

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

April 16, 2014
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm
CVB

Meeting Agenda	Minutes
1. Opener	10
2. March Meeting Minutes	2
3. Privilege of the Floor	3
4. Chair's Report – Rick Adie	7
5. Staff Report – Tom Knipe	7
6. Tourism Capital Grant Recommendations – Martha Armstrong ACTION – Recommend 2014 Tourism Capital Grants	20
7. STPB Budget Committee Report DISCUSSION	20
8. CVB Monthly Report – Jodi LaPierre, Mary Rachun	10
9. Ag & Culinary Tourism Task Force Report – Rita Rosenberg-Barber	5
10. Upcoming Tourism Program-Funded Activities and Collecting and Recording STPB Member Impressions	5

Agenda Packet

- Draft March 2014 STPB Meeting Minutes
- Summary of 2014 Tourism Capital Grant Recommendations
- CVB April, 2014 Report
- Tompkins Lodging Industry 2000-2013 spreadsheet
- 2014 STPB Committee Assignments – revised March, 2014

Next Meetings May 21, 2014
 June 18, 2014



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 Draft – March 2014**

1 **Date:** March 19, 2014
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:00pm
 3 **Location:** CVB / Chamber of Commerce
 4
 5

Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	E	At-Large	Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Anthony Hopson	A	Ithaca College	Susie Monagan	✓	Arts-Culture
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation	<i>John Spence</i>	✓	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	<i>Bruce Stoff</i>	✓	<i>CVB, Non-Voting</i>
John Gutenberger	E	Cornell	<i>Dwight Mengel</i>	✓	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
Lynette Scofield	✓	Lodging	<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	A	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	<i>Jean McPheeters</i>	✓	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
Rita Rosenberg	✓	Agriculture	<i>Martha Armstrong</i>	✓	<i>TCAD, Non-Voting</i>
Andy Zepp	✓	At-Large	<i>Will Burbank</i>	✓	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large	<i>Beverly Baker</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large	<i>Carol Kammen</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	<i>Jon Reis</i>	✓	<i>Associate Member</i>
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large	<i>Stuart Stein</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Anne Gossen	✓	At-Large	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3	Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff
Christy Agnese	✓	At-Large			

9 **Also in attendance: Ronda Roaring**

10 **Agenda**

- 11 February Meeting Minutes
- 12 Chair's Report
- 13 Staff Report
- 14 Wayfinding Plan Presentation
- 15 Presentation and Discussion – Laurene Gilbert, Jean McPheeters, Tom Knipe
- 16 CVB 2014 Revised Work plan
- 17 Presentation and Discussion
- 18 Spring 2014 Tourism Grant Review and Recommendations
- 19 Action – Recommend Community Celebrations Grants – Carol Kammen
- 20 Action – Recommend Tourism marketing & Advertising Grants – Ethan Ash
- 21 Action – Recommend New Tourism Initiatives Grants – Anne Gossen
- 22 Action – Recommend Tourism Project Grants – Steve Hugo
- 23 2014 Arts and Culture Organizational Development (ACOD) Grants
- 24 Action – Recommend 2014 ACOD grants awards – John Spence
- 25 Ag & Culinary Tourism Working Group Report – Rita Rosenberg

26 **Discussion**

27
 28 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:03 PM.
 29

30 **March 2014 STPB meeting minutes** were approved with no changes
 31

32 **Chair's Report:** Rick Adie reported on STPB Budget Committee activity. Actual 2013 revenues came
 33 within \$4,000 of the 2 million dollar budget. A final reconciliation of expenses and revenues will be available
 34 in April. The Budget Committee has decided not to make a recommendation regarding the \$21,755
 35 originally allocated for the Ticket Center that will not be used for the Ticket Center this year. Rick mentioned
 36 that unlike last year, the amount of money in reserves will be smaller at \$6,000 for the year. Although
 37 weather has impacted hotel business for the winter season, and that new inventory in town has helped
 38 increase the February weekend hotel stays. Rick Adie noted the schedule for developing the 2015 budget.
 39
 40

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes Draft – March 2014**

41 There will be a Horizons meeting on April 4th to discuss trends and projections. Topics will include an
42 exploration of a zero based budgeting approach and finding ways to finance strategic priorities. The Ag &
43 Culinary Tourism Working Group had its first meeting a few weeks ago, and the Heritage Tourism Working
44 Group is getting underway. The anticipated start date for the Higher Education Tourism Working Group will
45 be early summer. Rick emphasized all the hard work that went into the grant application review process and
46 thanked members for their hard work. He went on to note the new electronic application, thanking Tom
47 Knipe for streamlining the process. Andy Zepp was introduced as the newest At- Large Member who will be
48 filling the position of Miriam Musco, who resigned earlier this year. Andy introduced himself as the
49 Executive Director of the Finger Lakes Land Trust. They are an organization that works cooperatively to
50 help protect land and open space across the twelve counties in the Finger Lakes region.
51

52 **Staff Report** – Tom Knipe gave a brief tutorial on the new grant application and review website. Reviewers
53 are able to access a number of reports (including about return on investment), based on attendance and
54 other information the applicants provide. The database-backed system allows reviewers to exchange
55 questions and comments online as they are reviewing applications. Tom also posted applicant answers to
56 some of the reviewer's questions. Tom also reported on the most recent EDC meeting where he and Bruce
57 Stoff presented information relating to Air BnB. EDC's feedback was that the CVB should list the Air BnB
58 operators that are registered to pay the room tax but should not otherwise promote AirBnB as a booking
59 site. Tom also reported to the EDC on the status of implementation of the Strategic Tourism Plan. He
60 focused on the areas identified for special STPB action. EDC members expressed a desire to consider
61 ACOD or other sources of funding as means of advancing implementation of the Plan. Tom has been
62 sharing the Priority Trails Strategy with other groups in the County including TCCOG and is starting to get
63 invites from towns. Tom has been working with Seneca and Cayuga counties on early preparation for a
64 CFA application to the state to develop the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail.
65

66 **Wayfinding Plan Presentation and Discussion** – Jean McPheeters opened by explaining the origin of the
67 Wayfinding Strategy. Wayfinding has long been a priority of the Tourism Program and a Strategic Tourism
68 Implementation Grant was approved in early 2013. The funds cover the hiring of the project manager and
69 consultant to do a comprehensive Wayfinding Plan. There is little money for implementing the signs in the
70 project. Jean listed members of the Steering Committee and praised them for their contributions.
71

72 Laurene Gilbert introduced herself as the project manager. She is a former employee of Cornell University
73 with a background in landscape architecture. The goal for the wayfinding strategy is to create a system that
74 would be adopted across the board for motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and would be located on
75 major highways and roads. Tom Knipe gave more background on the reasons that the project was funded
76 by the Tourism Program: 1) feedback from visitors about the difficulty of locating areas of interest or known
77 landmarks; 2) presence of signage on state highways which requires special approvals; 3) disjointed nature
78 of existing wayfinding signage systems due to the lack of a comprehensive plan for wayfinding signage; and
79 4) existing gaps in the system.
80

