

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

Wednesday April 20th, 2016; 3:00pm – 4:30 pm

CVB, 904 East Shore Drive, Ithaca

AGENDA	Start
1. March STPB Meeting Minutes	3:00
• ACTION – Approve Meeting Minutes	
2. Privilege of the Floor	
• Limit of 3 minutes per person for members of the public to address the board	
3. Discovery Trail Annual Report	3:05
4. Beautification, Signage and Public Art Strategic Plan – Jennifer Tavares & Chrys Gardener	3:25
• ACTION – Vote to adopt Plan	
5. 2016 Tourism Capital Grants – Martha Armstrong	3:30
• ACTION – Recommend 2016 Tourism Capital Grants	
6. Chair’s REPORT – Anne Gossen	3:45
7. Nominating Committee	3:50
• ACTION - Nomination and Election of Vice-Chair	
8. Membership & Bylaws Committee	3:55
• ACTION - Vote to recommend appointment of Ithaca College representative	
9. Budget Committee REPORT – Sue Stafford	4:00
10. CVB Quarterly Report – Jennifer Tavares	4:10
11. Staff REPORT – Tom Knipe	4:25
12. Announcements (time permitting)	

END by 4:30

Agenda Packet

1. March 2017 draft STPB meeting minutes
2. 2016 Tourism Capital Grant applications and award recommendations
3. Tompkins County Beautification, Signage and Public Art Strategic Plan. View the REVISED full plan document at www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism/tourism/plan or via this direct link:
<http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/files/tourism/Beautification%20Plan%20draft%204-14-16%20%28003%29.pdf>
4. CVB Quarterly Report – Q1 2016

To Access 2016 Tourism Capital Grant Applications

Go to: <https://ctk.apricot.info/auth>

User: tourism@tct.com

Password: Tourism (password is case sensitive!)

Instructions: Follow the links to view the original grant applications. Click “reports” from the left hand tool bar to access summary reports. Use Safari, Chrome, or Firefox as a browser (not Explorer).



MISSION: The Strategic Tourism Planning Board is charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for tourism initiatives that *promote economic development* and *enhance the quality of life* in Tompkins County.

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes – March 2016**

1 **Date:** March 16, 2016
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** CVB
 4
 5

Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation		Name	✓	Representation	
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large		Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture	
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation		Josh Friedman	E	Arts-Culture	
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture		<i>John Spence</i>	✓	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>	
John Gutenberger	✓	Cornell		<i>Dwight Mengel</i>	A	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>	
Lynnette Scofield	✓	Lodging		<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	✓	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>	
Kelli Cartmill	✓	Lodging		<i>Jennifer Tavares</i>	✓	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>	
Rita Rosenberg	✓	Agriculture		<i>Martha Armstrong</i>	✓	<i>TCAD, Non-Voting</i>	
David Blake	✓	At-Large		<i>Mike Sigler</i>	E	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>	
Andy Zepp	✓	At-Large		<i>Beverly Baker</i>		<i>Associate Member</i>	
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large		<i>Carol Kammen</i>		<i>Associate Member</i>	
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large		<i>Jon Reis</i>	✓	<i>Associate Member</i>	
Ken Jupiter	E	At-Large		Tom Knipe	✓	Staff	
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large		Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff	
Anne Gossen	✓	Arts-Culture	7				
Sue Stafford	A	TC3	8				
			9				

10 **Also in attendance:** Dan Klein, Tompkins County Legislator, Chrys Gardener, CCETC
 11

12 **Meeting Agenda**

13 February STPB Meeting Minutes
 14 Privilege of the Floor
 15 Chair's REPORT – Anne Gossen
 16 Nominating Committee – Vote to Appoint 2016 Nominating Committee
 17 Staff REPORT – Tom Knipe
 18 CVB Monthly Report – Jennifer Tavares
 19 Beautification, Signage, and Public Art Strategic Plan – Jennifer Tavares
 20 Spring 2016 Tourism Grants - Mike Mellor
 21 Spring 2016 Community Celebrations Grants – Sue Perlgut
 22 Announcements
 23

24 **The meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM.**
 25

26 **February 2016 STPB meeting minutes were approved** with no changes.
 27

28 **Privilege of the Floor** – Dan Klein, Tompkins County Legislator, commented on several aspects of the
 29 draft Beautification, Signage and Public Art Strategic Plan, and requested that his written comments be
 30 forwarded to the STPB.
 31

32 **Chair's Report** – Anne Gossen provided a brief report, and expressed her gratitude to members of the
 33 STPB.
 34

35 **Agritourism Update** – Ethan Ash provided an update his committee's successful efforts with Agritourism
 36 workshop at Coltivare. A draft Strategic plan is slated for May, with ongoing plans for farm assessments,
 37 strategy planning, and marketing and P&R.
 38

39 **Nominating Committee** – David Blake made the motion to recommend Ethan Ash, Sue Perlgut, and
 40 Lynnette Scofield as the 2016 Nominating Committee, seconded by Stephen Nunley. The 2016 Nominating
 41 was approved unanimously. They will work on nominating a vice-chair to replace Christy Agnese, who is
 42 vacating that position.

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes – March 2016**

43
44 **Staff Report** – Tom Knipe provided a brief staff report. A written summary is attached to these meeting
45 minutes.
46

47 **CVB Monthly Review** – Jennifer Tavares provided a brief report on the Convention and Visitors Bureau's
48 efforts over the last month. A full report was provided in the Strategic Tourism Planning Board agenda.
49

50 **Beautification, Signage and Public Art Strategic Plan Draft** – Jennifer Tavares and Chrys Gardener gave
51 a presentation on the Beautification, Signage, and Public Art Strategic Plan. Members agreed that a vote to
52 adopt the plan will take place on April 20.
53

54 **Spring 2016 Tourism Grants** – Mike Mellor provided background on the Tourism Marketing and
55 Advertising, New Tourism Initiative, and Tourism Project Grant applications that were reviewed, and included
56 in the agenda packet. He went on to recommend funding for 18 of the 21 applications submitted.
57

58 **Action:** David Blake Moved to accept the Committee Recommendations for the Spring Writes Literary
59 Festival, seconded by Stephen Nunley. **Vote:** Yes 10; No 0; Abstention 1 (Sue Pergut)
60

61 **Action:** A vote on recommendations for Tourism Marketing and Advertising, New Tourism Initiatives, and
62 Tourism Project Grants was proposed with the exception of the following applications: Spring Writes. Sue
63 Pergut moved to accept the committee recommendations, seconded by Kelli Cartmill. **Vote:** passed by
64 unanimous vote.
65

66 **2016 Spring Community Celebrations Grants** – Sue Pergut reported on the application review process for
67 Community Celebrations grants noting that 17 of the total 18 applications are being recommended for
68 funding.
69

