

# Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan 2012-2020

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POSTERS

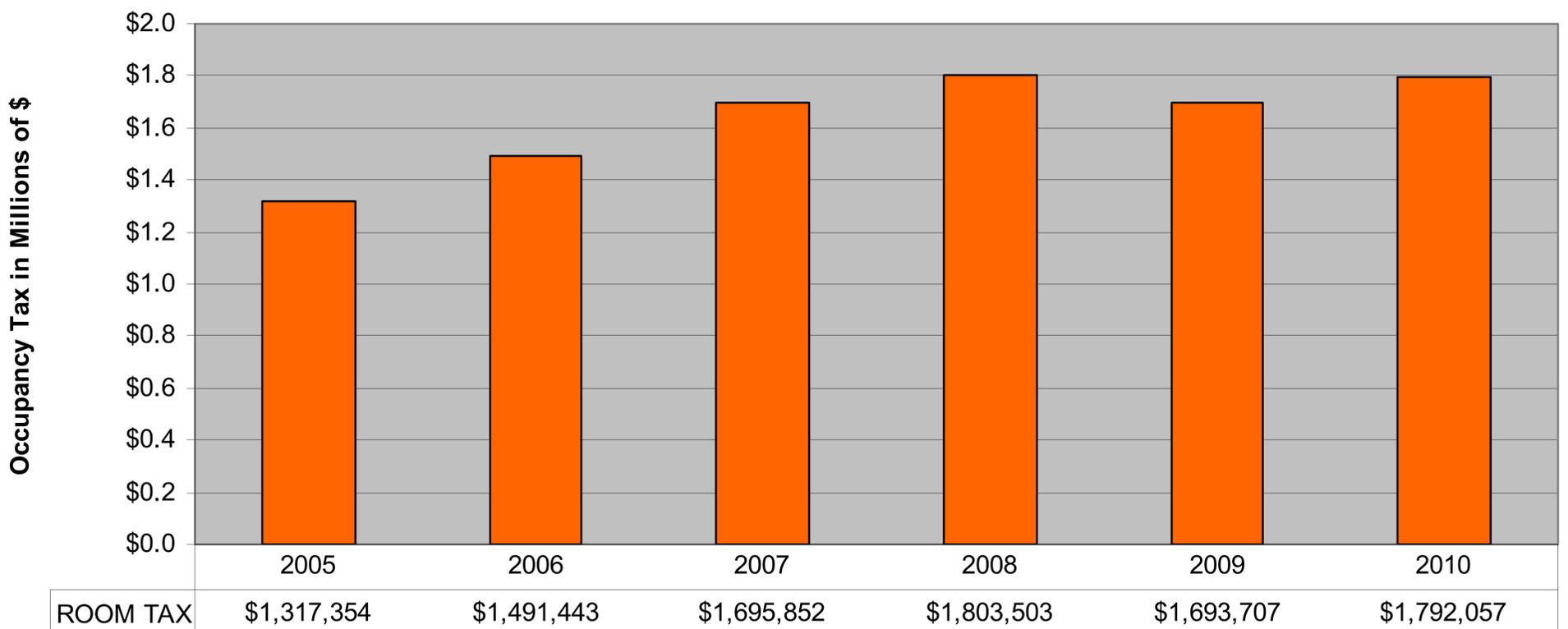
Community Workshop

January 10, 2012

# ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX

## 7% average annual growth between 2005 and 2010

Room Occupancy Tax  
Tompkins County 2005-2010

