit Administration’s program for enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities (Section 5310 grants). Further, federal guidance advises using the coordinated planning process as a best practice for developing mobility management and Job Access operating assistance projects (Section 5307 Urban Formula and 5311 Rural Formula transit programs).

The last comment, relating to SRTS, resulted in the addition of one policy under the Quality of Life section of the goals and policies in Chapter 3 of the LRTP (Goal V, Policy M: Support schools and municipalities in establishing long-term programs

that provide children with safe and convenient opportunities to walk or bicycle to school through investments in pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure and support and promotion efforts).

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

INTEGRATION, Goal I: To develop an integrated transportation system for Tompkins County that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users.

Policy J: Improve the transportation options for non-drivers including seniors, youth, individuals with disabilities and other population groups.

MOBILITY, Goal II: To promote implementation of transportation services, programs and projects that enhance mobility.

Policy M: Encourage innovative collaborations and coordination of public and private resources to increase the availability and effectiveness of alternative transportation modes.

Policy O: Target public resources to increase access to information and mobility for persons living in isolated and underserved areas of the County, low-income populations, seniors, people with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency.

QUALITY OF LIFE Goal V: Develop a transportation system that sustains and enhances the quality of life for Tompkins County residents and visitors.

Policy E: Encourage the provision of programs and facilities that support populations with special transportation needs including: low-income persons and households, seniors, youth and persons with disabilities.

**Transportation Planning-3-Transportation & Land Use:**

- Land is expensive near Cornell, need to identify zones further out with neighbors that will accept development, and link with effective transportation and good developers. [TC]
- How do we define walkable and mixed use? Places with no access to schools are not truly walkable. Have a close school with safe routes should be part of the planning definition for walkable, mixed use. [TC]
- Start with Main Street improvements. Make main streets walkable, attractive, well lit, etc to attract shops. Provide assistance to local communities to know what to do and access resources (Main Street Programs). [TC]
- Cluster housing close to bus lines and other transportation. [TC]
- Require developers to provide sidewalks, foot paths, and bike paths, not only roads. [TC]
- Housing is strongly linked to transportation. [TC]
- Location of affordable housing developments which are away from transportation and services creates challenges, especially for families with children (Overlook as an example). [TC]
- Medical care facilities in proximity to/co-located with housing for seniors should be supported (Lower Marion, PA as model example to research). [TC]
- Is there any particular reason why the scenarios are only completed up to 2030 and not 2035?

**Response TP-3:** The above series of comments relate to the land use regulatory role of local municipalities and its impacts on transportation. The ITCTC recognizes the importance of our urban form and how it affects transportation patterns. There is no question that so called ‘sprawl’ development patterns generate more automobile based trips by reducing or eliminating the feasibility of other modes. Mixed use, usually higher density, development patterns facilitate the use of bicycles, walking, transit and other forms of shared transportation to accomplish many trip needs. Changing development patterns is a long term proposition therefore it is important act now to promote and implement land use regulations that facilitate a broader range of mobility options. Municipalities that are successful will fare better in a future that will demand greater efficiency in the use of transportation resources.

The LRTP chapter 4 includes numerous mentions of land use as it relates to transportation. One the key conclusion of the scenario analysis states that: *In order to achieve a modal shift away from car dependency land use development patterns must take a more efficient form, as described in the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan. This will facilitate the use of transit, walking, bicycling, car pools, vanpools, car sharing and ride sharing. All of these currently available alternatives work best when land uses are integrated and in close proximity.*

In response to the last comment in this section, the ITCT did not develop a new scenarui model for the 2035 LRTP. What is included in the plan is the scenario analysis from the 2030 plan. Development of the 20 year model scenario was a substantial effort 5 years ago and the ITCTC agreed that there had not been sufficient policy, land use or transportation program changes to expect much difference in the outputs from running a new scenario analysis. The ITCTC has plans to acquire the latest emission models from the Environmental Protection Agency and train staff on its use so a new scenario analysis can be included in the next LRTP update.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

PROXIMITY, Goal III: To achieve land development patterns that enable the efficient provision of multimodal transportation services.

