

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

Wednesday July 27th, 2016; 3:00pm – 4:45 pm

Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA), 330 E State St, Ithaca

AGENDA	Start
1. Welcome – Anne Gossen	3:00
2. Tour of CSMA – Robin Tropper-Herbel, Director	
3. June STPB Meeting Minutes	3:15
• ACTION – Approve Meeting Minutes	
4. Privilege of the Floor	
• Limit of 3 minutes per person for members of the public to address the board	
5. Chair’s REPORT – Anne Gossen	3:20
6. Staff REPORT – Tom Knipe	3:25
7. CVB Quarterly Report – CVB Staff	3:30
8. Draft Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan	3:50
• ACTION – Adopt the Plan	
9. STPB 2016 Goals 60 Second Status Updates – STPB Committee Chairs and project leaders	4:15
<i>In less than 60 seconds, update the board on progress towards these 2016 STPB goals:</i>	
A. Agriculinary Tourism – EA	
B. Heritage Tourism Implementation – TK	
C. Visitor Profile Study – JT	
D. Tourism Program Communications Plan – JF	
E. Higher Education & Tourism - TK	
F. Outdoor Recreation Tourism – AZ & IG	
H. “Threshold for Thorough Review” – KJ	
I. VP Tourism – “Discuss Tourism Vision” – TK, PC	
J. Diversity & STPB – LS	
1. Meeting Facility – GF	
10. STPB Goals Mid-year Check-In – Small Group Discussion	4:25
	END by 4:45

To be followed by:

STPB Mid-Year Celebration Happy Hour at Argos Inn – 4:45-5:30

Agenda Packet

1. June 2017 draft STPB meeting minutes
2. CVB Quarterly Report
3. 2016 STPB Goals



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.

1 **Date:** June 15, 2016
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** TC3 Extension, Ithaca Commons
 4
 5

Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture
John Gutenberger	E	Cornell
Lynnette Scofield	E	Lodging
Kelli Cartmill	✓	Lodging
Vacant		Agriculture
David Blake	✓	At-Large
Andy Zepp	✓	At-Large
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large
Steve Hugo	E	At-Large
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large
Anne Gossen	✓	Arts-Culture
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3

Name	✓	Representation
Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Josh Friedman	✓	Arts-Culture
Cara Nichols	✓	Ithaca College
John Spence	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
Dwight Mengel	A	Transportation, Non-Voting
Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Jennifer Tavares	E	Chamber, Non-Voting
Martha Armstrong	✓	TCAD, Non-Voting
Dan Klein	✓	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Beverly Baker		Associate Member
Carol Kammen		Associate Member
Jon Reis		Associate Member
Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Pam Pariso	✓	Staff

8

9
 10 **Also in attendance:** Ed Marx, TC Planning; Christy Agnese, former IC STPB member; Monica Roth, CCE;
 11 Diane Bradac, TWNY; Livia Isaacson and Rodney Fleming, CVB.
 12

13 **Meeting Agenda**

- 14 1. April STPB Meeting Minutes
 15 2. Privilege of the Floor
 16 3. Principal Planner – Ed Marx
 17 4. Chair Report – Anne Gossen
 18 5. 2017 Budget Recommendations – Tom Knipe & Sue Stafford
 19 6. CVB Marketing Update Presentation –Rodney Fleming & Livia Isaacson
 20 7. Draft Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan – Ethan Ash & Tom Knipe
 21 8. Hospitality Workforce Development Program Annual Report – Diane Bradac
 22 9. Hospitality Star Graduation Ceremony 4:30-5:00
 23

24 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:07 PM by Vice Chair **Ethan Ash**. Chair **Anne Gossen** was present
 25 at the beginning of the meeting, but had to leave early because her son was ill.
 26

27 **April 2016 STPB meeting minutes were approved** with no changes. (There was no May meeting.)
 28

29 **Privilege of the Floor**

30 New member **Cara Rosenberg-Nichols** from Ithaca College spoke on behalf her parents and RoseBarb
 31 Farm about an upcoming Healthy Food for All event August 10, 5-8 p.m. She asked everyone to save the
 32 date. More information is coming from Cornell Cooperative Extension. **Dan Klein** introduced himself as the
 33 new County Legislature Liaison to the STPB. All welcomed him.
 34

35 **Principal Planner Report - Ed Marx, Tompkins County Commission of Planning**