70 **Action:** Lynnette Scofield made the motion to accept the committee recommendations, seconded by Anne
71 Gossen. **Vote:** Passed by unanimous vote.
72

73 **Announcements** – Jennifer Turner announced her resignation from the Planning Department. Sue Pergut
74 announced the Connie Cook documentary being shown on next Monday at Cornell Cinema at 7:00 PM. Kelli
75 Cartmill announced Kilpatrick's early opening in honor of St. Patrick's Day.
76

77 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.
78

79 Respectfully Submitted,
80 Jennifer Turner
81 Tompkins County Planning Department
82

83 **Next Meeting Scheduled**

84 April 20, 2016
85
86



Business Creation, Retention and Expansion

MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Planning Tourism Board
From: Martha Armstrong <marthaa@tcad.org>
Date: April 5, 2016
Re: STP Review of Tourism Capital Grants 2016 Applications

At the April 20 meeting, we will review the Tourism Capital Grant applications summarized in the table below. The table indicates the project value and the request. This is followed by the Tourism Capital Grant Review Committee’s recommendations. The STPB will act by deciding what to recommend to the County Legislature. Synopses of each application, and the Review Committee’s comments, are on the following pages.

Complete applications and supporting materials provided by the applicants are available online at <https://ctk.apricot.info/> . STP board members and Legislators may use the following credentials to access the applications:

i.d.: tourism@tct.com

Password: Tourism (case sensitive)

Application Summary

Application	App* Type	Project Value	REQUEST		RECOMMENDATION	
			Grant	Award years	Grant	Award years
Downtown Ithaca Alliance (Conf Ctr)	F	44,000	40,000	2016	40,000	2016
Ithaca United Soccer Club (Fields)	F	9,995	9,995	2016	5,000	2016
Sciencenter (Sustainability)	C	144,347	48,115*	2016-18	48,115	24,000-2016 24,115-2017
State Theatre (Lobby)	F	15,200	9,000	2016	9,000	2016
The Cherry Arts (Theater Equipment)	C	296,000	75,000	2016-18	0	n/a
Tompkins County Planning (Blueway)	C	121,343	33,480	2016-17	33,480	2016
Wharton Studio Museum (Exhibits)	F	9,050	9,050	2016	9,050	2016
TOTAL		645,535	222,525		144,645	

* F is Feasibility Study, C is Capital Investment grant

*applicant request was for \$50,000

General Comments:

The Tourism Capital Grant program has **\$208,000** available for grants.

- \$121,000 is available to distribute in 2016
- \$87,000 may be awarded for future years through multi-year awards

*Tompkins County Area Development
401 E. State St. | E. MLK Jr. St., Suite 402B
Ithaca, New York 14850
T: 607-273-0005 | www.tcad.org*

Application Briefs

Downtown Ithaca Conferencing/Meeting Facility Feasibility Study The DIA, working with the City, County, CVB, higher education reps, and private downtown lodging stakeholders, proposes to examine the feasibility of creating and sustaining a downtown conference/meeting facility.

Feasibility Study to Improve Tourism In Tompkins County By Increasing Athletic Field Space A lack of athletic field space prohibits athletic tournaments from being held here. The Ithaca United Soccer Club will identify either a new parcel of land to develop or renovate an existing parcel to build the desired athletic fields. The project deliverable will be a preferred parcel of land, a method towards acquiring or renovating, and a construction cost to build the facility.

Sciencenter Sustainability Gallery and Garden The Sciencenter proposes a new combination indoor-outdoor Sustainability Gallery and Garden. This gallery and garden will include hands-on exhibits and educational programming that promote greater understanding of conservation and environmental stewardship, highlight local efforts in sustainability, and reinforce Tompkins County as a top destination for agri- and edu-tourism.

State Theatre Feasibility Study for Lobby Expansion The State Theatre's lobby is extremely undersized for a 1,600 seat venue. Most historic venues make a significant amount of money through concession sales. Because of the lobby size and layout, the ability to increase concession sales is very restricted. The State has explored what kind of expansion opportunities are possible, and now we need to hire professional architects, engineers and a codes specialist to assist.

Cherry Artspace Technical Outfitting In autumn 2016, Performance Premises LLC will complete construction of the Cherry Artspace in Ithaca's west end, a multidisciplinary venue unlike any in the region. The Cherry Arts seeks funds to outfit the Artspace with the lighting, sound, and video equipment required for a suitably high-quality venue.

Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Phase One Building on the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan, with the support of Cayuga and Seneca Counties and many regional partners, the County seeks support for physical improvements in Tompkins County to establish this new water trail on Cayuga Lake. Expected outcomes include enhanced public access to the lake for paddling and an interpretive program highlighting the rich historic and natural features surrounding Cayuga Lake.

Planning & Design Study for DPW/Wharton Building Exhibit Space Concept Wharton Studio Museum's Planning Study will provide program, design and cost for a phased approach to developing interpretive exhibits on and in the DPW/Wharton building (in Stewart Park) with a goal of preserving and celebrating its history as a once-vibrant motion picture studio. The Study will produce visuals, budget and timeline necessary to implement the project in partnership with City of Ithaca and Friends of Stewart Park.

Synopses of each application are on page 3-10.

Synopsis Downtown Ithaca Alliance
Downtown Ithaca Conferencing/Meeting Facility Feasibility Study

Type Feasibility Study Grant

Agency Annual Operating Budget \$850,000

Grant Request \$40,000.00

Project Value \$44,000.00

Summary The Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) works to facilitate development, market downtown, manage the downtown environment, and program events and activities. The exploration of creating and sustaining a conference/meeting facility is an element of the Downtown Ithaca 2020 Strategic Plan.

The DIA, working with the City, County, CVB, higher education reps, and private downtown lodging stakeholders, proposes to examine the feasibility of creating and sustaining a downtown conference/meeting facility. By 2018, downtown will have 577 hotel rooms within walking distance of each other. Added to Ithaca's recent prominence as a visitor destination and downtown's investment in a new pedestrian mall and other major projects, there is interest in evaluating the feasibility of a conferencing/meeting facility. This proposed study would involve engaging a qualified firm expert in the field of meeting facilities to undertake a two phase project: a demand analysis and a preliminary business/modeling plan.

Schedule about six months

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Groups - Expand meetings, conferences and group tours
- Downtown Ithaca - Enhance downtown Ithaca as a hub of visitor activity
- Marketing - Maximize the effectiveness of destination marketing, advertising, and public relations

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project

This study will fulfill Critical Action 25: "Develop a new project to recruit higher education meetings & conferences with campus assistance". The study will assess downtown Ithaca's potential of attracting professional and academic conferences. Downtown Ithaca's unique accessibility to the Commons and restaurants, its large collection of quality lodging rooms (577- some 29% of the region's total) along with Downtown Ithaca's Walk Score of 97, makes it an intriguing location for a conference/meeting facility.