Policy A: Integrate transportation concerns and land use planning efforts in Tompkins County in order to protect the reliability of the transportation system through efficient land use development.

Policy B: Encourage the development of land use plans where none exist and assist in the review and update of existing plans.

Policy C: Link transportation investment with local and regional land use planning.

Policy D: Promote intergovernmental cooperation and legislative initiatives that coordinate land use and transportation infrastructure.

Policy E: Consider land use and site design as it relates to efforts to reduce relative number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles of travel.

Policy F: Encourage review of land use plans and site designs to ensure the accommodation of pedestrian, bicycle, shared transportation and public transportation links and facilities.

Policy G: Promote compact, walkable, mixed-use land development patterns for communities in Tompkins County.

Policy H: Encourage innovative and best practice solutions in car and bicycle parking management.

Policy I: Promote trip minimization and increased vehicle occupancy rates.

**Safety**

- Establish safe routes to connect rural and urban areas. [TC]
- Control speed in residential areas
- Need to change culture in the city to reduce speed
- Role of speed enforcement
- Kids playing outside, doesn't feel as safe as it once did – better lighting? Speed bumps? [TC]
- County advocacy for safer State Route road design in communities to increase safety. For example, the crossing distance of Route 96 is very long for a person in a wheelchair. [TC]
- There is an 'Us versus Them' (Bikers versus Vehicles) issue that affects safety on the roads.
- Need to enforce existing laws, recalibrate speed limits, and implement truck restrictions to improve safety. [TC]
- With new development and changes to zoning density, need to pay attention to how they affect safety (ex. Spencer Rd. already unsafe, but if development built to currently allowed densities, the situation is likely to worsen). [TC]
- When you consider transportation issues for your long term plan, I hope you take into consideration the safety of the elderly and families with young children. The parking garages are not exactly user friendly. They can be places of choice for muggings because of their isolation. They can be just as dangerous for small children as other parking lots and busy streets, only more so, since driver awareness is not necessarily the best. It is easier and safer to park on the street. However, intended pay hikes will keep many from even parking on the street, and encourage families and the elderly to go elsewhere.

**Response S:** Safety is one of the overarching goals of the Long Range Transportation Plan as indicated in Vision Statement Goals and Policies in Chapter 3 of the document. Many of the issues in the comments such as changing speed limits, law enforcement and project design issues (such as lighting and traffic calming) are usually handled as the local level during project development or through changes in local policies. The ITCTC recognizes this and offers technical assistance, data and analysis. The ITCTC has access to NY State crash reports and prepares reports and analyses for use by local partners. ITCTC staff also works collaboratively with local agencies, municipalities and civic groups to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety through a variety of projects including development of bike/pedestrian facilities (trails, bike boulevards and bike lanes, etc.) and safe routes to school projects.

**Related goals and policies in the LRTP:**

INTEGRATION, Goal I: To develop an integrated transportation system for Tompkins County that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users.

Policy A: Promote the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods through the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system, including public transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and networks, infrastructure and operations planning, construction and maintenance practices.

Policy B: Support implementation of municipal bicycle plans and initiatives such as the Bicycle Boulevard Plan of the City of Ithaca.

- Policy E: Promote the use of Travel Demand Management techniques in order to achieve objectives such as: 1. reduced traffic congestion; 2. commute cost savings; 3. increase safety; 4. improved mobility for non-drivers; 5. energy conservation and pollution emission reductions.
- Policy G: Support enforcement of traffic laws by facilitating the use of advanced technologies and interagency cooperation.
- Policy K: Work with responsible jurisdictions and agencies to identify and improve high-risk traffic accident areas to ensure a safe environment for users of all modes of transportation.
- Policy L: Support the provision of safe transportation and passenger facilities capable of operating under emergency conditions.