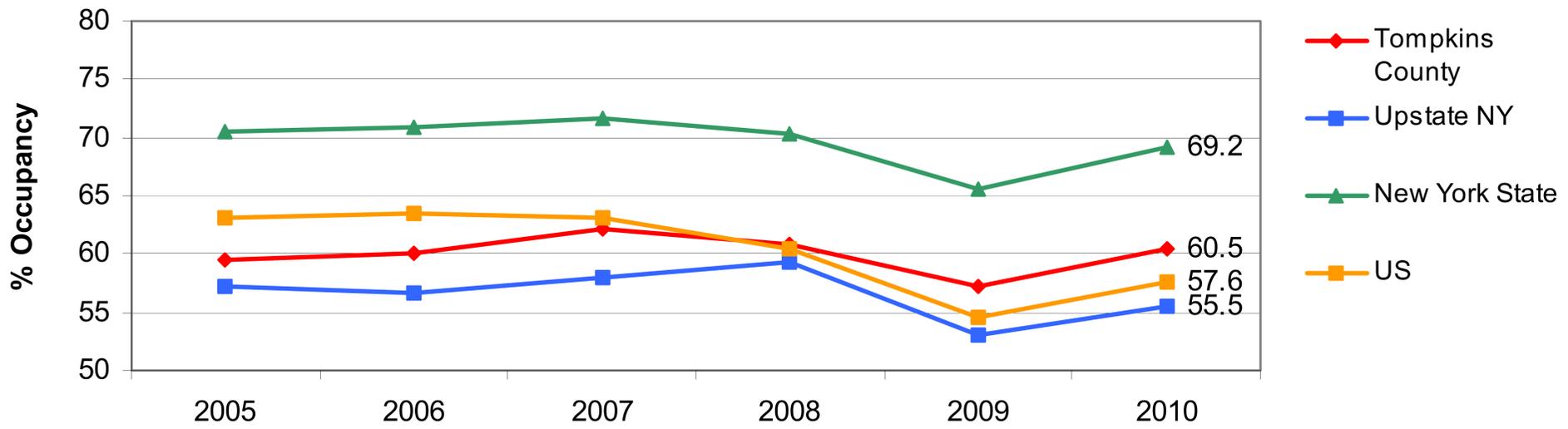


Source: Tompkins County Department of Finance

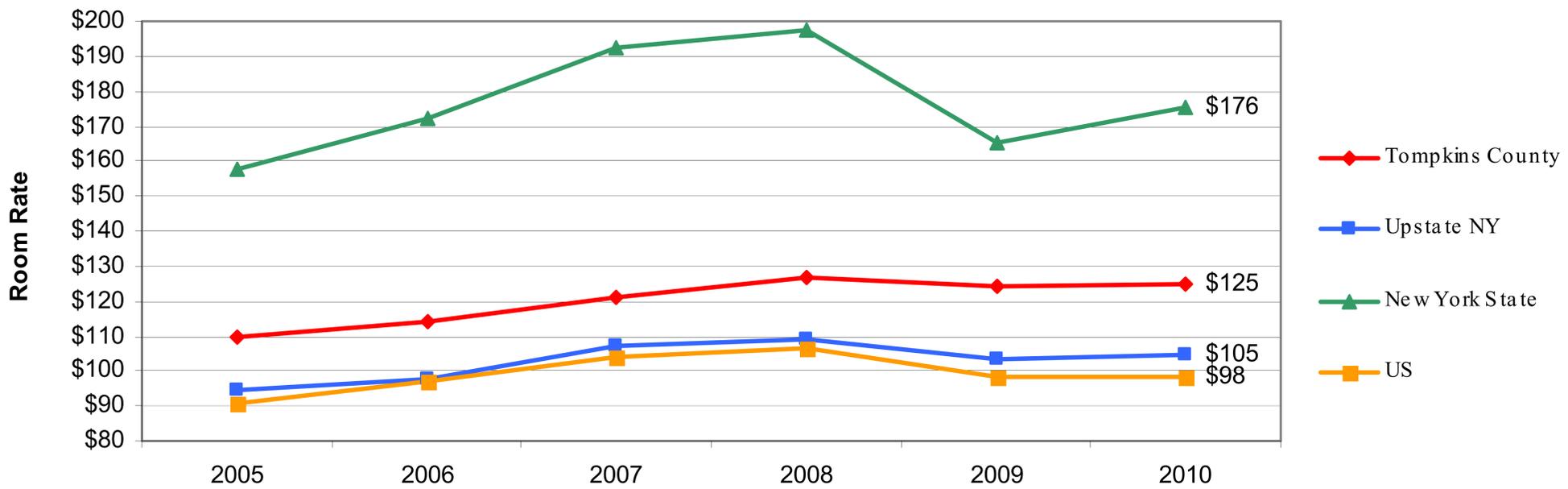
# LODGING INDUSTRY

## Tompkins County

**Hotel Occupancy 2005-2010**  
Tompkins County



**Average Room Rate 2005-2010**  
Tompkins County

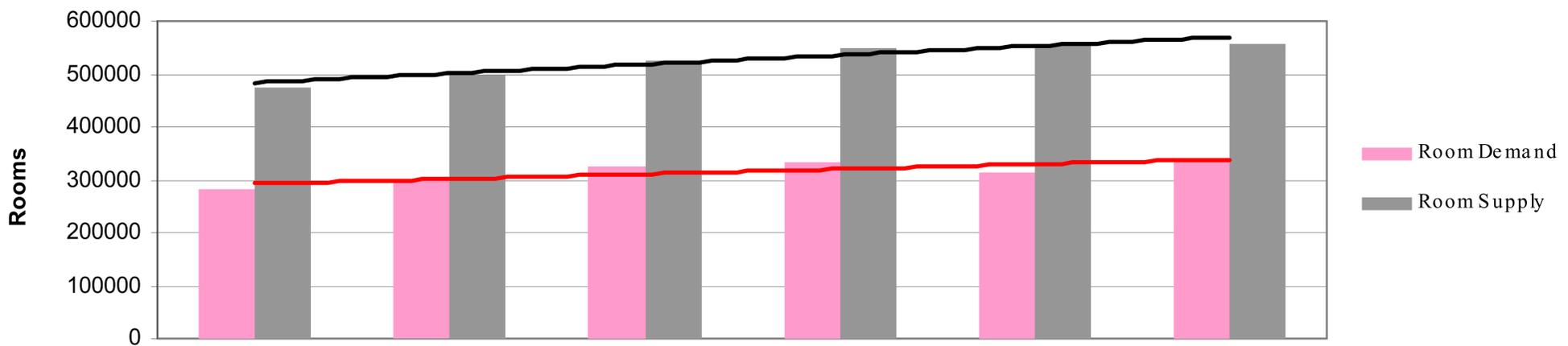