36 Ed Marx congratulated **Tom Knipe** for his recent promotion from five years as a Senior Planner to Principal
 37 Planner - Tourism Program Director. Ed stated that tourism is a county priority worthy of a director. He
 38 commended Tom on improving the grants application and evaluation process. Ed thanked all present for
 39 their work on the STPB and the subcommittees. Tom will continue his responsibilities of leading tourism in
 40 Tompkins County in the future. **Sue Perlgut** expressed concern that the board wasn't directly involved in
 41 the decision-making process. Ed explained that Tom holds a Civil Service position, and that this was

42 County Personnel Department decision based on his job description and the increased level of
43 responsibility which had evolved over time. The personnel decision was not based solely on Ed's or Anne
44 Gossen's recommendation, but on Civil Service job descriptions from the county. Ed confirmed that one
45 hundred percent of Tom's job is focused on Tourism. Tom said he sees this as an evolution of the position,
46 and doesn't anticipate big shifts in the way the program operates. He's excited about the formal leadership
47 role, and looks forward to supporting the overall tourism program in moving to the next level. Tom thanked
48 the board for their work and involvement.

49 .
50 **Chair Report**

- 51 • Ethan Ash gave the chair report in Anne's absence. He congratulated **Christy Agnese**, who has
52 moved to Pennsylvania and has resigned from the STPB. Christy was recognized as a former
53 STPB vice chair and chaired or co-chaired several of its committees, including Budget, Marketing
54 and Advertising Grant Review, Wine Center Review and many grant committees. She'll receive a
55 paver with her name on it. She said farewell and expressed to everyone how much she loved
56 working with the STPB and that she'll miss everyone.
- 57 • Tom Knipe introduced **Dylan Tuttle**, the first Stu Stein Memorial Heritage Tourism Intern for
58 Tompkins County. He's a Cornell master's degree student with a strong interest in agritourism and
59 will be working this summer on several action items from the Heritage Tourism Implementation
60 Plan.
- 61 • Ethan said the next meeting is July 27 at 3:00 and took a poll to see who would be able to attend.
62 At least nine said they will attend. **Anne Kellerman** asked about virtual meeting as a way to assure
63 a full quorum. Tom said we'd have to check the By-Laws.

64
65 **Budget Recommendations – Tom Knipe & Sue Stafford**

66 **Sue Stafford** gave the overview, and Tom presented the detailed proposed budget. A summary of
67 recommendations was provided in the agenda packet, and further details were provided are on the Tourism
68 Program website. Individual board members asked about plans for Strategic Tourism Implementation funds,
69 clarification on the status of the wayfinding project, and concerns about impacts of expansion of ACOD
70 recipients without significant expansion of overall funding, and the board discussed these. Sue Stafford
71 asked that the STPB hold a vote to recommend the proposed budget so it can be sent to the County
72 Legislature for approval. Ken Jupiter made a motion to recommend the budget as presented. David Blake
73 seconded the motion. **Passed** unanimously by show of hands. Sue was thanked for her leadership of the
74 Budget Committee.

75
76 **CVB Marketing Update Presentation – Rodney Fleming & Livia Isaacson**

77 Livia and Rodney presented the CVB's new social media strategy called "Ithaca is People." The slides from
78 their presentation are attached to these minutes. STPB members were invited to get involved.

79
80 **Hospitality Workforce Development Program Annual Report – Diane Bradac**

81 **Diane Bradac** talked about the Tompkins County Hospitality Star program, and gave ten key points for her
82 annual report (see handout). This pilot program for the Hospitality Star was a huge success, and after her
83 presentation and this meeting, all were invited to the lobby for a brief graduation ceremony and cake.
84 Eleven graduates were honored.

85
86 **Draft Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan – Ethan Ash & Tom Knipe**

87 Tom and Ethan presented the draft executive summary of the Agriculinary Tourism Implementation plan,
88 which is attached to these meeting minutes. Tom requested comments on the draft executive summary.
89 Members are invited to comment on the full draft plan before being asked to vote to approve it in July.

90 Several board members gave announcements about upcoming events.

91
92
93 **Meeting Adjournment**

94 **Josh Friedman** made motion to adjourn, **Sue Perlgut** seconded. All were in favor by verbal vote.