81 The consultants that were hired are PJ Smith. They were chosen for their experience and proximity
82 (Buffalo); their group is made up of planners and architects with ties to Cornell and they also worked on the
83 Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway. The study process started with information-gathering using the city sign
84 inventory and a study developed by Cornell planning students. Around 100 partners, including highway
85 superintendents, leaders from different municipalities, and a number of different venues were convened for
86 vision sessions and focus groups prior to the first of two public meetings. Originally the number of possible
87 attractions was 435. It was narrowed down to about 30. Rochester, Syracuse, Seneca Falls and Cayuga
88 County's wayfinding systems were helpful to use as case studies. A hierarchy of signs was created with
89 interpretive information that includes vehicular information along with pedestrian and bicycle kiosks. Phase
90 Two of the consultant's work will include design specifications: the design and details of the actual signs. A
91 draft plan will be reviewed and finalized by the end of April (the end of Phase One of the project).
92

93 Jean McPheeters noted some of the debated items of what landmarks will be named, what signs would be
94 removed and which signs will be replaced. She described several different types of signs, from gateway
95 signs to inter-community signs and district (community wayfinding) signs. Ithaca districts would include
96 waterfront, downtown, South Hill/Ithaca College and East Hill/Cornell which would be designated by
97 different colors. In the downtown areas there would be non-vehicular signs that would estimate a timeframe

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes Draft – March 2014**

98 for travel to different locations. There are also goals in place to add interpretive kiosks. The sizes, colors
99 and size of letters have been approved by the NY State DOT. The Steering Committee continues to meet to
100 give feedback to the consultant on the draft. Still to be included in the draft are cost estimates and more
101 details about phasing and implementation. Possible outside funding sources to explore include the State
102 Department of Transportation, the federal Transportation Alternatives Program, Regional Economic
103 Development Councils, TIGER and the City of Ithaca. She anticipates applying for a REDC grant in
104 conjunction with another region. The project is scheduled to be completed before the end of July. Jean will
105 see the Wayfinding Plan through to completion even if she leaves the Chamber before July. Tom Knipe
106 anticipates the utilization of a number of funding sources to bring this project forward.
107

108 **Monthly CVB Report and CVB 2014 Revised Work Plan** – The new STR Report shows that having 6.8%
109 more hotel rooms available has helped increase revenue by 8% in February. Teachers Winter Recess did
110 not generate the amount of anticipated hotel stays. Because of the time spent to produce the event it will
111 not be included in the CVB's budget request next year. The new smaller travel guide came out last week.
112 The Taughannock Falls overlook will be repaired in the next 2 years and will include a visitor's center, which
113 the CVB has been asked to help staff. Bruce referenced travel guide savings and the Director transition as
114 the two primary reasons for the \$57,000 carry over from last year. He plans on carrying the funds over to
115 different departments for more marketing and group sales. Some of his focuses are \$20,000 will be
116 allocated for trade shows. 2014 will also bring new focus on motor-coach, sports marketing and also
117 enhancing Chinese group tours. The Cortland Sports Council had a plan to do marketing for the CVB,
118 which will not be carried out this year. Bruce also discussed declining Visitor's Center foot traffic in this
119 digital world; and a need to focus on developing a new model for visitors centers in 2015. Bruce is planning
120 a \$110,000 digital marketing campaign in the next couple of weeks which for the first time will include a call
121 to action to visit during the mid-week. The Farm to Fork program advertising will start tomorrow focusing on
122 social media. There was discussion of the high cost of rooms and whether or not there will be price breaks.
123 Bruce's thoughts were that we will first need to give visitors reasons to want to visit Ithaca on the weekdays,
124 so that will be the focus of the marketing effort. He mentioned discussions that have taken place with the
125 innkeepers and notes the cooperative responses. Rick Adie noted that there will be no STPB action today
126 regarding the rollover of the budget and or budget changes. Tom Knipe will further investigate the
127 appropriate formal process with County Administration and get back to the STPB.
128

129 **Spring 2013 Tourism Grant Review**

130 **Celebrations** – Carol Kammen (Chair) reported the recommendation of \$11,000 to five projects within the
131 City of Ithaca. She noted that there was \$12,857 recommended to nine projects in communities outside the
132 City (Danby, Enfield, Groton, Newfield, Ulysses and 3 in Lansing). She noted the number of old projects that
133 applied and had revamped their format to fit the community's needs. One application was rejected because it
134 was a repeat from the following year, and two applications were rejected because they lacked focus or
135 capacity. The groups will be encouraged to work on their projects and to re-apply next year. Carol Kammen
136 moved to accept the committee recommendations, seconded by Sue Perlgut. **Vote:** passed by unanimous
137 vote.
138

139 **Tourism Marketing & Advertising** – Christy Agnese thanked Tom for the online application in the ease in
140 the application process. She recommended all 11 grant submissions for some level of funding and
141 mentioned that the only cuts were strategic. She provided the example that Tourism Marketing and
142 Advertising did not approve one applicant's request for brochures to be handed out to attendees because
143 this was not a qualifying out-of-county marketing expense. Christy voiced her enthusiasm in having a fall
144 round with available funds of \$23,211. Christy Agnese moved to accept the committee recommendations,
145 seconded by Rita Rosenberg. **Vote:** Yes 12; No 0; Abstentions 2 (Susie Monaghan, Sue Perlgut).
146

147 **New Tourism Initiatives** – Anne Gossen opened by thanking Tom Knipe for the useful online application.
148 She reported that there were four applications that requested \$42,400 and that they were recommending
149 awards totaling \$38,800, leaving \$36,500 for a fall round. Anne commented on the application for a feasibility
150 study for ice climbing, which is not a typical project. The project would work to identify and address safety
151 and risk management issues, along with funding and marketing opportunities, and would provide an
152 economic impact study and negotiations to secure permission to pursue ice climbing as a new winter visitor
153 activity in Ithaca. **Vote** on motion: Yes 12; No 0; Abstentions 2 (Ethan Ash, Sue Perlgut).
154

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes Draft – March 2014**

155 **Tourism Project Grants** – Anne Gossen reported that the applicant’s requests were double the amount of
156 funding available and that all the recommended awards fell between 33-80% of the requested amounts, with
157 one exception for a project which is not recommended for funding. Anne noted the stand outs this year were
158 Winter Festival and Winter Village Music because they align well with the off season and the re-opening of
159 the Commons. Recommended funding levels for the Dragon_Boat Festival and Scottish Games was less
160 than in years past in order to promote financial independence/sustainability. Anne Gossen moved to accept
161 the committee recommendations, seconded by Ken Jupiter. **Vote** on Motion: Yes 12; No 0; Abstentions 2
162 (Susie Monagan, Sue Perlgut)
163