Source: Smith Travel Research (based on survey results from 14 large hotel properties in Tompkins County)

# LODGING INDUSTRY

## Tompkins County

**Room Supply and Demand 2005-2010**  
Tompkins County



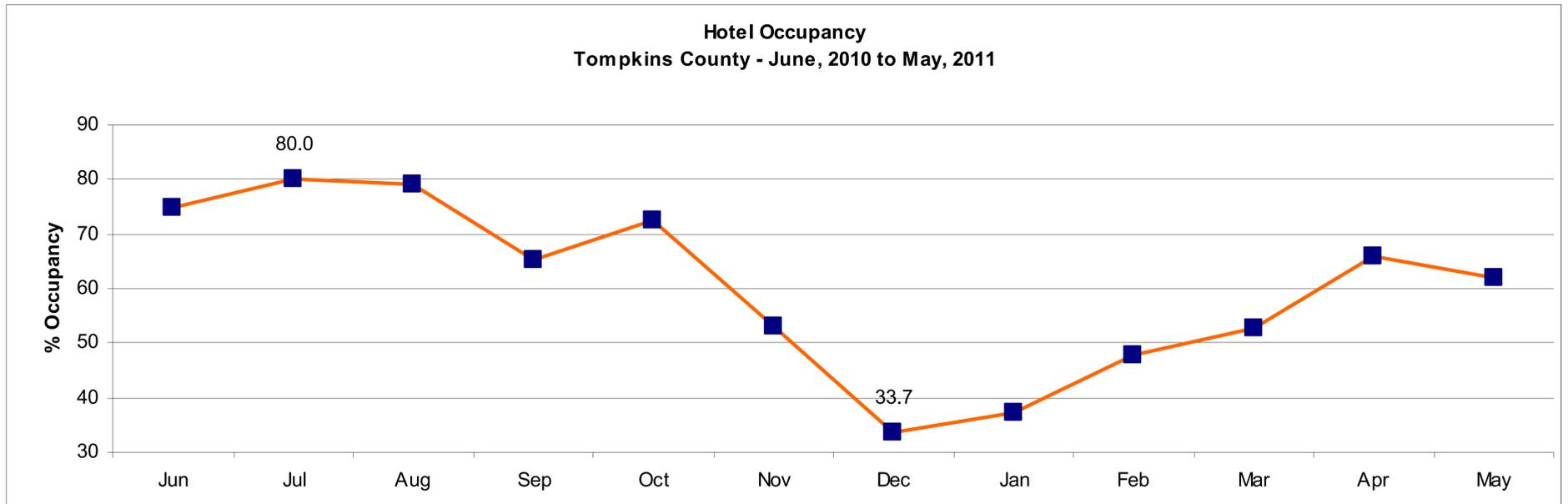
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Room Demand	283107	298694	325764	334192	315359	336767
Room Supply	476177	498225	524900	550030	556990	556990