Current Attendees 130,000

Out of County Attendees 26,000

Percent Out of County Attendees 20%

Tourism Grants previous 2 years 2015 Bite of Ithaca, 2015 Commons Celebration Event, 2015 Ice Festival, 2015 Tompkins Festivals Program, 2014 Ithaca Restaurant Week, 2014 Ice Wars & Chowder Cook-off, 2014 Tompkins Festivals Program

IDP – Conference Study

Strengths

1. Driving traffic to downtown would benefit the business community.
2. Having another venue for local celebrations such as weddings great
3. Would attract minor conventions
4. It would be a huge addition to the downtown as the hotels are completed and we can compete to have larger scale conferences taking place in the central core. It will ensure hotels, businesses have the facilities needed to compete in this market.
5. Opportunity to capture more events, conventions, seminars.
6. Due to the change in hotel supply since the last study, it makes sense to re-evaluate the situation. Would be good to fill 300-500 beds with mid-week conferencing.
7. Many stakeholders are willing to help with this, could be a collaborative project with many entities.
8. Directly relates to the county tourism plan.
9. This study, if it tells us that there is demand for a conference center will be able to address the need for filling rooms midweek.
10. Large(r) tourism population impacted.

Weaknesses

1. Can't be free standing project , needs to be part of a larger project such as a hotel.
2. If a for-profit I think the economics will not work as a stand alone. High capital investment such as food service and utilization will be a major issue. Will it need government subsidies?
3. One concern would be what kind of structure would be set up to manage a conference center
4. Difficult to determine size of the project, a convention center is not what we need but a smaller conference facility could be a possibility.
5. Location key, not addressed. Parking would become an even bigger problem, would need to address.

Other Comments

Synopsis Ithaca United Soccer Club, Inc.

Feasibility Study to Improve Tourism In Tompkins County By Increasing Athletic Field Space

Type Feasibility Study Grant

Agency Annual Operating Budget \$100,000

Grant Request \$9,995

Project Value \$9,995

Summary The Ithaca United Soccer Club (IUSC) was founded in 1980 by a group of local Ithaca residents and new immigrants from Europe and Latin America with the overriding purpose of organizing soccer for players in Tompkins County and the surrounding Finger Lakes region. We have had over 100 participants in our soccer tournaments with most of them coming from out of the County and we have 20% of our 500 weekly players come from out of the County to play soccer weekly.

The Ithaca United Soccer Club (IUSC) has identified an opportunity to increase tourism in Tompkins County's by creating opportunities for visitors to come to our County to play soccer. IUSC has engaged municipal and community groups within the last year and has found that a lack of athletic field space prohibits athletic tournaments from being held which could draw large numbers of out of town visitors every year. IUSC's proposes to form a Technical Working Group (TWG) to guide IUSC in finding either a new parcel of land to develop or renovate an existing parcel of land to build the desired athletic fields. The project deliverable will be a preferred parcel of land, a method towards acquiring or renovating and a construction cost to build the facility. Witham Planning is the consultant.

Schedule Start-First Technical Working Group Meeting: May 2016, End-Final Report: December 2016

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Sports - Increase sports tourism-Cayuga lake, gorges and waterfalls, trails, parks, and natural areas
- Festivals and Events
- Grow the visitor attraction and positive impacts of vibrant festivals and events

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project

#12-This project is a feasibility study and implementation strategy to attract new sporting events and tournaments.

#13-This project creates a Technical Working Group that will include representatives from local school districts, City of Ithaca Parks Department and other local facilities and Ithaca amateur athletic leagues and associations.

Current Attendees 1,400 (1,000 players and 400 spectators) for Buffalo and Ithaca tournaments

Tourism Grants previous 2 years

- None

Ithaca United Soccer Club – Fields study

Strengths

1. This study could be useful if it uncovers land that could be used for fields that might not have a higher use factor.
2. They have had great attendance.
3. Very specific niche.
4. Established organization with good knowledge of opportunities currently being missed.
5. Nice established board that meets regularly.
6. Diverse membership.
7. Addresses CVB problem of field shortage that prevents marketing to tournaments as well as a shortage for local use.
8. Ready to fund raise to make it happen.
9. Have consultant identified.

Weaknesses

1. If they determined there were more fields needed, who would pay for it?
2. Soccer club has no resources and a negligible board. Operational capacity of the organization to pay for proper maintenance of the fields going forward is a key concern.
3. It would seem that this research could be done by the organization.
4. This seems like something that should intertwine with other organizations, not just IUSSC – look into partnering with other soccer clubs, lacrosse, baseball. It is a big project for one group.
5. Possibly look into a multiuse facility, even adding hockey. Ice time is in high demand, the current situation is bad in our area for getting time at current facilities.
6. Small(er) tourism population impacted.

Other Comments

1. The Review Committee had a spectrum of opinions about supporting this project. They settled on funding it 50% so that the organization would need to develop some of the funding and thereby buy-in from other sources – possibly partner organizations who are also interested in developing more fields.
2. The Review Committee would encourage developing collaboration from other sporting organizations that seek more fields.

Synopsis Sciencenter
Sciencenter Sustainability Gallery and Garden

Type Capital Investment Grant

Agency Annual Operating Budget \$2,800,000

Grant Request \$50,000.00 (*eligible amount is \$48,115*)

Project Value \$144,347.00

Summary The Sciencenter proposes a new combination indoor-outdoor Sustainability Gallery and Garden. This gallery and garden will include hands-on exhibits and educational programming that promote greater understanding of conservation and environmental stewardship, highlight local efforts in sustainability, and reinforce Tompkins County as a top destination for agri- and edu-tourism.

This project will include a new 800-sq-ft indoor exhibit gallery and a 2,000-sq-ft outdoor garden, featuring highly interactive exhibits on local agriculture, water conservation, and renewable energy, including solar, wind, and hydroelectric power.

Complementary “Power the Future” field trips will focus on renewable energy and climate change. With 200 “Power the Future” participants traveling from outside the county each year, new exhibit offerings will inspire return trips, helping to create the next generation of Sciencenter visitors.

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Edutourism - Increase educational tourism
- Sustainability - Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as the preeminent Sustainability Tourism destination in New York State
- Ag and Culinary - Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a regional hub of culinary and agritourism

Schedule Start 9/1/16 with completion by 12/31/17

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project - None

Total Attendance (Current) 102,914

Out of County Visitor Attendance (Current) 36,020

% of Current Out of County Visitors 35%

Total Attendance (Yr 3 Projected) 100,000

Out of County Visitor Attendance (Yr 3 projected) 37,000

% of 3yr Projected Out of County Visitors 37%

Tourism Grants previous 2 years

ACOD 2013-2015	Campaign consultant - \$17,000/year
Capital 2014	Golf Construction - \$25,000
Project 2014	Curiosity Corner Science Park - \$14,000
Capital 2015	Sagan Planet Walk - \$25,000
Project 2015	Curiosity Corner - \$18,327

Can accept award over 2 years? yes **Over 3 years?** yes

Sciencenter Sustainability Exhibit/Garden

Strengths

1. Sciencenter has a reputation for strong programs and leadership
2. High interest in sustainability presents opportunity for success of project
3. Provides new programs for the Sciencenter which needs to be upgraded periodically to maintain/build audience.
4. They have a proven history of developing and implementing new projects and exhibits with much success.
5. Really like the tie-in to agri/edu tourism. The focus on understanding conservation and sustainability is very "Ithaca" and makes sense that the Sciencenter have something that addresses it.
6. Strong data / dimensions fo the plan.
7. A very "current" issue that should generate interest.