164 **2014 Arts & Culture Organizational Development Grants** – John Spence opened by thanking the panel.
165 In addition to the STPB Arts & Culture reps, the panel included Leslie Ackerman, Director of the Business
166 Sense Program at Alternatives Federal Credit Union. Six organizations were previously been approved for
167 ACOD funding and were given three year contracts. 2014 is the second year on their three year contracts.
168 They are required to submit a year-end report for review and the committee determined that all six
169 organizations met their eligibility requirements and were making progress towards their stated objectives.
170 The Kitchen Theatre, Hangar Theatre, PRI (jointly for MOE and CNC), Sciencenter, History Center, and
171 Cayuga Chamber Orchestra are being recommended to continue with the amounts in their original awards.
172 The only difference was that Kitchen Theatre lost money in 2013 when they did not participate with the Ticket
173 Center and due to the results of the negotiated agreement to space out the reduction over two payments, it
174 was recommended that they be awarded \$23,000 of the originally awarded amount of \$27,000. The State
175 Theatre submitted a new application. John noted that the State Theatre has been funded previously through
176 ACOD and re-applied after their contract expired. He went on to say that their hiring of a marketing director
177 has been successful in recognizing the kind of shows they can sell. He also mentioned that four bands from
178 Ithaca have decided to kick off their national tours from Ithaca. The committee recommends that the State
179 Theatre be funded with a two-year award at \$27,000 per year. An application from Friends of Stewart Park
180 was deemed ineligible under the current guidelines due to a lack of 501c3 certification from the IRS, lack of
181 permanent space for the public or staff. Ken Jupiter moved to accept the committee recommendations,
182 seconded by Rita Rosenberg. **Vote** on motion: Yes 12; No 0 Abstentions 2 (Christy Agnese, Susie Monagan)
183

184 **Ag & Culinary Tourism Task Force Report** – Rita Rosenberg and Ethan Ash (co-chairs) met with Tom
185 Knipe and Rick Adie to identify the first steps and goals for the group. A meeting is scheduled for early April
186 to which the CVB, CCE, DIA, restaurant and hotel owners, chefs, winery personnel, and tour operators will
187 be invited. The meeting will serve to identify challenges as well as potential assets and opportunities.
188 Research of best practices from other communities will also be conducted. The taskforce plans to produce a
189 five year Ag & Culinary Tourism Implementation Plan by the end of the 2014.
190

191 **Announcements** - Rick Adie mentioned upcoming events that will take place after the next Strategic
192 Tourism Planning Board meeting. He encouraged members to attend the events and provide feedback. He
193 went on to thank the group in all their efforts and progress that was made.
194

195 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:01pm.
196

197 Respectfully Submitted,
198 Jennifer Turner, Administrative Assistant
199 Tompkins County Planning Department
200

201 **Next Meeting Scheduled**
202 Wednesday, April 16, 2014

MEMORANDUM

To: STP Board
 From: Martha Armstrong <marthaa@tcad.org>
 Date: April 10, 2014
 Re: Tourism Capital Grant recommendations for review April 16, 2014

At the April 16 meeting, we will review the Tourism Capital Grant applications summarized in the table below. The STPB will act by deciding what to recommend to the County legislature.

The table indicates the project value, the request, and the Tourism Capital Grant Review Committee's recommendations. Page 2 provides a brief description of each applicant's project. A longer synopsis 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 TCAD's website – please go to the following url:

http://www.tcad.org/?page_id=2744 which requires the password **tcad2014**.

Application Summary

Application	App* Type	Project Value	REQUEST		RECOMMENDATION	
			Grant	Award years	Grant	Award years
Finger Lakes ReUse Center: Living Building Challenge Visitor Study	F	14,920	9,698	2014	0	NA
Tompkins Planning: Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail: Design Study	F	18,000	18,000	2014	10,000	reimburse
CSMA: 3 rd Floor Performance Space Capital Improvements Phase 1	C	165,400	55,134	1 or 2 years, prefer 1	55,000	31,000 2014 24,000 2015
Ithaca Children's Garden: Edible Forest Garden Phase 1	C	102,809	34,235	1 or 2 years, prefer 1	34,000	34,000 2014
PRI Cayuga Nature Center: Cayuga Lake Past and Present Exhibit	C	241,180	85,000	2014 42,500 2015 42,500	40,000	20,000 2014 10,000 2015 10,000 2016
Sciencenter: Mini-Golf Construction	C	307,400	100,000	2014 50,000 2015 50,000	25,000	0 2014 10,000 2015 15,000 2016
Totals		849,709	302,067		164,000	

* FS is Feasibility Study, C is capital grant

General Comments:

The Tourism Capital Grant program has **\$195,000** available for grants.

- \$95,000 is available to distribute in 2014
- \$100,000 may be awarded for future years through multi-year awards

Application Briefs

Finger Lakes ReUse Center: Living Building Challenge Visitor Study

Two-part study: Evaluate the feasibility of completing the Living Building Challenge for FLRC's new Ithaca ReUse Center located on Old Elmira Road. Also evaluate the feasibility of creating a destination for tourists in collaboration with The Sustainability Center.

Tompkins Planning: Cayuga Lake BlueWay Trail: Design Study

Design a logo, sign design, interpretive kiosk design, and CLBT style guide. This will establish basic elements for consistent development of existing and new launch points and waterside access points. Initial design work will also deliver graphics and themes for use in a wide variety of web and print promotional tools.

CSMA: 3rd Floor Performance Space Capital Improvements Phase 1

Phase 1 Capital Improvements follows the guidance of their 2013 feasibility study. Includes: replacement of the historic windows, plaster repair, and stage renovations. These accomplish visual improvements and address structural, safety, energy and code compliance concerns. Future phases will address electric, acoustics, and other needed improvements.

Ithaca Children's Garden: Edible Forest Garden Phase 1

Phase 1 includes: a major path linked to the Cayuga Waterfront Trail that includes a board walk defining the eastern edge of the Children's Garden, completion of the fence that provides safety for young visitors, excludes deer, and defines entry points, and completion of the outdoor kitchen for garden-to-table education.

PRI Cayuga Nature Center: Cayuga Lake Past and Present Exhibit

This new exhibit will tell the story of Cayuga Lake at two different time periods: pre-colonial and the present. Two large freshwater aquaria are at the core of this exhibit, each holding approximately 1,000 gallons. One aquarium will represent the biota of Cayuga Lake today, and the other the biota around 300 years ago, before the major impacts of Europeans.

Sciencenter: Mini-Golf Construction

Completely renovate, expand and professionalize the mini-golf course. Builds on 2013 feasibility study to enhance aesthetics, accessibility, weather dependency, weatherization, design flaws and functionality, and to develop new science-themed challenges for each hole. Will be ADA compliant and the only mini-golf course in Tompkins County.

Detailed synopsis of each application and review comments are on page 3-14.

Multi-year funding recommendations are detailed on page 16.

General note about these recommendations:

This year the TCG Review Committee recommends emphasizing newer projects and applicants over those that are more established and/or have drawn on this program multiple times.

In the past, the award of large multi-year grants began to reduce the amount of funds available in the first year of subsequent grant cycles. This year the Committee did not award the entire pool of funds that could have been awarded for multi-year awards. This approach will continue to rebuild the funds available in the first year as the program moves forward.

Synopsis of Finger Lakes ReUse Center's Feasibility Study: Living Building Challenge

Background: Finger Lakes ReUse (FLR) incorporated in 2007 and opened its original ReUse Center in Triphammer Mall, in 2008. Their primary operation is to accept, process and sell donations of reusable building materials and house wares. They also run a training program targeting long-term unemployed to learn basic employment skills. FLR's annual budget is \$840,000. They have 14 employees, 9 interns and 20 trainees. The FLR Center attracted 43,837 visitors (donors and customers) in 2013. 20% of their visitors are from outside Tompkins County.