Source: Smith Travel Research (based on survey results from 14 large hotel properties in Tompkins County)

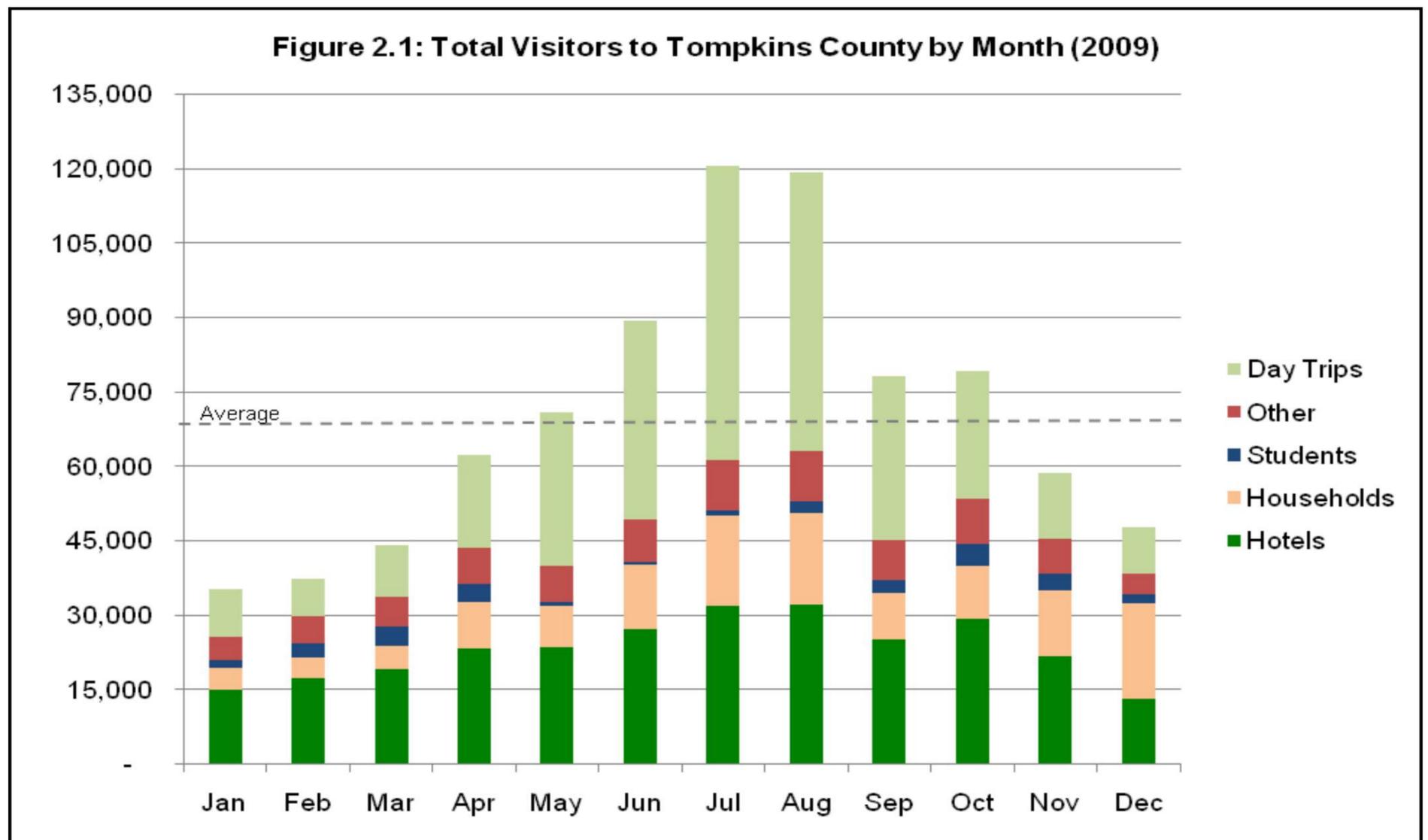
Average daily room supply or demand may be calculated by dividing yearly figures by 365. For example, in 2010 the average daily room supply was 1,525 rooms. The average daily room demand was 923.