Weaknesses

1. Seems like a large investment for some seasonal appeal
2. It's a large ask and still a lot that they need to raise. Will they be able to get the additional funds through donations?
3. Is this competitive or additive to the program at the Children's Garden.*

*Response from Sciencenter

The sustainability exhibit would definitely be complementary with the Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG). Although we have not discussed with ICG, our indoor exhibits in the sustainability gallery would provide visitors with a very different experience. At ICG, children are learning almost entirely through play (unless they are taking part in one of ICG's educational programs that are led by ICG staff). While our exhibits are also open-ended, the interactives are a bit more focused on specific topics and scientific principles, with each exhibit having defined learning goals. For example, in the Anarchy Zone at ICG, kids might do some engineering as they make forts, etc out of the tires and other materials there. In our planned hydropower exhibit, children will also learn engineering but they will be learning it because they are working towards a specific goal (build an effective dam, e.g.).

The planned sustainability garden is much smaller in scope than ICG. Our garden here will be tied to our indoor exhibits and isn't going to be a play space in the way that ICG is. Our goal is to use our limited outdoor space to highlight regional agriculture but the main interactive pieces will be at the indoor exhibits. If funded, we can reach out to ICG to make sure that our efforts complement theirs.

Other Comments

NOTE: Reviewer Kara Taylor is on the Sciencenter board and recused herself from the discussion of Sciencenter funding.

Synopsis State Theatre of Ithaca, Inc.
Feasibility Study for Lobby Expansion

Type Feasibility Study Grant

Agency Annual Operating Budget \$1,000,000

Grant Request \$9,000.00

Project Value \$15,200.00

Summary In the spring of 2009, a new, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization “State Theatre of Ithaca, Inc.” was formed to own and operate Tompkins County’s last remaining historic performing arts venue. They saw 58,322 visitors during our 2014/15 Season and are on a very similar pace this season. By tracking ticket purchases by zip code, they estimate that 40% of our ticket buyers are from outside of Tompkins County.

State Theatre of Ithaca, Inc. is requesting \$9,000 for a Feasibility Study to further assist us with exploring Lobby Expansion opportunities. The State Theatre now hosts between 75 -85 events each year, catering to all demographics and attracting close to 60,000 patrons each year. The State Theatre’s lobby is extremely undersized for a 1,600 seat venue. Most historic venues make a significant amount of money through concession sales. Because of the lobby size and layout, the ability to increase concession sales is very restricted. The State has begun exploring what kind of expansion opportunities are possible, but has reached a point where they need to hire professional architects, engineers and a codes specialist to assist.

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Arts, Culture, Heritage - Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a central arts, cultural and heritage tourism destination in the Finger Lakes
- Downtown Ithaca - Enhance downtown Ithaca as a hub of visitor activity
- Niche - Grow under-tapped niche visitor markets and experiences

Schedule Study: Summer/Fall 2016. Aim to construct Summer 2017

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project - None

Total Attendance (Current) 58,000

Out of County Visitor Attendance (Current) 23,200

% of Current Out of County Visitors 40%

Tourism Grants previous 2 years

\$42,000 received over 3 years to support The State Theatre's Restroom Renovation Project

\$25,000 received in Arts/Cultural Organizational Development Support

State Theatre Lobby study

Strengths

1. State Theater has a large following and this is a very needed component
2. Year round operations and will enhance revenue stream
3. I like the idea of a study that if it is successful the theater could increase their revenue stream with changes to the lobby area. That can only be plus
4. Potential to add to the ability of the State to sustain itself.
5. Location on the Commons allows restaurant support and entertainment in walking distance
6. Established organization, proven steward of money
7. Low cost project – good bang for buck
8. They have done other renovation projects in the past that have proven successful.
9. Potential to improve user experience.
10. Relatively small amount requested for feasibility.
11. Strong data / detail on tourism dimensions.

Weaknesses

1. None

Notes:

* In the online application, the State requested \$5,000. State Theatre mistakenly believed the 1/3 limit for capital requests also applied to feasibility studies. At the Program Administrator's prompting, they increased their ask from \$5,000 to \$9,000.

Other Comments

Synopsis The Cherry Arts, Inc.
Cherry Artspace Technical Outfitting

Type Capital Investment Grant
Agency Annual Operating Budget \$25,000
Grant Request \$75,000
Project Value \$296,000

Summary The Cherry Arts was incorporated in August 2014. Since the company in its current form is little more than a year old, visitor data and demographics are preliminary. From September –December 2015 they had about 600 ticket buyers, approximately 25 of whom were out of county. They anticipate these numbers to grow exponentially when the Artspace is complete and is hosting the work of many other more established, companies alongside our own.

In autumn 2016, Performance Premises LLC will complete construction of the Cherry Artspace in Ithaca's west end, a multidisciplinary venue unlike any in the region. The LLC will provide the building rent-free to non-profit company The Cherry Arts, to program with two missions: 1) to create an innovative, high-end venue in which different art forms are presented alongside one another, cross-pollinating both arts and audiences; and 2) to create The Cherry's own innovative theatre work. To accomplish this, The Cherry Arts seeks funds to outfit the Artspace with the equipment required for a suitably high-quality venue including: theatrical lighting, and a grid to install it on; sound equipment; video equipment; and computers and the programs required to make these systems interact with one another. Non-technical equipment includes ladders, platforms for staging and audience, drapes, seats, and office equipment.

Schedule Fall 2016.

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Arts, Culture, Heritage - Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a central arts, cultural and heritage tourism destination in the Finger Lakes
- Niche - Grow under-tapped niche visitor markets and experiences
- Festivals and Events - Grow the visitor attraction and positive impacts of vibrant festivals and events

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project

"Inventory established but underutilized cultural assets... and promote these." Ithaca is home to an extraordinary group of professional theater artists, often current or former faculty members and their spouses. These creators constitute a significant and underutilized cultural asset, and The Cherry Arts will create work based in an ensemble of these artists.