Project: FLR is purchasing a 17,000 square foot building at 214 Old Elmira Road to expand their operations and bring reuse opportunities to downtown Ithaca. Basic structural and mechanical upgrades to the building will cost about \$230,000 to \$400,000. FLR envisions the Ithaca ReUse Center as a destination for tourists who are interested in sustainability and green building. They are exploring the possibility of green upgrades to the building. One such possibility is the Living Building Challenge certificate program, a new program that requires the "greenest" building performance. This could cost an additional \$1.5-2.0 million. FLR is requesting support to hire Taitem Engineering to evaluate the feasibility of completing the Living Building Challenge. If completed, it would be only the second building of its kind in New York State. At the same time, FLR proposed to identify a tourism consultant to assess the tourism impact of this rigorous greening upgrade and its alignment with the County's Strategic Tourism Plan. FLR is also exploring with the Sustainability Center the possibility of a co-location partnership. The Sustainability Center, a project of the Center for Transformative Action, is currently located at 111 North Albany Street near State.

Request: \$9,698 toward total value of \$14,920
(\$6,448 toward the engineering study; \$3,250 toward the tourism study)

Schedule: Approximately 28 weeks

Tourism Strategic Plan

page 26: Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as the preeminent Sustainability Tourism destination in New York State

Recent Tourism Grants

None

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- The ReUse Center has been successful and grown substantially since their founding in 2007
- Sustainability tourism is identified as an Emerging Focus Area in the Strategic Tourism Plan

Weaknesses

- Feels like an "if they build it they will come proposal". We need an overall study of sustainability tourism to understand if there is really a market for this.

- Tourism part of the study needs to be done before considering if the Taitem part of the study is worth pursuing
- The visitors are really shoppers – not sure that figure can be used to infer how many tourists would be attracted from outside of the County
- Organizationally: need to show strong board support, and combining two organizations (ReUse Center and Sustainability Center) with different missions can be challenging
- The Living Building Challenge requires a major investment and has a big scope. The application does not show projections of operating costs going forward and has no discussion of the financial sustainability of this project

General Comments

- The STPB has established a committee this year to look at the role of sustainability in local tourism. The Review Committee would like to see the STP's committee explore this, and felt this would provide important guidance to reviewing sustainability oriented tourism proposals.
- The committee would prefer to see the applicant undertake a more clearly defined tourism study of the proposed project before the Taitem engineering study.

Synopsis of Tompkins County Planning Department's Feasibility Study: Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Design Study

Background: In 2013, the Tompkins County Planning Department with its partners in Seneca and Cayuga Counties developed the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan. The plan was funded by a \$45,000 grant from the New York State Department of State through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Grant Program (LWRP). The three counties together contributing an additional \$45,000 of matching in-kind support. The Plan significantly advances regional efforts to develop a formal water trail on Cayuga Lake by identifying the existing conditions along the lakeshore for paddle boaters; assessing regional assets; identifying gaps in access areas along the lakeshore; and proposing locations and preliminary concepts for future access points and launch sites. The Plan also outlines best practices in water trail development, draws examples from case studies of similar water trails which have been effectively implemented, and includes potential itineraries and marketing, outreach, and implementation strategies. (For details, see a copy of the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan submitted with this application.) A key goal of the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail is to promote tourism and economic development by enhancing access to Cayuga Lake for kayakers, canoers and stand-up paddleboarders, and promoting Cayuga Lake as a destination for paddling experiences.

Project: Develop a detailed Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail (CLBT) design. This will consist of a logo, sign design, interpretive kiosk design, and CLBT style guide for use in other common site elements for each of the fourteen "existing" CLBT sites. This initial design work will also deliver graphics and themes for use in a wide variety of web and print promotional tools later, including an interactive website for the Blueway Trail. This study will determine the basic elements for consistent development of existing and new launch points and waterside access points along the Blueway Trail. Support for the study will position the Trail to apply for additional funds through the NY State Consolidated Funding Application this year to fund development of the Trail sites.

Other Relevant Information: The Trail will simultaneously be working on develop of a business/management plan for the Blueway Trail. Support for this second element is proposed to be provided in-kind from several sources, including planning departments from each of the three involved Counties (Tompkins, Cayuga and Seneca) and the National Park Service, [Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program \(RTCA\)](#).

Request: Not to exceed \$18,000 -- based on preliminary discussions with potential consultants.

Schedule: Select consultant by July 2014; complete study by December 2014

Tourism Strategic Plan

page 23: Expand outdoor recreation and other tourism related to our outstanding natural amenities: Cayuga Lake, gorges and waterfalls, trails, parks, and natural areas.

page 24: 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.

Recent Tourism Grants

None

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- Increasing access to the lake is a long-time unmet goal of the tourism board
- Increases attention to our waterways, builds on dragon boats, sailing club and so on
- non-motorized boats
- project development is proceeding in logical steps
- strong alignment with the Strategic Tourism Plan
- Cost of work seems reasonable

Weaknesses

- Lake only accessible three months of the year – prefer to favor year round activities
- Three counties are involved in the trail, so why should our county pay the entire cost?

General Comments

- The Committee hopes that the other two counties will combine to provide the other \$8,000 needed to complete this step of the BlueWay Trail's development

**Synopsis of Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA)'s
Capital Grant: Third Floor Performance Space: Capital Improvements Phase 1**

Background: CSMA's mission includes: arts education, arts presentation and being a resource for artists and musicians. CSMA hosts gallery nights and public performances. CSMA's 1920's building houses the historic Fraternal Order of Eagles ballroom on the third floor. This performance venue can hold an audience of 400 standing, 300 in theatre seating and 175 at table seating. CSMA's overall attendance is about 21,000 annually, including nearly 17,000 attendees at 375 events in the Third Floor Performance Space. The space has a history of hosting popular national acts as well as local performances. Recent and current uses of the space related to tourism include Light In Winter, the Fringe Festival (theatre), Ithaca Comedy FEST, Spring Writes, Winter Village Bluegrass Festival (kids' bluegrass academy), and weddings (including two same-sex marriages). Recent shows have drawn 15-20% of audience from outside the County, and 3-6% from greater than 75 miles away.

CSMA purchased the building in 1998 and invested in upgrades to the third floor including: new heating and cooling, renovated bathrooms, replacement dance floor, upholstery and closets. They have also invested \$45,000 in repairing the elevator. Recently, CSMA has put significant effort into improving their organization and operations. This includes refinancing the building to reduce and manage expenses, focusing on program development, and strengthening their board. They are currently working to re-brand the organization.

Annual Budget: \$523,000

Project: The proposed Phase 1 Capital Improvements follows the guidance of their 2013 feasibility study that analyzed and prioritized improvements to the third floor Eagles ballroom. Phase 1 focuses on: replacement of the historic windows, plaster repair, and stage renovations. While these bring visual improvements to the space, they also address structural, safety, energy and code compliance concerns. Future phases will address upgraded electric services, improved acoustics, the audience entrance and other needed improvements to support a full array of events. Architect John Snyder, a board member is preparing the designs and cost estimates.