# SEASONALITY

## Tompkins County Tourism Industry



Source: Smith Travel Research (based on survey results from 14 large hotel properties in Tompkins County)



Source: Chmura Economics, *Profile of Tompkins County Visitors* (2010). The definition of visitors for this data does not include students. In the chart above, "students" refers to people who stayed with students when they came to visit. Similarly, "households" refers to where visitors stayed.

# QUICK FACTS

## Tompkins County Tourism Industry

- 843,000 visitors<sub>1</sub>
- \$157 million in local spending<sub>2, 3</sub>
- 2,328 jobs (3,375 if indirect & induced included)<sub>3</sub>
- 4% of local jobs<sub>2, 4</sub>
- \$44 million in local wages<sub>4</sub>
- \$11.2 million in local taxes generated<sub>3, 5</sub>
- \$9.4 million in NY State taxes generated<sub>3</sub>

1 – Source: Chmura Economics, *Profile of Tompkins County Visitors* (2009 Figure)

2 - Industry Sub-clusters include: Accommodations; Food & Beverage; Culture, Recreation & Amusements; Passenger Transportation; and Travel Retail

3 – Source: Tourism Economics (2010)

4 – Source: NYS Department of Labor, QCEW (2009)

5 - \$9.4 million in local taxes generated if \$1.8 million hotel occupancy tax excluded

# VISITOR PROFILE

## Tompkins County

- Top market for overnight visitors is NYC, then Rochester, Philadelphia, Boston, and D.C.
- 47% of visitors are college or university-related
- 75% of visitors here for leisure
- 41% have household incomes of \$100,000+
- 37% day-trippers, 33% stay in hotels, 19% stay with family and friends, 11% other lodging

# VISITOR PROFILE

## Tompkins County

- \$185 per person, per trip average spending
  - \$335 for those staying in hotels,
  - \$216 if staying in other lodging,
  - \$117 if staying with family & friends,
  - \$51 for day-trippers.
- 35% of spending on food and drink, 28% on lodging, 25% on shopping.
- 88% “satisfied”
- 69% promise repeat visits
- Natural beauty, Cornell, dining, the people and the peaceful ambiance ranked as the best aspects