95
96 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

97

98 Respectfully Submitted,
99 **Pam Pariso**
100 Administrative Assistant
101 Tompkins County Planning Department
102
103 **Next Meeting Scheduled**
104 July 27, 2016

DRAFT



Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Q2 2016 Report
Six Months, Ending June 2016

[Learn more >](#)





A Message from Peggy Coleman VP, Tourism & Community Relations

What a great first week! I've worked in the destination marketing industry for a long time, including as the Sales Manager here at the CVB in the 90s. Many moons later, I'm thrilled to be back as the VP, Tourism & Community Relations for the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce & CVB.

So much has changed over the last 21 years: new hotel development, new product offerings, upgrades to area theaters and to the Commons, to name just a few. The one thing that has remained constant is a talented, dedicated, and professional CVB team who inspires visitation from across the globe and then provides stellar visitor services to encourage repeat visitation. I am honored to join the team of the Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau. I look forward to meeting each of you in the coming weeks!

The county tourism economy for the first half of 2016 finished strong, with growth in occupancy, rate, demand, and revenue. All three departments of the CVB contributed to this economic growth. Marketing launched the "Ithaca is People" Instagram campaign featuring local influencers resulting in double the followers in just 25 days. 90% of our Facebook fans are from outside the destination, gaining us the highest potential for visitor conversion. Sales maintained its aggressive pace with over \$758,809 in projected revenue from business booked from leads generated by the CVB. For the first time, our sales team participated in the Administrative Professionals Celebrations on both Cornell and IC campuses, educating 700+ professionals who influence meeting site selection. Visitor Services opened a third visitor center at the Taughannock Falls Overlook. In the first three weeks of operation, the Visitor Services team already assisted 3300+ visitors at the new center.

We have many exciting programs in the pipeline for the rest of 2016, including updating the Visitor Profile Study and partnering with the County Tourism Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension on an agriculinary tourism project to develop and promote agriculinary tourism assets in Tompkins County. In the meantime, I encourage you all to get out and enjoy our destination as a visitor.

Safe travels,

Peggy Coleman, VP, Tourism & Community Relations
Ithaca/Tompkins County
Convention & Visitors Bureau



Q1-Q2 2016 Lodging Market Performance (STR)

	Ithaca-Tompkins		NY Ex. NYC		USA	
OCC Rate*	55.6%	+5.1%	67%	+0.3%	63.5%	0%
Avg Daily Rate**	\$149.45	+1.8%	\$183.16	-1.6%	\$122.18	+3%
RevPar	\$83.09	+7.0%	\$124.16	-1.3%	\$77.52	+3%
Supply	241,600	-3.4%		+2.2%		+1.5%
Demand	134,324	+1.5%		+3.5%		+1.5%
Revenue	\$20.075mil	+3.4%		+3.8%		+4%

*Occupancy Rate **Revenue per available room



Taughannock Visitor Center staff talks to 3,326 visitors over three weeks in June

Corning Museum of Glass brought 20 docents and volunteers to FAM Tompkins County

Visitor Services Department participated in Ithaca Today and Ithaca College Open Houses this spring

Taughannock Showing Tremendous Impact

Opening our third visitor center has demonstrated success in three short weeks. We assisted 3,326 visitors from 44 states and 33 countries.

New Visitors Center



Visitor Center Traffic

We have experienced an unprecedented 48% growth YoY in visitor touchpoints! 38% of our total visitor touchpoints are made through the three visitor centers. 84% of guests to our centers are from the US. Top 4 countries in descending order were Canada, UK, Germany, and Israel. Top 10 home states of our guests were NY, PA, NJ, OH, MA, CA, CT, FL, MD, VA.

YTD Totals

	2016	2015	2014
ESD Walk ins	2540	2594	2786
DVC Walk ins	3337	2832	2446
Taughannock	3326	0	0
Chat Requests	1746	1698	0
TG Requests	3092	3640	7349
OffSite Touchpoints	8705	3783	0
Phone Calls	949	1417	1726
Totals	23695	15964	14307

Chat Still Producing Inquiries

Chat component resulted in 435 lodging inquiries with an estimated impact of 789 room nights. 30% of chat inquiries are related to lodging and waterfalls.

Chat Top 10



- Lodging inquiries
- Waterfalls/State Parks/Hiking
- Events
- Directions/Transportation
- Outdoor Recreation
- Miscellaneous
- Camping
- Wineries/Breweries
- Travel Guide Request
- Restaurants

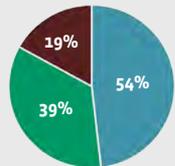
Town Gown Success

As part of our work plan, we have made a concerted effort to have more presence on both college campuses during orientations, grad fairs and the like this spring. Data indicates 36% of our documented touchpoints have been reached through this method of programming.