Request: \$55,133 for 1/3 of \$165,400 Phase 1 improvements.

Schedule: 8 months

Supports Tourism Strategic Plan:

page 20: Develop as a central arts, culture and heritage destination

page 21: Enhance downtown as a hub of visitor activity

page 22: Increase educational tourism

page 27: Grow untapped niche visitors markets and experiences (Winter festivals, LGBTQ)

page 29 Grow festivals and events

page 30: Expand meeting, conferences and group tours

Critical actions page 36 and 37: Support specialty indoor festivals in the Winter; Develop as an LGBTQ destination, including for weddings

Recent County Tourism grants 2012 to 2013

2012 New Tourism Initiative grant, \$11,000 for the Ithaca Fringe Festival (CSMA serving as fiscal sponsor)

2013 Tourism Capital Grant: feasibility study of 3rd Floor Performance Space (See Appendix G)

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- Year round facility offers expanded opportunities for winter events
- Supports downtown as a cultural center
- Provides support space for the growing hotel capacity
- Relatively cheap to create this space because the building is there – just needs renovations to add to its capacity
- Nice performance space for the east side of town – similar size to Hangar on the west side
- Being multi-use makes this space more viable in the long run, so less chance it would be torn down like the Strand Theatre
- Organization has a strong board/strong leadership
- Organization has been able to fundraise buying the building and building projects in the past
- Would like to see this space “come back.” It had some great shows in the past.

Weaknesses

- Some reviewers wondered about the organization’s capacity. Discussion at the meeting led to the positive comments recorded above.

General Comments

- The committee wanted to fund this project fully as CSMA is a newer applicant. While unable to fund it all in the first year the committee wished to provide the funding all over two years.

Synopsis of Ithaca Children's Garden's Capital Grant: Edible Forest Garden

Background: The Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG) was founded in 1999. Since 2004, it has had a 25-year lease from the City of Ithaca for three acres in Cass Park. ICG offers both a public garden and educational programs. ICG has grown from an estimated 3,000 visitors in 2004 to 14,700 visitors in 2010, when an estimated 12%, or 1,750, came from greater than 75 miles away. ICG estimates they had 16,800 visitors in 2013.

ICG hired a new Executive Director and elected 7 new board members in 2011. This has brought renewed focus on vision, program expansion, garden development, and fundraising (such as the Tough Turtle event which raised over \$60,000 in 2013).

Annual Budget: \$301,000

Project: ICG proposes to build and install Phase 1 of a major addition to the garden – the Edible Forest Garden. Overall, the new garden is designed with an arrangement of permanent plantings known as Permaculture, which will produce a bounty of edible foods each year without replanting annually. The Edible Forest Garden will have twelve sections, known as guilds that are each planted around a central fruit or nut tree. This project also includes several key pieces of infrastructure for the entire Children's Garden. Phase 1 includes:

- a major path linked to the Cayuga Waterfront Trail that includes a board walk defining the eastern edge of the Children's Garden
- Completion of the fence that provides safety for young visitors, excludes deer, and defines entry points
- Completion of the outdoor kitchen for garden-to-table education

Phase 2 and 3 (not part of this request) will include

- the guild plantings
- a large pavilion will provide a gathering space for 100 people, a sheltered growing area for extended-season and fragile plants, and solar panels for energy
- a cistern to collect rainwater for fountains and irrigation

Request: \$34,235, which is 1/3 of the estimated total cost value \$102,809

Schedule: June 2014 to September 2014 dependent on fundraising success

Supports Tourism Strategic Plan:

Page 18: Goal: Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a regional hub of culinary and agritourism

Page 19: Goal: Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a central arts, cultural and heritage tourism destination in the Finger Lakes.

Page 22: Goal: Increase educational tourism

Page 23: Goal: Expand outdoor recreation and other tourism related to our outstanding natural amenities: Cayuga Lake, gorges and waterfalls, trails, parks, and natural areas.

Page 26: Goal: Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as the preeminent Sustainability Tourism destination in New York State.

Page 28: Goal: Increase the perception of Ithaca and Tompkins County as an outstandingly beautiful community that is simple for visitors to navigate and as a place to visit for the overall beauty of the area.

Page 32: Goal: Enhance collaboration and partnership on tourism related initiatives between tourism partners and our institutions of higher education.

Recent County Tourism grants 2012 to 2013

2012	Bulb Labyrinth Memorial Garden	\$3,600
2012	International Mud Day	\$800
2013	Fresh Air for Families: Compost to Cuisine	\$8,000
2013	FAF: Tourism Marketing and Advertising	\$2,200
2013	Festival of Fire & Ice	\$900
2013	International Mud Day	\$1,000
2014	Festival of Fire & Ice	\$1,200

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- Multi-generational teaching of sustainability
- Very marketable – can see people traveling specially to visit the Children’s Garden
- Great location, very visible
- Children truly love to visit the Children’s Garden
- Ties into the parks system, Cass, the Hangar, Waterfront and Black Diamond trails
- Adds to what we have here for visitors with children, it is a quality children’s destination

Weaknesses

- Some questioned if it would truly attract visitors from more than 75 miles away
- The Cornell Plantations may be a better place to see gardens
- Some question if this fairly new organization has the capacity to do the required fundraising

General Comments

- The committee wanted to fund this project fully as Ithaca Children’s Garden is a newer applicant. Want to fund it all in the first year to help them attain this expansion.
- Look forward to seeing the pavilion completed in Phase 2 as this will add to ICG’s tourism attraction
- Seeing more young families with children among our visitors – used to be almost all DINKS (dual income no kids). Now the Boomer’s children are having kids. Grandparents are part of the new mix. Will be timely to refresh the Chmura study of our market and see if this is a quantifiable change.

**Synopsis of PRI/Cayuga Nature Center's (CNC)
Capital Grant: Cayuga Lake Past and Present Exhibit**

Background: Since the official merger of the Paleontological Research Institution with the Cayuga Nature Center in 2011, the quality of exhibitions and educational programs at CNC has improved. PRI has embarked on a five-year plan to rejuvenate the physical plant, programs and mission. Major renovations to the entrance and lobby are currently underway to make the Lodge more welcoming and accessible to visitors. These renovations will be completed in June 2014. The Lodge currently hosts about 7,600 visitors annually with 27% from greater than 75 miles away. PRI estimates there are an additional 2,700 visitors including campers, participants in other education programs, and hikers.

Annual Budget: PRI: \$1,400,000

Project: CNC proposes to add a major new permanent exhibit to the renovated lobby. This new exhibit will tell the story of one specific site along Cayuga Lake at two different time periods: pre-colonial and the present. Visitors will observe the differences between those times through the use of live fish and aquatic plants, faux trees and plants, a diorama-style backdrop, and locally-sourced taxidermy. Two large freshwater aquaria are at the core of this exhibit, each holding approximately 1000 gallons. One aquarium will represent the biota of Cayuga Lake today, and the other the biota around 300 years ago, before the major impacts of Europeans. A diorama background will include a large (about 25 feet long) mural of the view into the distance, and taxidermied specimens of native animals will be nestled among tree roots or suspended in flight. PRI estimates completion of various improvements including the addition of this major exhibit by summer 2015. Themes are: natural history of the Cayuga Lake basin, and natural history in your backyard. PRI expects that these improvements and parallel increases in marketing the expanded experience at CNC will significantly boost visitorship to 21,000 in 2015 and up to 28,000 by 2017.