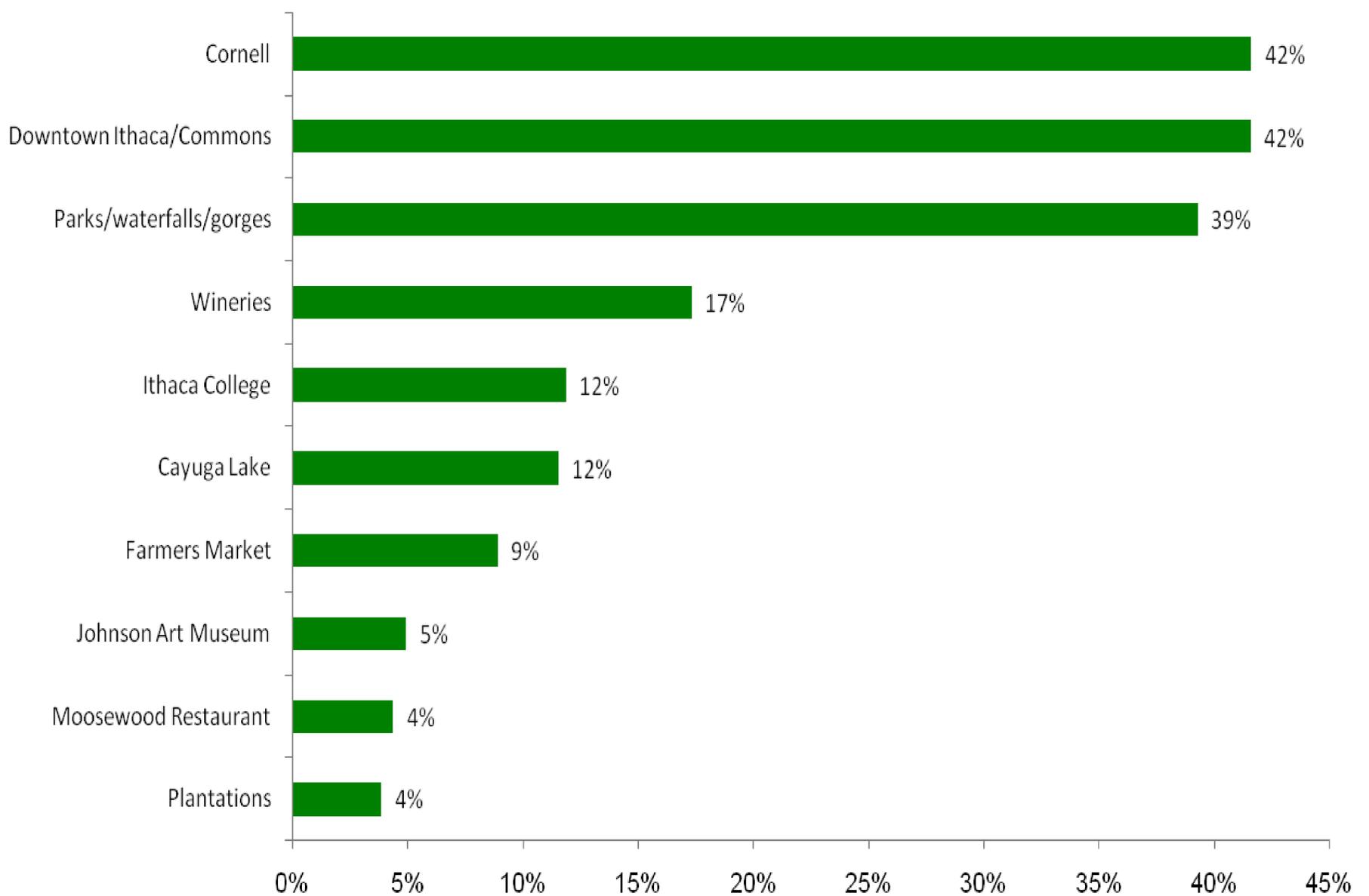
# TOP ATTRACTIONS

Cornell University and Ithaca College are the #1 draw to the County. Followed by:

2. Gorges and State Parks
3. Downtown Ithaca and The Commons
4. Local Dining
5. Cayuga Lake
6. Arts, Music, Theatre
7. Wineries
8. Discovery Trail and Museums
9. B&Bs, Inns & Resorts

# TOP ACTIVITIES of Tompkins County Visitors

Figure 2.9: Activities in Tompkins County



Source: Chmura Economics, *Profile of Tompkins County Visitors* (2010)

# TOURISM PROGRAMS

## 2005-2010 Expenditures

<b>Grants</b>	<b>Total Award Dollars 2005-2010</b>	<b>Number of Grants 2005-2010</b>	<b>Average Grant Amount</b>	<b>Entities that Received Funds 2005-2010</b>
Arts & Cultural Organization Stabilization/Development	\$1,051,950	43	\$24,464	9
Tourism Capital <sup>1</sup>	\$811,800	20	\$40,590	12
Tourism Projects	\$375,822	48	\$7,830	22
Tourism Marketing and Advertising	\$205,167	62	\$3,309	25
Community Celebrations <sup>2</sup>	\$143,411	114	\$1,258	12
New Tourism Initiatives	\$124,370	7	\$17,767	5
Town Beautification Grants	\$67,000			9
<b>Other Tourism Programs - Product Development</b>	<b>Total Dollars 2005-2010</b>	<b>Number of Years Funded 2005-2010</b>	<b>Average Annual Program Budget</b>	
Beautification, Public Art & Signage <sup>3</sup>	\$551,516	6	\$91,919	
Workforce Development/TC3 Customer Service	\$75,000	2	\$37,500	
CAP – Operating Assistance	\$178,080	6	\$29,680	
CAP- Operating Ticket Center	\$172,455	6	\$28,743	
Festivals	\$50,000	2	\$25,000	
County Historian	\$15,000	3	\$5,000	
<b>Other Tourism Programs - Marketing</b>				
Market Tompkins County - CVB	\$4,681,969	6	\$780,328	
Discovery Trail	\$198,349	6	\$33,058	
Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance	\$70,400	6	\$11,733	
Market the Arts	\$10,000	1	\$10,000	