Visitor Center Top 3 Topics of Conversation

- Directions and/or Maps
- Waterfalls / State Parks / Hiking
- Downtown Information





- Mobile traffic to VisitIthaca.com nearly matches desktop at 46%
- Instagram relaunch increases followers by 101% in 3 weeks
- 2016 Sweepstakes lowers CPA by 48% YoY, our lowest ever in email marketing

'Ithaca is People' Launch

Our Instagram is now run by Tompkins County residents, with early results doubling our audience in less than a month. They are highlighted across all social mediums to drive traffic to our Instagram account.

Early Results

737
Followers on June 5, 2016
(Relaunch Date)

1480
Followers on June 30, 2016

4359
Engagements from June 5-30, 2016

Facebook Engagement at New High

With a strategized focus on four content pillars, we have seen numbers rise faster in this half year than the previous three.

With 90% of active fans living outside Ithaca and 76% women, Facebook is reaching a prime tourism audience.

Facebook Fan Growth



Fans Living Outside of Tompkins County

21% Growth YoY

Gorges Getaway Campaign Success

The six week campaign broke our record for lowest CPA (Cost Per Acquisition) of email addresses, and garnered us an additional 3,867 email newsletter subscribers.

Campaign ROI

\$5-8
Average CPA Cost

\$3.50
2015 Sweeps CPA Cost

\$1.48
2016 Sweeps CPA Cost



426K
Impressions

3,867
New Subscribers

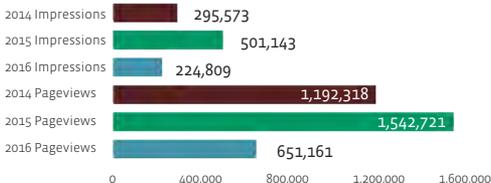
34,415
Total Subscribers

Mobile Traffic Matches Desktop

Q1-Q2, mobile/tablet devices have brought in 46% of all site traffic, up from 36% in 2015.

While last year's Key West PR anomaly spiked traffic last year with over 200,000 unique site visits, we are seeing expected numbers for 2016, with our new site minimizing pageviews as users are directed towards relevant content easier than ever.

YTD Web Traffic



Ithaca Farm to Fork
1,023 Facebook Likes
25% increase

Post Engagement up 25% since Q4 2015



VisitIthaca.com 2.0 in preliminary phases to further refine User Experience after August 2015 launch



8 million+ regional impressions, including nearly 2.5 million local impressions

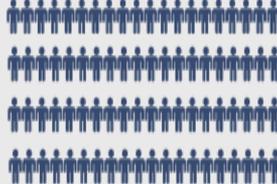
Canadian tourism campaign continues to grow with 1 million + cross-border impressions

BrandUSA Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway Video in production

Regional Tourism Council puts FLX in the Spotlight

The Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council and QUINN PR brought 8.1million + impressions to the region from national media including Glamour Magazine, The Wall Street Journal and the Today Show.

Regional Impressions



8.13M
Impressions

Local Awards and Accolades

Ithaca/Tompkins County gathered nearly 20.5 million + impressions due to features and awards from media such as USA Today, Thrillist and Men's Journal magazine.

Local Impressions



20.5M
Impressions

International PR Continues to Grow:

A Welcome Surprise: Cross Border Showcase

Our partnership with the largest Canadian tourism campaign in the country resulted in 1 million + out-of-market media impressions since May including radio spots totaling an average of 20,000 listeners.



Brand USA: Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway Video

Tompkins, Cayuga and Seneca Counties have partnered for a production of a destination video and travel article that will be broadcasted worldwide. This video will be translated in numerous languages. We will own the rights to all content including b-roll video.



Notable 2016 Stories Include:





- Trade show attendance brings 59 appointments with tour operators YTD
- 51 leads booked YTD brings over \$758,809 in revenue, 2,294 room nights, +22% YoY
- Ithaca Motorcoach FAM tour brings booked business

Ithaca Sales by the Numbers:

51

Sales Leads Booked YTD



\$759K

Projected Revenue



2,294

Projected Room Nights



33

American Bus Association

The number of appointments with tour operators that took place at the American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace.



13

Pennsylvania Bus Association

The number of appointments conducted at the Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA) annual meeting.