Request: \$85,000 over two years toward the \$241,180 total cost

Schedule: The Cayuga Lake exhibit will be created by summer 2015.

Tourism Strategic Plan

page 6: (overarching goal) “provide memorable experiences and legendary service that will educate, delight and relax visitors, compel them to tell others and motivate repeat visits
page 19: Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as a central arts, cultural and heritage tourism destination in the Finger Lakes.
page 20: Measurable objective to increase heritage tourism sites by 50% by 2020
page 22: Increase educational tourism – including measurable objective “increase Discovery Trail visitation”. PRI would like to work collaboratively with others to increase edu-tourism

Recent Tourism Grants for CNC

Marketing Grant \$4,250 awarded fall 2013
Project Grant \$8,000 awarded spring 2013
Marketing Grant \$4,500 awarded spring 2013
Project Grant \$4,750 awarded spring 2012
Marketing Grant \$4,938 awarded spring 2012

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- The merger with PRI is bringing strong leadership and marketing capacity to the Nature Center
- Like the idea of the exhibit – showing the pre-colonial and current lake environment
- Shows affects of climate change as well
- adds to year-round exhibits and attraction to the CNC
- builds on the new entrance and provides an accessible major exhibit
- the applicant believes they have a commitment for matching funds for this exhibit

Weaknesses

- none

General Comments

- Some concern was expressed about giving funds almost every year to the same applicants – in this case PRI and the Sciencenter. Want to diversify the constituents being served by County money. CNC merging with PRI in some ways is a “new,” or renewing, venue.

Synopsis of Sciencenter's Capital Grant: Science Mini-Golf

Background: The Sciencenter was founded in 1983. It currently attracts about 100,000 visitors annually -- 38% are from outside the County and 32% are from greater than 75 miles away. In 2003, the original science mini-golf course, Galaxy Golf, was built to increase outdoor activities and to provide activities for teenagers who had aged-out of the other Sciencenter exhibits. The Capital Grants program contributed \$25,000. The course averaged about 3,850 players per year. However, participation has decreased as the course, which was constructed as a test course, has deteriorated in recent years.

Annual Budget: \$1,860,000

Project: The Sciencenter seeks to completely renovate, expand and professionalize the course based on lessons learned from operating the original course, as well as responding to guest comments. A currently funded feasibility study supports pre-studying the following elements: enhanced aesthetics, accessibility, weather dependency, weatherization, design flaws and functionality, and developing prototype science-themed challenges for each hole. The Sciencenter is working with a consultant, Harris Miniature Golf Courses Inc., to provide course design services and the physical course framework. The requested capital support will pay for the first phase landscaping, fencing and course amenities such as pathways, benches and shading to be built in spring 2014. It will also support the second phase of construction including the 18 interactive science-themed challenges and course lighting to take place in the spring of 2015. The completed course will be fully ADA compliant and will be the only mini-golf course in Tompkins County. The Sciencenter expects the course will attract about 8,000 golfers annually.

Request: \$100,000 over 2 years toward total investment of \$307,400.

Schedule: Phase 1 installation of the course framework, landscape, and amenities with prototype science-themed challenges will be spring of 2014. Phase 2 completion with permanent science-themed challenges and interactive elements will be installed spring of 2015.

Tourism Strategic Plan

page 6: (overarching goal) provide memorable experiences and legendary service that will educate, delight and relax visitors, compel them to tell others and motivate repeat visits

page 20: Develop as a central arts, culture and heritage destination

page 22: Increase educational tourism – including measurable objective “increase Discovery Trail visitation”

Recent Tourism Grants

- 2013 to 2015 ACOD operational support: \$51,000 total
- Capital Grants 2012 \$ 30,000: Live Animal Gallery
- Project Grant 2013 \$13,500: Exhibition Mars Rover
- Feasibility Study 2013 \$12,500: Prototyping Mini-Golf Science-themed Challenges

TCG Review Committee Comments

Strengths

- Separate ticket price will help generate new revenues and support the Sciencenter financially
- Unique facility that can be marketed more broadly than the Sciencenter's other attractions -- could attract more than 8,000 visitors
- Nice to have more outdoors activity
- Being part of the Sciencenter will generate the kind of traffic mini-golf needs to succeed
- Sciencenter's strongest market is younger children – mini-golf will expand their market e.g. could attract teens and college students

Weaknesses

- Seasonal activity
- could attract teens and college students (noisy visitors who would play in evenings) – if open late could the activity conflict with residential neighbors across the creek?
- Seems like a tight space and may limit the potential number of players
- Borders on being a commercial recreational venture as much as an educational activity

General Comments

- Seeing more young families with children among our visitors – used to be almost all DINKS (dual income no kids). Now the Boomer's children are having kids. Grandparents are part of the new mix. Will be timely to refresh the Chmura study of our market and see if this is a quantifiable change.
- Some concern was expressed about giving funds almost every year to the same applicants – in this case PRI and the Sciencenter. Want to diversify the constituents being served by County money.

INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

Tourism Capital Grants program fund status

As of March 2014, there is **\$95,000 available for grants** in 2014. I recommend that up to another \$100,000 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

This is the third year we are using a scoring grid. This is intended as a discussion guide, not a point system to determine the awards.

For your information, also enclosed are:

- Multi-year grant worksheet with current commitments
- Criteria for Grants from the application guide
- The review committee's Conflict of Interest Policy

The scoring grid is at the end of the packet.

TCAD Tourism Capital Grants Review Committee members:

April 2014:

- Rita Rosenberg Barber (STP)
- Carol Chock (TC Leg)
- Steve Hugo (STP)
- Ken Jupiter (STP)
- Mary Kane (TCAD)
- Peter Parkes (TCAD)
- Andy Sciarabba (TCAD) Chair
- Steve Snyder (TCAD) (excused, has a conflict)

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

Budget Info (<i>estimates italicized</i>)			2014	2015*	2016*	2017*	2018*
Total budget			207,215	211,359	215,586	219,898	224,296
TCAD Admin expenses	subtract		14,371	14,658	14,951	15,250	15,555
2013 Admin remainder*	add		2,156				
Awards budget			195,000	196,701	200,635	204,648	208,741
Past Multi-Year Awards							
	Year	award					
Cay Nat Ctr '09	2009	100,000	25,000				
Cay Nat Ctr '11	2011	100,000	25,000	12,000			
Scienctr Animal Rm	2012	25,000	5,000				
Mus of Earth 10 th Anniv Exhibits	2013	32,000	20,000				
State Theatre bathroom expansion	2013	42,000	10,000	20,000			
Stewart Park Rehab Phase 1	2013	70,500	15,000	25,000	10,000		
Committed			100,000	57,000	10,000	0	0
Available for new grants*			95,000	139,701	190,635	204,648	208,741
Current Grants							
	Proj		Recommend				
	Value	Request	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ReUse Building Tourism Study	14,920	9,698	0				
TC Blueway Trail Design Study	18,000	18,000	10,000				
CSMA 3rd Fl Performance Space	165,400	55,134	31,000	24,000			
ICG Edible Forest Phase 1	102,809	34,235	34,000				
PRI/CNC Lake Exhibit	241,180	85,000	20,000	10,000	10,000		
Sciencenter Mini-Golf Constr	307,400	100,000	0	10,000	15,000		
Total		292,369	95,000	44,000	25,000		
Available for new grants*			0	95,701	165,635	204,648	208,741
*budget for 2015 to 2018 escalated at 2%							
prepared by TCAD: Edition: April 9, 2014							

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

These grants will focus on major visitor-generating projects such as a new meeting center, the State Theater, and museums. Development of outdoor recreation attractions is a priority of the Tourism program. The funds can be used for:

- feasibility studies of potential capital projects
- seed money or one-time investments in unique capital projects
- ongoing debt funding of building projects

It is intended that funds for all three types of uses will be available each year. The fund cannot be used to refinance existing debt.