Source: Tompkins County Tourism Program

1 - Includes award values of multi-year awards

2 - Community Celebrations Grants are distributed to a wide variety of entities through municipalities in Tompkins County. Between 2005 and 2010 these municipalities included the City of Ithaca; Villages of Dryden, Groton and Trumansburg; and Towns of Dryden, Caroline, Danby, Enfield, Groton, Ithaca, Lansing, and Newfield.

3 - Not including Rural Beautification Grants

# MARKETING PROGRAMS

## The 60%

# Tompkins County Tourism Program

### **Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)**

Designated as the County's Tourism Promotion Agency, the CVB enhances economic development through promotion of local activities and assets to visitors and residents.

### **Marketing and Advertising Grants**

Promote events and projects likely to attract visitors in a manner consistent with the CVB's marketing strategy; requires a 50-50 match.

### **Discovery Trail**

Collective marketing for eight local organizations that have a dual mission of education and tourism promotion: PRI- Museum of the Earth, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Cornell Plantations, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cayuga Nature Center, Sciencenter, The History Center, and Tompkins County Public Library.

### **Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance**

Cooperative marketing with the premier regional destination marketing organization that represents 14 counties in the Finger Lakes region

### **New Tourism Initiative Grants**

Support significant new tourism generating initiatives that flow from and are consistent with the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan

### **Market the Arts**

Collectively market Tompkins County's artists and feature them on one website to allow them to sell their work; includes but is not limited to the members of the Greater Ithaca Art Trail.

### **Recognition Awards**

Recognize volunteer efforts to attract large groups, meetings or conventions to Tompkins County.

# PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

## The 40%

### Tompkins County Tourism Program

#### **Beautification, Signage & Public Art**

Improve way-finding signage to direct travelers to key destinations and beautify communities to welcome visitors, especially at gateways.

#### **Tourism Capital Grants**

Expand major visitor-generating facilities, and fund feasibility studies.

#### **Arts & Culture Organizational Development**

Strengthen large existing arts and culture organizations with long term financial planning and development tools.

#### **Community Celebrations Grants**

Support observances, commemorations, jublations, inaugurations, presentations, or other "red letter days" or salutes that have meaning for the community.

#### **Community Arts Partnership (CAP)- Downtown Ticket Center**

Rent at Center Ithaca for the Downtown Ticket Center.

**CAP** Assistance with operating expenses.

#### **Tourism Project Grants**

Support tourism-generating single projects.

#### **County Historian**

Provide a historical connection to today's tourism projects.

#### **Strategic Planning and Staffing**

Maximize program effectiveness and reduce volunteer workload on program administration tasks through sustainable staffing, leadership and research.

#### **Festivals**

Provide technical assistance, coordination, and resource sharing for local events and festivals at a macro level to enhance their effectiveness.

#### **Workforce Development/TC3 Customer Service**

Create a career ladder for entry level jobs in the hospitality industry and improve the visitors' experience.

# 2005-2010 SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Guided by the 2005-2010 Strategic Tourism Plan, the Tompkins County Tourism Program invested in tourism marketing and product development that promoted economic development and enhanced the quality of life for local residents. A selection of tangible 2005-2010 achievements is sorted by the four guiding categories of the former plan.

## Provide Gateway - Infrastructure

*Develop the physical and intangible pipelines that increase access to and experience of the tourism product*

- Supported centralized box office services of the Ticket Center which averaged 80,000 tickets (\$1.1 million) sold annually.
- Created a “how to” manual for event planners, and enhanced quality of events through technical assistance & workshops
- Enhanced existing tourism attractions through physical improvements.
- Improved visitors’ access to information with purchase of a brochure cart on The Commons.
- Increased Visitor Center traffic by relocating Downtown Visitor Center to a more accessible location.
- Improved front-line customer service through TC3- Workforce Training program.
- Provided financial assistance to refurbish Veterans Memorials at Dewitt Park.
- Endorsed the physical expansion of the Visitor Center at the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce building.
- Provided an inviting environment downtown through support for the Downtown Ambassadors program.
- Contributed to the creation and maintenance of beautification projects in all nine towns.
- Created a volunteer corps to help maintain the Beautification Program’s gardens with 375 volunteers contributing over 4,000 volunteer hours.
- Supported the Art in the Heart program of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA).
- Planted and maintained flowerbeds at 30 strategic locations in the City of Ithaca through the Beautification Program at Cooperative Extension and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance.