Total Attendance (Current) 1,000
Out of County Visitor Attendance (Current) 100
% of Current Out of County Visitors 10%
Total Attendance (Yr 3 Projected) 15,000
Out of County Visitor Attendance (Yr 3 projected) 2,000
% of 3yr Projected Out of County Visitors 13%

Tourism Grants previous 2 years - None

Can accept award over 2 years? yes **Over 3 years?** yes

The Cherry Arts -- Equipment

Strengths

1. Free rent, but for how long?
2. Certainly there are individuals to somewhat support these art forms
3. Currently have committed board and supporters
4. Arts is important to our community.
5. They've already purchased the building.
6. Project seems to have a lot of synergy with Tourism plan goals.

Weaknesses

1. Not a good location
2. Not creating any jobs, will need support for operations, and no operating history to support this major expenditure.
3. Reluctance at this point to commit funds in the realm that are being asked for without a somewhat longer track record. Less than one-year track record.
4. Low attendance. Unable to demonstrate there will be audience for this without some track record
5. Start-up/speculative
6. Unrealistic time frame unless they have significant donor support
7. Not convinced the County needs another theater, also not convinced of exactly what type of theater this will be.
8. No existing marketing plan or programming for 2016.
9. Small current operating budget. Difficult to determine from application if have capacity to carry out.

Other Comments

1. This application is for an ambitious start-up project. The reviewers felt the applicant did not adequately demonstrate that there would be audience and donor support for this project.
2. Most of the reviewers questioned funding this project with a significant capital grant without greater track record. The lack of a marketing plan and lack of 2016 programming added to this concern.

Synopsis Tompkins County Planning Department
Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Phase One

Type Capital Investment Grant
Agency Annual Operating Budget 0
Grant Request \$33,480
Project Value \$121,343

Summary The Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail is a partnership of Tompkins, Cayuga and Seneca Counties. Phase One implementation of this project is being managed by the Tompkins County Planning Department with support from Cayuga and Seneca Counties, tourism promotion agencies (TPAs) in the region, the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP), Finger Lakes Region, the National Park Service, Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, and others. When complete, the Blueway Trail will attract paddling enthusiasts to visit and experience Cayuga Lake, and also enhance access to Cayuga Lake for the 900,000+ current visitors to Tompkins County.

In 2013 and 2014, Tompkins County completed the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan, with the support of Cayuga and Seneca Counties and many regional partners, and the project was awarded significant funding from New York State grant through the most recent CFA round. The portion of the project for which support is requested will implement physical improvements in Tompkins County to establish this new water trail on Cayuga Lake. Expected outcomes include enhanced public access to the lake for paddling experiences (kayaking, standup paddleboarding, canoeing, etc), increased tourism, economic activity and jobs related to paddling, and an interpretive program highlighting the rich historic and natural features surrounding Cayuga Lake.

Schedule start in May 2016, and take 12 to 14 months to complete, by early summer 2017

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Outdoor - Expand outdoor recreation and other tourism related to our outstanding natural amenities
- Beautification - Increase the perception of Ithaca and Tompkins County as a beautiful community that is simple to navigate and as a place to visit

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project

To "Complete and support implementation of the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan, to include enhanced maps and signage to waterfront access points, and targeted site development for enhanced waterfront access." The Tompkins County Planning Department has agreed to lead implementation of this critical action on behalf of the County Tourism Program.

Total Attendance (Current) 0
Out of County Visitor Attendance (Current) 0
% of Current Out of County Visitors n/a
Total Attendance (Yr 3 Projected) 7,200
Out of County Visitor Attendance (Yr 3 projected) 3,600
% of 3yr Projected Out of County Visitors 50%

Tourism Grants previous 2 years

Can accept award over 2 years? Yes **Over 3 years?** No

Tompkins County Blueway Trail

Strengths

1. Support of county staff
2. Provides access to the waterfront
3. Health and wellness component is very popular
4. The goals of the County's Strategic Tourism Plan are being met with this kind of project.
5. Better access to important community asset
6. Appeal for a broader region
7. Great for tourists and community members alike
8. Well organized, good plan.
9. Love the emphasis on the lake, waterfront and parks.
10. Helps to address the issue of lake access.
11. Good leverage of funds.
12. A unique project.
13. Good demonstration of organizational capacity.

Weaknesses

1. For these types of water sports and recreation need fairly calm waters
2. Major usage of lake is probably only 3 to 5 months
3. Will need public (taxpayer) support for operations since minor revenue stream
4. Much small(er) impact re: tourism population.

Other Comments

1. There are many summer visitors staying in downtown. It is hard now to tell them where to go to access the lake. They don't want to drive out to Myers Point and Stewart Park does not offer much. This will really help give visitors places to access the lake and utilize Stewart Park more.
2. For different levels of paddlers, will give them different places to stop along the lake.
3. This is a viable niche market. There are not many water trails nationally. This could be marketed to clubs.

Synopsis Wharton Studio Museum
Planning & Design Study for DPW/Wharton Building Exhibit Space Concept

Type Feasibility Study Grant
Agency Annual Operating Budget \$32,000
Grant Request \$9,050
Project Value \$9,050

Summary Wharton Studio Museum incorporated in 2009. While WSM does not currently have a museum building, it continues to produce numerous successful community-based exhibits, film events and presentations annually throughout the County such as "Silent Movie Month" and "Silent Movie Under the Stars", which attracts a large audience from outside Tompkins County. WSM has a website, Facebook page, Twitter handle and blog (CineFiles).

WSM's Planning Study will provide program, design and cost for a phased approach to developing interpretive exhibits on and in the DPW/Wharton building with a goal of preserving and celebrating its history as a once-vibrant motion picture studio. The Study will examine two phases of development of exhibits that will not displace current Department of Public Works maintenance programs, and include different scenarios for Ithaca Youth Bureau storage needs. The Study will produce visuals, budget and timeline necessary to implement the project in partnership with City of Ithaca and Friends of Stewart Park. The Study will produce a comprehensive concept, blueprint and timeline to identify the building as a historic site, enhance the building and ensure its history is preserved and celebrated.

Schedule start summer 2016; complete by early 2017

Strategic Tourism Plan Goals Addressed by this project

- Arts, Culture, Heritage - Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a central arts, cultural and heritage tourism destination in the Finger Lakes
- Beautification - Increase the perception of Ithaca and Tompkins County as a beautiful community that is simple to navigate and as a place to visit
- Edutourism - Increase educational tourism

Strategic Tourism Plan Critical Action Addressed by this project

In the Area of Arts, Culture and Heritage Tourism, Project addresses all Critical Actions with potential for walking tours/apps/audio tours; supporting existing/new arts marketing vehicles through collaborations with History Center, Historic Ithaca, Discovery Trail; and developing targeted programs to "expand cultural assets such as region's cinema" which WSM has been doing for many years.

In the Area of Lakes, Trails..., the Project addresses Critical Action "To support the Stewart Park Revitalization Plan." Project contributes to revitalization of the park by upgrading, enhancing and establishing as significant, this historic lakefront building used for maintenance. Building is neglected and in disrepair.