900

PBA Marketplace

The number of group leaders who attended PBA marketplace with 25 tour operators where Ithaca CVB had a booth.



13

Destinations of New York State

The number of appointments secured at the Destinations of New York State (DONYS) sales blitz, focusing on New England and Connecticut.



147

Empire State Society of Association Executives

The number of association executives at the Empire State Society of Association Executives exposition, where Ithaca CVB, Statler, and Hotel Ithaca were all exhibiting.



Ithaca Sales Motorcoach FAM

The June 2016 FAM tour has already resulted in multiple bookings for 2017.

Tourism Development Projects:

Visitor Profile Study to Be Updated

The Tompkins County Tourism Program, CVB, Discovery Trail, and other tourism partners are joining forces to update our Tompkins County visitor profile, and will be executing a contract shortly for these services. The Visitor Profile Study Client Committee received and reviewed two proposals from consultants interested in updating the oft-cited “Chmura Study” from 2010. Work on this important project is set to begin by fall 2016, with completion in late summer of 2017.



Ithaca Events Launch is on the Horizon

The Ithaca Events website is in its final phases! Venue landing pages have been created and events are currently being reorganized and curated for a cleaner, more user-friendly calendar. The default calendar design is being customized to create a seamless user experience while redirecting traffic to the Visit Ithaca website.



Sowing the Seeds of Agri-Culinary Tourism

In February, with the support of the CVB, over 100 local farmers and rural land owners attended a conference to learn about opportunities to grow their business and host visitors to our area. Community engagement continues to grow on social media platforms, and our recently launched social media campaign is inclusive of residents involved in the local farm-to-fork movement. The Tompkins County Tourism Program has secured a grant from the USDA to continue the development of marketing, product development and technical assistance aspects of the program.





Do you/your business want to be our featured Guest Blogger?

Contact livia@visitithaca.com for more information!



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Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) 2016 Goals

2016 Action-Oriented Goals

- A. Complete the Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan and create a tangible program by the end of the year. (Lead: STPB Agriculinary Tourism Task Force)
- B. Complete the Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan by February 2016. (Lead: STPB Heritage Tourism Task Force)
- C. Continue new comprehensive visitor profile study process for Tompkins County. A contract with a qualified research firm to be in place by early 2016, with the study to begin by mid 2016. (Leads: CVB, STPB P&E Committee, Study Client Committee)
- D. Create a communications plan for the Tompkins County Tourism Program.
- E. Convene a Higher Education Tourism Working Group (Lead: Task Force)
- F. Complete the Outdoor Recreation Tourism Implementation Plan (Lead: Task Force)

2016 Policy-Driven Goals

- H. Discuss the P+E Committee threshold of tourism program investment for more thorough review of an organization or project, and a framework for assessing risk for new initiatives. Timing: February 2016. (Lead: P&E Committee)
- I. Discuss tourism vision with new Vice President of Tourism & Community Relations. (Lead: CVB)
- J. Discuss existing and potential structural efforts for diverse representation on the STPB board, and inventory existing board diversity efforts (Lead: Membership and Bylaws Committee and encourage any board member to attend)

The following Possible Goals will be revisited in July 2016 for possible inclusion in STPB goals for the year. Staff and board member capacity to achieve the board goals in 2016 will be the primary consideration in determining whether any of these possible goals are added to the list of approved goals.

POSSIBLE Action-Oriented Goals

1. Re-convene a meeting facility task force (Lead: STPB Meeting and Conference Facility Task Force)

POSSIBLE Policy-Driven Goals

- Follow up on Tourism Program Communications and Branding effort to advocate for the County Tourism Program, such as by having= board members meet with community stakeholders including elected officials to communicate the impact of the county tourism program.(Lead: STPB)

Possible 2017 Goals

- Align budgeting with strategic priorities incorporating new information from the 2016 Visitor Profile Study, the various recent new tourism plans (Agriculinary, Heritage, Outdoor, Wayfinding, Beautification) grants feedback, and other sources. Examine Arts and Culture support in other communities to understand our community's support for the arts relative to other communities and our goals, and consider similar programs for other tourism sectors. Critically examine the tourism program policy of long-term vs. short term projects, infrastructure vs. events, and encouraging additional time for visitors already coming vs. bringing new visitors. (Lead: P+E)
- Conduct a detailed review of tourism program funding by sector and report on the level/quality of alignment of funding and priorities. Potential intern project.