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.

B. *Feasibility Studies:* Grants may fund up to 100% of a 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
 - improved visitor experience and/or
 - increased visitors to the facility 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
- possibility of
 - improved visitor experience and/or
 - increased visitors to the facility and/or
 - visitors increasing their length of stay in order to visit the facility

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.

**Worksheet for the Tourism Capital Grants Program
Tompkins County Tourism Program**

Applicant Organization:	ReUse Sudy	BlueWay Study	CSMA 3rd Fl	Ith Ch Garden	Nature Ctr	SciCtr Golf
Organizational capacity to carry out the project						
Likelihood of the project to increase or improve tourism over five years						
project/organization role in the TC tourism industry						
Benefits/Cost -- Return on Investment						
Value of Project to Community						
Contribution to the County's Strategic Tourism Plan						
"Gut" reaction to application						
TOTAL POINTS						

Score 0 to 5 (excellent/high) for each criteria

CVB Report April 2014

STR Report for Feb

The February STR Report showed strong month for local hotels. Highlights include a rise in rate, room revenue and total revenue. Two upside surprises: room demand kept pace with room supply (a turnaround from late 2013); and January figures were revised significantly upward (unfortunately, no explanation given). February by the numbers:

Occupancy -0.4%

ADR +1.5%

RevPar +1.1%

Room Supply +6.8%

Demand +6.4%

Revenue \$2.9 million, +8%

Seasonal Ithaca Fork Ad Campaigns

The \$16,000, grant-funded "Ithaca Fork" farm-to-fork campaign is underway in key Northeastern markets using online display ads and YouTube pre-roll video ads. The Google Ad Network display campaign has generated 1.4 million impressions thus far with 2,604 clickthroughs and 200 consumer sign ups. The YouTube video campaign has logged 20,000 impressions, 1,845 video views and 104 clickthroughs. Both are performing better than legacy print campaigns with vastly superior tracking. The campaigns will run through June.

Seasonal Midweek Booking Campaign: The focus on filling midweek room-nights has called out a need for a specific mid-week business push. The marketing team has a new webpage in development that will host mid-week specials on VisitIthaca.com. This page will become the landing page of a \$100,000 Google Display Network campaign that will drive traffic to stay mid-week. The web page and creative are currently in the works, and accommodations partners will be contacted for packages as we progress. The current packages and deals page on VisitIthaca.com is the 15th most popular page (over 14,000 views YoY) and has received little to no marketing or advertising, showing that consumers organically seek out this information while on VisitIthaca.com. The new page will have additional search functionalities and will be extremely user-friendly.

Sales Dept. Motorcoach Results

The sales department's enhanced efforts to attract Motorcoach business paid off in March with the booking of a September Ithaca Culinary tour. This tour was designed, marketed and sold to attract a niche audience to Tompkins County, leverage our reputation as a dining destination and support the county's efforts in agriculture and culinary tourism. The tour is expected to deliver 60 room-nights and \$14,280 in economic impact. It's the third tour booked this year, representing a total of 130-room-nights and \$40,940 in economic impact.

CVB Retreat Results

The CVB's two-day retreat at La Tourelle yielded positive results.

IthacaEvents.com—This Events Calendar site was created by CAP in 2006? as an integral part of the Ticket Center. Eight years later, the Ticket Center is closed, the site needs a technological overhaul and the cost (\$30k-\$50) is way outside CAP's capabilities. CAP has requested the CVB to operate IthacaEvents.com and assume the associated costs. At the retreat, staff agreed the site was useful to us and owning it might save us time and money in our own events needs. Staff suggested that by integrating IthacaEvents into the planned rebuild of Visitithaca.com—essentially making it an additional programming module— we can keep the website alive at almost no additional cost. This represents a \$20,000 to \$50,000 savings vs building a standalone IthacaEvents.com.

Internal Efficiencies—Staff will implement a new staff meeting schedule and adopt an Internal Projects Status Report to improve internal communication and efficiency. We will also investigate a new Customer Management Software program, our current IDSS system may actually be making us less efficient.

VisitIthaca Branding and VisitIthaca.com—We outlined the basics of our impending branding program and key features of the new VisitIthaca.com

Visitor Center 2020—We brainstormed on the digital changes that have revolutionized the travel industry and began a plan for keeping the CVB and its visitors centers relevant in a digital world.

Evaluation Metrics—Monica Hargraves from CCE walked us through the first stages of 6-hour evaluation program that will yield coherent, transparent goals and objectives for the CVB. Tompkins County is requesting these metrics and recommended Monika's CCE program. The CVB is essentially beta-testing the program for possible adoption by all organizations funded by the County Tourism Program.

2015 Budgeting

The 2015 budgeting process begins this month with strategic planning meetings for the entire tourism program. Please submit any specific ideas or suggestions for 2015 CVB action direct to me: Bruce@Visitithaca.com, 607-272-1313.

2000-2014 Lodging Market Report

As part of the 2015 budget process, the CVB sales staff compiled a multi-year review of Tompkins County STR data. The resulting spreadsheet documents a powerful success story for the CVB, the local Lodging Community and the entire County Tourism Program. (Attached).