Total Attendance (Current) 0

Tourism Grants previous 2 years

WSM is fiscal sponsor for Ithaca Fantastic Film Festival which has successfully applied for New Tourism Initiative and Marketing grants in the past. WSM received 3 Tourism grants 2010-2012

Wharton Studio Museum exhibit study

Strengths

1. Perseverance of organizers is impressive
2. Cost of the study is minimal
3. Appears that city wants to find a way of doing this
4. Some reviewers were supportive of a study as a way to move this project along, some "iffy"
5. The events have been well received and good PR
6. Moves toward historic building preservation.
7. Improves Stewart Park with a little TLC
8. Steps back from a full-blown museum.

Weaknesses

1. Needs for city to replace DPW space being taken
2. Long term lease needed for the future of the museum
3. Doubtful they will be able to raise significant funding for capital improvements and will need annual support for operations.
4. Is it relevant?

Other Comments

1. Trowbridge and Wolfe did a study in the 1980's for the City (Mayor Gutenberger). They looked at the feasibility of putting a museum in Stewart Park. Suggestion that the Wharton Studio Museum look at that study.
2. Some reviewers felt a museum would not make sense, giving these concerns: attendance would only be high for 2 or 3 months of the year; the Wharton Studio history is fairly small and could not support a full-blown museum.
3. The Review Committee recommends fully funding this study because they generally support the scaled-back approach that it will develop.

INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

Tourism Capital Grants program fund status

As of March 2016, there is \$208,000 available in the program's fund for grants – \$121,000 is available for grants in 2016. I recommend that up to another \$87,000 may be committed for future years through multi-year awards.

What is on the horizon?

This program has a single round annually.

I expect there will continue to be strong applicant interest for the next several years. Most of the feasibility studies we have funded over the past several years are likely to generate eligible capital projects in the next several years.

Other Information

The Review Committee completes a scoring grid online in Apricot. The averaged results from all the reviewers' scores helps guide the reviewers' discussion, it is not a point system to determine the awards.

Also enclosed are:

- Multi-year grant worksheet with current commitments
- History of the Tourism Capital grants awards since inception (by recipient)
- Criteria for Grants from the application guide
- The review committee's Conflict of Interest Policy

TCAD Tourism Capital Grants Review Committee members:

April 2016:

- Andy Sciarabba (TCAD) Chair
- Kara Taylor (TCAD)
- Kelli Cartmill (STP)
- Ken Jupiter (STP)
- Steve Snyder (TCAD)
- Jim Dennis (TC Legislature)

- Mary Kane (TCAD) (excused)
- Steve Hugo (STP) (excused)

**Tourism Capital Grants
 Multi-Year Grants Worksheet**

TCG Budget Info (estimates italicized)			2016	2017*	2018*
Annual Budget			207,000	211,140	215,363
Budget Adjustment - previous year allocated/unspent	add		13,587		
TCAD Admin expenses	subtract		12,587	12,839	13,096
Past Multi-Year Awards			208,000	193,473	
	Year	award			
Stewart Park Rehab Phase I	2013	70,500	10,000		
Blueway Trail	2014	10,000	10,000		
PRI-CNC Cayuga Lake Exhibit	2014	40,000	10,000		
Sciencenter Minigolf	2014	25,000	15,000		
Lake Street Public Park	2,015	20,000	10,000		
PRI MoTE Smithsonian exhibits	2,015	50,000	27,000		
Sciencenter: Sagan Walk Exp	2,015	25,000	5,000		
Committed			87,000		
Available for grants awarded in 2016			121,000	plus \$87,000 in 2017/18	

Current Grants	Proj		Recommendations		
	Value	Request	2016	2017	2018
Downtown Ithaca Alliance (Conf Ctr)	44,000	40,000	40,000		
Ithaca United Soccer Club (Fields)	9,995	9,995	5,000		
Sciencenter (Sustainability)	144,347	48,115	24,000	24,115	
State Theatre of Ithaca (Lobby)	15,200	9,000	9,000		
The Cherry Arts (Theater Equipment)	296,000	75,000	0		
Tompkins County Planning (Blueway)	121,343	33,480	33,480		
Wharton Studio Museum (Exhibits)	9,050	9,050	9,050		
Total	645,535	220,640	120,530	24,115	

*budget escalated 2% 2017 to 2018
 prepared by TCAD: Edition: April 5, 2015

Detailed History of Awards

Recipient	Year	Grant value	Feas Study or Capital	sum of multiple grants	total project value
Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail	2014	10,000	f	10,000	18,000
Cayuga Nature Center Feas	2008	13,500	f		
Cayuga Nature Center	2009	100,000	c		
Cayuga Nature Center	2011	100,000	c		
Cayuga Nature Center	2014	40,000	c	253,500	801,280
City of Ithaca Lake St Park	2015	20,000	c	20,000	240,000
CSMA 3 rd Floor study	2013	8,000	f		
CSMA 3 rd Floor renovations	2014	55,000	c	63,000	173,560
Dorothy Cotton Institute	2010	7,500	f	7,500	7,500
FLLT Emerald Necklace boardwalk	2012	20,000	c	20,000	76,550
Hangar Theatre	2003	9,000	f		
Hangar Theatre	2008	84,000	f		
Theatre for All Seasons capital	2009	100,000	c		
Hangar Theatre study complete All Seasons	2013	5,000	f	198,000	3,212,600
Schoolhouse study	2006	10,000	f		
IMPP study	2013	7,500	f		
History Center Tommy study	2013	7,500	f	25,000	23,000
Ithaca Children's Garden	2009	14,800	c		
Ithaca Children's Garden	2014	34,000	c		
Ithaca Children's Garden	2015	16,000	f	64,800	133,779
Ithaca Farmers Market	2005	10,000	c		
Ithaca Farmers Market	2015	5,000		15,000	82,630
Ithaca Motion Picture Project	2009	5,500	f	5,500	5,500
Ithaca Skate Park	2011	60,000	c	60,000	435,340
Kitchen Theatre Feas 1	2008	13,000	f		
Kitchen Theatre Feas 2	2009	21,000	f		
Kitchen Theatre Capital	2009	100,000	c	134,000	1,236,800
PRI- Museum of Earth- Building Expansion	2003	125,000	c		
MOTE Climate Exhibit/glacier	2010	50,000	c		
10th Anniversary exhibits	2013	32,000	c		
PRI/MOTE Smithsonian Exhibit	2015	50,000	c	257,000	8,024,805

(continued from previous page)