CONNECTIVITY, Goal IV: To maintain and improve transportation networks to enhance safety, multimodal and intermodal connectivity and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

- Policy A: Consider safety as the base component of all infrastructure design decisions with an end objective of reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.
- Policy B: Improve the existing and proposed road network to safely accommodate bicycling, pedestrian and public transportation uses.
- Policy D: Work with State, County and local municipal officials to maintain the safe and efficient operation of all components of the existing transportation system.
- Policy G: Utilize sidewalks, multiuse trails and paths, pedestrian bridges, roadway shoulder improvements, and other pedestrian facilities to provide needed pedestrian network links.
- Policy H: Maintain a multiuse trail network plan for Tompkins County and provide assistance and incentives for its implementation.
- Policy I: Support the development of an integrated countywide system of preferred truck routes in Tompkins County.

### **Environmental**

- Track the volume of gasoline sold in the County to monitor emissions.
- Institute a revenue neutral carbon tax
- Healthy living (the visual experience)
- Environmental Concerns: climate change, decreasing greenhouse gas
- Increase re-vegetation of road ditches after cleaning. Big source of sediment and other contaminants. [TC]
- Sedimentation from ditching – do less, re-vegetate. [TC]
- Gravel roads on slopes are a great source of sedimentation. [TC]
- Work to limit erosion in ditches along roads. [TC]

**Response E:** The above comments relate primarily to air quality and water quality impacts of the transportation sector. Air quality impacts from transportation originate primarily from the use of fossil fuel based internal combustion engines in the vast majority of motor vehicle of all types. The ITCTC is working with the Tompkins County Planning Department in seeking to meet the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan emission goals. The LRTP includes the results of the scenario analysis, Appendix A, which identified the need to address air quality and energy impacts of transportation with a multi-faceted strategy of having lower emission/higher efficiency vehicles, reducing the number of trips, particularly drive – alone trips, promoting active and shared transportation (bicycling, walking, transit, ride share, car share, etc.), encouraging more efficient land use development patterns. Programs and initiatives supporting these actions are included throughout the LRTP. The problem of increased erosion from clearing road ditches is a maintenance related issue that is handles by the different State, County and local agencies with jurisdiction of over the roads. The ITCTC does not play a significant role in these efforts however it recognizes the impact of these actions and includes related policies in the LRTP – see below.

ENVIRONMENT, Goal VI: To work progressively towards a transportation system that will have zero-net negative impact on the environment.

- Policy A: Encourage transportation initiatives that reduce or minimize the production of ozone precursors, small particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and other greenhouse gases.
- Policy B: Promote alternative fuels and clean air strategies, which can be implemented in public fleets and private vehicles.
- Policy D: Support mitigation of the negative impacts of transportation projects on affected ecosystems.
- Policy E: Preserve natural, scenic and cultural areas within the Ithaca-Tompkins County area.
- Policy F: Support the replacement of the bus fleet with progressively cleaner and more energy efficient bus technologies.

**Location Specific Issues:**

- Reduce speed limit on Ellis Hollow Rd in Caroline to 40mph since route 79 parallels Ellis Hollow has a lower speed limit and there are blind spots on Ellis Hollow Rd and it is a rural road where people want to walk and bike safely. [TC]
- It has been years since there was any nearby bus transportation from my neighborhood to Cornell. By "my neighborhood, I refer to the blocks stretching from W. State Street north to Tompkins St., and from Meadow St. to N. Albany St. Many people in that neighborhood work or study at Cornell, and some retired people in my neighborhood are retired from the university and therefore have privileges they could take advantage of if only they had an easy way to get to the Cornell campus. The closest bus stop is at least a half mile away (much more for many neighbors) at the corner of N. Tioga and E. Court, the #10 stop. Why can't the number 10 TCAT bus travel west on Seneca and turn north on Albany Street, make a stop at GIAC before and then turn east to go up East Hill to Cornell? That small change would add 5-7 minutes to the route but reach many more residents of downtown Ithaca.

**Response LSI:** The LRTP does not address location specific issues as addressed in these comments. However, the ITCTC acknowledges the importance of the travel issues raised in these comments and has forwarded your comments directly to the appropriate agencies for their evaluation and consideration of possible actions.