Tompkins County Lodging Industry Performance 2000 to Present

	Occupancy Rate		Average Daily Room Rate		RevPar		Room Supply		Room Demand		Room Revenue	
2000	66.1	0.3%	\$87.34	\$8.20	\$57.74	\$8.50	408,436	0.8	269,999	1.1%	\$23,581,259.00	9.4%
2001	61.4	-7.9	\$94.13	\$7.70	\$57.80	\$0.00	443,840	8.7	272,557	0.9%	\$25,654,745.00	3.5
2002	63.3	3.1	\$96.88	\$2.90	\$61.37	\$6.20	443,840	0.0	281,164	3.2%	\$27,238,980.00	6.2
2003	63.6	0.5	\$100.82	\$4.10	\$64.09	\$4.40	443,840	0.0	282,144	0.3%	\$28,446,357.00	4.4
2004	61.1	-1.1	\$101.10	\$4.70	\$61.83	\$3.50	455,564	2.6	278,231	1.5%	\$28,165,678.00	6.2
2005	59.5	-2.6	\$109.52	\$8.10	\$65.12	\$5.10	476,177	4.5	283,107	1.6%	\$31,007,074.00	9.8
2006	60	0.8	\$114.35	\$4.40	\$68.55	\$5.30	498,225	4.6	298,694	5.5%	\$34,155,400.00	10.2
2007	62.1	3.5	\$121.26	\$4.70	\$75.25	\$8.30	524,900	4.4	325,764	8.1%	\$39,500,819.00	13.2
2008	60.8	-2.1	\$126.42	\$3.90	\$76.91	\$1.70	550,030	4.8	334,627	2.6%	\$42,302,786.00	6.6
2009	57.2	-5.9	\$123.55	-\$2.40	\$70.61	-\$8.20	556,990	1.3	318,342	-4.7%	\$39,329,705.00	-7.0
2010	60.5	6.8	\$124.68	\$0.40	\$75.38	\$7.20	556,990	0.0	336,767	6.8%	\$41,986,580.00	7.2
2011	61.6	1.8	\$133.59	\$7.30	\$82.32	\$9.30	563,621	0.0	347,309	1.8%	\$46,396,750.00	9.3
2012	60.1	-2.3	\$138.84	\$4.20	\$83.46	\$1.90	564,784	0.2	339,532	-2.1%	\$47,139,512.00	2.1
2013	59.2	-1.3	\$144.00	\$3.80	\$85.21	\$2.40	581,572	3.0	344,119	1.6%	\$49,554,215.00	5.5
2014												
Change	62.1% to	-2.10%	65%	\$56.66	48%	\$27.47	173,136	42%	74,120	27%	\$ 25,972,956.00	110%

CVB Staff computed occupancy change based on two, seven-year periods, '00 to '06 and '07-'13. Ave OCC was 62.1% in the first seven years, Notes: 60.2% in the latter.
 Source: Smith Travel Research

STPB Committee Assignments 2014

Key blue type means on committee last year

Italics mean Associate STPB Member, Ex-Officio STPB member, or member of the community.

Committee	Meetings	Members by appointment	Admin	Chair	Committee Members
Executive	As needed	Former Chairs and Vice Chairs, Budget Chair and Current Chair and Vice Chair	Tom Knipe	Rick Adie	<i>Rick Adie, Sue Perlgut, Anthony Hopson</i>
Standing Committees					
Budget 4 Voting members required		Chair, Vice Chair	Tom Knipe	Rick Adie	<i>Rick Adie, Anthony Hopson?, Stephen Nunley, Sue Perlgut, Sue Stafford, Christy Agnese</i>
Membership & By-Laws 3 Voting members required	As needed		Tom Knipe	Lynnette Scofield	<i>Sue Perlgut, John Gutenberger</i>
Nominating Appointed by vote of the full board	As needed				
Grant Review Committees (2 voting members required)					
Tourism Project and New Tourism Initiative Grant Review	March, November (if needed)		Tom Knipe	<i>Steve Hugo Anne Gossen</i>	<i>Jon Reis, Rita Rosenberg, Mike Mellor, Christy Agnese</i>
Community Celebrations	March, November		Tom Knipe	<i>Carol Kammen</i>	<i>Beverly Baker, Sue Perlgut, Jackie Kippola, Mike Lane, Sue Stafford</i>
Arts and Culture Organizational Development Grant	March	Arts & Culture STPB reps	John Spence	?	<i>Susie Monagan, Sue Perlgut, Ethan Ash, Anne Gossen, Leslie Ackerman</i>
Tourism Capital Grant	April		Martha Armstrong	?	<i>Steve Hugo, Ken Jupiter, Rita Rosenberg, Christy Agnese, others recruited by TCAD</i>



Committee	Meetings	Members by appointment	Admin	Chair	Members
Tourism Marketing and Advertising Grant Review	March, November (if needed)		Tom Knipe Bruce Stoff (tech. asst.)	Ethan Ash	Anne Kellerman, Sue Stafford, Stephen Nunley, Christy Agnese Lynnette Scofield
Special Committees					
Planning & Evaluation	Monthly or bi-monthly		Tom Knipe	Ken Jupiter	Anne Kellerman, Rick Adie, Mike Mellor, Gary Ferguson, Ian Golden, Sue Stafford?, <i>tourism program administrators</i>
Festivals	One or two times/year		Tom Knipe, Vicki Taylor Brouse	Susie Monagan	Rita Rosenberg, Ian Golden?, Vicki Taylor Brouse, Gary Ferguson
Marketing Advisory Committee	Quarterly		Bruce Stoff		Stephen Nunley, Tom Knipe, Rick Adie, Michael Mellor, Ethan Ash?, Gary Ferguson <i>others appointed by CVB</i>
Beautification, Public Art, Signage			Jean McPheeters		Ken Jupiter, JoAnn Cornish, Gary Ferguson, Chrys Gardiner, Monika Roth, Tom Knipe

STPB Working Groups – need chairs

Heritage Tourism Stu Stein, Chair. Volunteer: Ian Golden.
 Agri-Culinary Tourism Ethan Ash, Rita Rosenberg, Co-Chairs, Lynnette Scofield.
 Higher Education Tourism Volunteers: Steve Hugo, John Gutenberger



Name	Planning & Evaluation	Budget	Membership & Bylaws	Tourism Projects & New Tourism Initiatives	Community Celebrations	ACOD selection & review	Tourism Capital Grants	Marketing & Advertising Grants	Marketing Advisory	Festivals	Executive	Beautification, Public Art, Signage	Tourism Partner Awards	Ag & Culinary Working Group	Tourism Higher Ed Working Group	Heritage Tourism Working Group
Rita Rosenberg				X			X			X				V		
Susie Monagan*						X				CH						
Rick Adie*	X	CH							X		CH		CH			
Sue Stafford		X			X			X								
Sue Perlgut		X	X		X	X					X					
Anne Kellerman	X							X								
Stephen Nunley		X						X	X							
Andy Zepp																
Steven Hugo				CH			X								V	
Anthony Hopson		X									X					
Ethan Ash						X		CH	X					V		
Michael Mellor				X					X							
Christy Agnese		X		X			X	X								
Anne Gossen				CH		X										
Ken Jupiter	CH						X					X				
Ian Golden	X									X						V
Lynnette Scofield			CH					X								
John Gutenberger			X													
Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members																
Will Burbank	X															
John Spence	X					ADM										
Bruce Stoff	X							ADM	ADM							
Gary Ferguson	X								X	X		X				
Jean McPheeters	X											ADM				
Martha Armstrong	X						ADM									
Dwight Mengel																
Tom Knipe	ADM	ADM	ADM	ADM	ADM			ADM	X	ADM	ADM	X	ADM	X	X	X
2014 Associate STPB Members																
Beverly Baker					X											
Jon Reis				X												
Stuart Stein																V
Carol Kammen					CH											
*going off the board at the end of 2014 due to term limits																
Others Non-STPB Members Affiliated with Tourism Program																
Vicki Taylor Brous						X				X						
Monika Roth												X				
Don Schlather																
Mike Lane					X											
Andy Sciarabba													X			
Jo Anne Cornish												X				
Chrys Gardiner												X				
Jackie Kippola					X											