Recipient	Year	Grant value	Feas Study or Capital	sum of multiple grants	total project value
Sciencenter Golf	2003	25,000	c		
Sciencenter Ocean	2005	20,000	c		
Sciencenter Outdoor	2006	60,000	c		
Sciencenter Marcellus Drilling Exhibit	2011	50,000	c		
Live Animal gallery	2012	30,000	c		
Galaxy Golf study	2013	12,500	f		
Galaxy Golf install	2014	25,000	c		
Sciencenter Sagan Walk Exp	2015	25,000	c	247,500	1,131,420
<hr/>					
Historic Ithaca - State Theatre Phase 2	2003	125,000	c		
State Theatre -- Bathroom study	2012	3,780	f		
State Theatre Bathroom constr	2013	42,000	c	170,780	1,254,300
<hr/>					
CWT Phase 2	2005	5,000	c		
CWTI interpretive panels and Crew cove	2012	20,000	c	25,000	191,500
<hr/>					
Stewart Park Rehab Action Plan	2008	15,000	f		
Stewart Park Building Study	2010	15,000	f		
SP Landscape Study	2012	10,000	f		
Buildings Rehab Ph 1	2013	70,500	c		
Stewart Park 5-Yr Priority Plan	2015	20,000	f	130,500	479,590
<hr/>					
Wine Center Feasibility Ph1	2004	5,000	f		
Wine Center Feasibility Ph 2	2005	7,500	f		
Wine Center capital	2007	160,000	c	172,500	519,720
<hr/>					
TOTALS				1,879,580	18,047,874

52 grants total – 22 feasibility, 30 capital

Median award:

Feasibility: \$10,000 (range 3,780 to 84,000* arch dwgs; to 21,000* non-arch)

Capital: \$41,000 (range: 5,000 to 160,000)

This is the 14th year of operating the program

Criteria for the Grant...from the application guide:

The Tourism Capital Grants Program focuses on major visitor-generating projects such as theaters, museums, and other major cultural and recreational attractions. The funds can be used for:

- Design, renovation, and new building projects
- Investments in unique permanent (minimum 5-year life) installations such as exhibits
- Feasibility studies of potential capital projects

The fund cannot be used to refinance existing debt, or for operating expenses.

Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility: large, tourist/visitor generating not-for-profit or public-purpose projects. Examples of projects include the Sciencenter Touch Tank permanent exhibit, the Hangar Theater renovations for winter operations, the Museum of the Earth new building, and visitor amenities for the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. The organization must track where visitors are from in order to establish tourism impact. The organization must market to visitors beyond Tompkins County.

Project Eligibility

A. *Capital Investment Projects:* New construction and renovation projects are eligible. The project may provide expansion or renovation to existing facilities, or may be a totally new facility. The fund will usually participate at the \$25,000 level or higher. Funds may contribute up to one third of eligible costs that include:

- Acquisition of land
- Acquisition, construction, and renovation of buildings
- Acquisition of furnishings, equipment, permanent exhibitions, and other capital improvements designed to serve or promote tourism over a minimum of five years
- Design services for the project

B. *Feasibility Studies:* Studies should potentially lead to a capital investment as described above. Grants may fund up to 100% of a feasibility study. Eligible projects include:

- Concept level design and cost estimates
- Tourism plan for a capital project
- Business plan for a capital project
- *Not eligible: fundraising feasibility study*

Evaluation Criteria

A. *Capital Investment Projects:*

The application must demonstrate

- Financial feasibility of the project
- Organizational capacity and commitment to make the project a success
- Likelihood of
 - increased visitors to the facility and/or
 - improved visitor experience and/or
 - visitors increasing their length of stay in order to visit the facility

B. *Feasibility Studies:*

The application must demonstrate

- Preliminary research that supports proceeding to a full scale feasibility study
- Organizational commitment to the project being studied, including evidence of investment
- Possibility of
 - increased visitors to the facility and/or
 - improved visitor experience and/or
 - visitors increasing their length of stay in order to visit the facility

Evaluation criteria for all applications include:

- Organizational capacity to carry out the project
- Likelihood of the project to increase or improve tourism over five years
- Project/organization role in the Tompkins County tourism industry
- Benefits/cost -- return on investment
- Value of project to community
- Contribution to the County's Strategic Tourism Plan

Tourism Capital Grant Review Committee Conflict of Interest Policy

The Tourism Capital Grant Review Committee members (hereafter called members) are encouraged to play active roles in their communities by serving as board members or otherwise being involved with a wide spectrum of organizations. This means that, from time to time, potential conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts will inevitably arise. It is the committee's policy to deal with such conflicts in as open and appropriate a way as possible.

Conflicting involvements include but are not limited to the following: members serving as board members of applicant organizations, immediate family of members serving as board members of organizations affected by the committee's decisions, members or their immediate family being employed by or doing business with such organizations. Serving on an advisory board to an applicant organization should be disclosed, but is generally not considered a conflict of interest that requires recusal. In rare instances, working for an organization that has made a major contribution to an applicant organization may be considered a conflict of interest.

In case of such conflicts or the appearance thereof, such members are expected to disclose the conflict at the earliest practicable time. Such disclosure shall be made a matter of record. Once such a disclosure has been made, the remaining committee members will determine whether or not there is a potential conflict of interest. Should it be so considered, the member involved shall:

- abstain from voting and shall not participate in the discussion other than to answer specific factual questions that may be raised by other members.
- not attempt to exert his or her personal influence with respect to the matter, either at or outside the meeting.
- be prepared to excuse himself or herself from the room while the matter is discussed and voted on if asked to do so by the committee or committee chair.
- If the member involved is a paid staff of an organization with a current application, that member should recuse themselves from all meetings and discussions of applications during that funding cycle of grant awards and at least for six months.

The minutes of such meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made and that the member having a possible conflict abstained from voting.

All candidates for membership on the committee should be advised of this policy prior to assuming their responsibilities as members.



First Quarter 2016 CVB Report

Key Projects & Administrative Updates

Personnel Updates & Transitions

Please join me in welcoming Livia Isaacson, Marketing & PR Manager, and Rodney Fleming, Interactive Marketing Manager to the CVB marketing Team. Livia and Rodney both join us with significant marketing, advertising, public relations, and digital/social media experience. With fresh direction and new ideas, we can't wait to hear more about their plans to implement the marketing program for 2016.

Visitor Profile Study

In the next few weeks, the client committee will be interviewing the two companies that submitted proposals. Jennifer has had follow up phone calls with the bidders, and the remainder of the CVB team is reviewing the RFP and the proposals to ensure that our follow up questions and additional research needs can be addressed through the follow up committee meetings and interview/bid award process.

TURA Mobile Technology Initiative

The CVB Visitor Services & Marketing teams had a thorough training session and follow up meeting about this project with Co-Lab and Communique. All parties agreed to utilize the next few months for troubleshooting, gaining a deeper understanding of the technology we've developed together, envisioning next phases of the project, and pursuing potential funding opportunities for the next phase.

Budget

CVB Team, Chamber President & Finance Director will be collaborating on the 2017 budget in the next few weeks, utilizing the 2016 work plan, County Strategic Tourism Plan, and anticipated industry trends as guidance.

Monthly STR Report

In February, we rebounded nicely from the dip in January and YTD are up as well. We are still seeing a drop in supply, likely a reflection of the construction that has started at Hotel Ithaca.

+9.9% on occupancy
+0.3% on ADR
+6.2% on Demand
+6.4% on Revenue

The supply stat has us down -3.4%

That makes us up year to date:

+4.9% on occupancy
+0.3% on ADR
+1.3% on Demand
+1.6% on Revenue



Marketing Team Updates

Q1 Top Highlights:

Engagement Numbers at All-Time High

- Web: 37% more engagement YoY
- Facebook: 17% more engagement YoY
- Email: 11% more engagement vs Industry Average

Facebook Flourishes:

Reaching 28,585 (and counting!) engaged fans, Facebook has become the social influence destination. With 90% of active fans living outside Ithaca and 76% women, Facebook is reaching a prime tourism audience.

By the Numbers:

- Q1 Growth: 2,061 likes
- Total Likes: 28,585
- 26% Growth YoY
- 17% more engagement YoY (Average Likes: Q1 '16: 716 // Q1 '15: 593)

Site Overhaul Drives Engagement Rate:

While last year's Key West PR anomaly spiked site hits at this time last year, we are seeing a more engaged audience than 2015's Q1 audience, with their time on the site being over 37% longer. Seeing larger engagement numbers shows our tourists is committed to spending more time with quality content, and opens the doors to additional site content for further engagement (i.e. video).

Email Marketing Surpasses Facebook Growth:

With 31,631 subscribers, showcasing the best Ithaca has to offer via email blasts is now a staple. After a +15% increase in email campaign subscribers in Q1, our email blasts now have more subscribers than our Facebook fans. This, of course, with an exceeding-industry-average engagement rate.

By the Numbers:

- 31,631 (now) / 26,890 (Jan 1) – 15% increase
- 11% higher engagement vs rest of industry (18.1% vs 16%)

PR Impression Numbers:

- Total media placements for the quarter was 122
- Total media impressions for the quarter was 205,993,988

Culinary Tourism Sees Hungry Audience:

With promotion and management of the IthacaFork.com website, we've seen a 54% increase in unique visitors in Q1, 61% of which are within our target 18-34 year old age range. The number of fans on our Ithaca Farm to Fork Facebook page has grown by 9.1%.

Agri-Culinary Conference Harvests Community Interest:

With support from the CVB in planning and execution, the county's Agri-Tourism workforce produced an extraordinarily well received Agri-Tourism conference in March 2016. Roughly 100 local farmers were in attendance and panelists included farmers and agritourism experts from across the Northeast, helping generate ideas and excitement around diversifying their businesses.



What's Next:

- Instagram & Twitter Overhaul
- IthacaEvents.com Redesign
 - The CVB has been working with Localist on the design and implementation of our new event calendar platform. We expect this new platform to be user ready by end of May, streamlining the event submission process, boosting attendance at events, and building brand awareness with an interface that is visually integrated with the Visit Ithaca brand & website.
- Summer Sweepstakes
- Additional Revenue Streams via Targeted Ad Sales

Sales Team Update

57 new leads from 2016 (2,796 projected room nights with \$879,550 projected economic impact)

36 Leads booked (1790 room nights)

9 lost/withdrawn/cancelled (149 room nights)

12 leads remain (857 room nights)

\$604,535 = Projected economic impact of booked leads

- Attended DONYS Sales Blitz to NE and had 13 appointments
- Attended PBA Marketplace and from conversation with various group leaders found out about a few coaches coming to the area, Benedict Bus (9/20), Susquehanna Trailways (9/17), Elite Coach (6/23) and Bailey Coach, sometime in June. Anderson also has a potential tour, will find out about dates.
- Gearing up to participate in Admin Day Celebrations on both campuses; this is a new initiative which the sales team hopes will yield higher percentage of meeting and lodging bookings in Ithaca by the decision makers & support staff.
- Starting follow up phone calls with Diane's help to RSVP participants for our June Tour Operator FAM Tour
- Mary's continued engagement with Cornell has led to assistance with summer programming, i.e. possible housing, activities, etc.
- The Sales team met with Ithaca College to continue conversation of how best to work together to increase group business at IC and to Tompkins County.
- *A great sales team success story example:* We booked AAA East Central (Myrna Blanda) to come to Ithaca in September for one night. Myrna let Sarah know that she was working with Grapevine Country Tours as a step on, Sarah called Bonnie at Grapevine, made the introduction and offered to assist with overnight rooms. A lead went out and they have since booked with the Courtyard.



Visitor Services Q1 Highlights

Q1 Totals	2016	2015	2014	
ESD Walk ins	519	488	416	
DVC Walk ins	601	660	549	
Chat Requests	595	440	0*	*Implemented Chat in Q3 2015
TG Requests	791**	3699	2064	**Change in lead generation tactics for TG
Off-Site Touchpoints	1905	30	0***	***Data tracking began in 2015.
Phone Calls	363	841	739	
Totals	4774	6158	3768	

We are now starting to see year over year data for the **chat component** as we are starting our second full year. The chat numbers have the 2015 Florida Keys mentions removed to show a true year over year comparison.

Off-site Touchpoints are up due to our concerted efforts to reach out to the Campus Community to make ourselves available for visitor services during **grad fairs, open houses** and such.

In keeping with our **work plan goals**, we implemented **survey monkey** as a means to track the information we are collecting on the guests stopping in to our visitor centers. With just the click of a few buttons, we are able to slice and dice information to show cumulative traffic between both centers.

Here's just a sampling of the data we can now pull:

- 56% of the travel parties visited **Downtown** and 43% stopped by **East Shore Drive**.
- The hours between **1-4pm** account for 45% of our traffic.
- We had visitors from **20 different countries** (including Canada, UK, Spain, China, France, Germany, Israel, Australia, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, Czech Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, & Switzerland) and 32 states.
- Of our **Canadian** visitors, 88% were from the Province of Ontario.
- 55% on the **conversations** included **directions &/or maps**, 29% explored **waterfalls/state parks/hiking** and 28% asked about **Downtown**.

The Visitor Services Department is working with Tompkins Workforce NY on two **ambassador related programs**. One is to identify national ambassador training programs currently in existence and analyze their appropriateness for our market to offer as recommendations to STPB. The other is helping Workforce in developing a program on Tompkins County hospitality and ambassadorship to present to some pilot markets. FAM Tour season is in full effect as Jodi is actively preparing itineraries for **Hospitality Star** (June 14-15, 2016), **Corning Museum of Glass** (June 21, 2016) and shortly, setting a date for the CVBs Annual **FAM Tour**.

Travel Guide Shift: In the summer of 2015, the Marketing Team made a decision to drop a previous travel guide lead generating service after some invoice confusion (no invoices for two years) and reevaluation of marketing expense priorities. Jodi, Livia, and Rodney will be evaluating this service and others to determine if a similar travel guide distribution system is necessary moving forward.