# 2005-2010 SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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## Offer Experience - Product Development

*Create and improve attractions*

- Supported the creation of the Finger Lakes Wine Center.
- Invested in and helped to stabilize the State Theatre, Hangar Theatre and Kitchen Theatre for year-round performances.
- Invested in and helped to stabilize the Museum of the Earth, the Sciencenter, the Cayuga Nature Center, The History Center, and the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra.
- Supported the expansion and improvement of outdoor venues: The Farmers Market, the Cayuga Waterfront Trail, Stewart Park, the Ithaca Children's Garden, and the Ithaca Skate Park.
- Supported the creation of an annual Literary Arts Festival.
- Sponsored winter festivals – Light in Winter, ice sculpture fests, holiday events, Winter Village Bluegrass.
- Supported our County Historian in receiving national recognition as “Historian of the Year”.
- Sponsored a nationally recognized triathlon and Dragon Boat Festival.
- Sponsored dozens of dance, theatre, and musical events; food, wine, and beer showcase events; and ethnic events.
- Supported 114 community celebrations to honor residents and create a sense of place.
- Created a Tompkins Tourism Partner Award program to encourage Tompkins County residents to plan events or conferences which bring in large numbers of overnight visitors.
- Supported the creation of seven new events or attractions through the New Tourism Initiatives grant program.

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## Create Demand - Marketing

*Motivate travelers to experience Tompkins County as a destination*

- Celebrated our communities' 'best of' and 'top 10' listings in 33 nationally recognized media outlets, ten times at #1, and 88% of mentions within the top 10.
- Supported the creation of an online artist and performer directory.
- Supported the creation and upgrade of IthacaEvents.com, an online cultural event directory.
- Supported the creation of the CVB's "Winter Recess – Ithaca Loves Teachers" campaign.
- Conducted comprehensive survey-based research of Tompkins County visitors to understand their motivations (Chmura Study).
- Supported promotion of the Greater Ithaca Art Trail, growing visitation to more than 6,000 studio visits and average art sales of more than \$50,000 on open studio weekends in October.
- Supported the development and marketing of the Ithaca Theatre Collective.
- Celebrated the CVB's initiative to position Ithaca as "Home of the Ice Cream Sundae".
- Collaborated with towns and villages to create brochures and websites highlighting local points of interest.
- Enhanced Tompkins County's image: "Ithaca is Gorges".
- Supported Discovery Trail marketing.

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## Enable Action –

### Government Initiatives

*Facilitate enhanced support for tourism through the suite of marketing and the product development programs of the Tompkins County Tourism Program*

- Created and developed the Tompkins County Tourism Program - the suite of marketing and product development programs enabling of all this work.
- Catalyzed action and leveraged additional support for the civic contributions of the many organizations that now participate in the local tourism sector.
- Hired a full time Tourism Coordinator and utilized County government staff for legal, financial, and administrative oversight.
- Partnered with the City, Towns, and Villages to facilitate community celebrations and provide venues.

# 2012-2020 Strategic Tourism Plan

## Focus Areas:

# ESTABLISHED TOURISM TYPES

*These tourism product development areas currently most define our County for the purposes of marketing to leisure travelers.*

*They are: 1) historic priorities of the STPB and 2) current significant visitor attractions. These focus areas will continue to provide opportunities to align tourism product development priorities with the County's marketing strategy for leisure travelers and tell the big picture of what the County is about from the perspective of visitors.*

- **Arts & Culture and Heritage Tourism**
- **Lakes, Trails, Parks, Waterfalls and Gorges**
- **Agricultural and Culinary Tourism**
- **Edu-tourism**

# 2012-2020 Strategic Tourism Plan

## Focus Areas:

# EMERGING TOURISM TYPES

*The plan identifies several additional distinct emerging tourism types for Tompkins County. These types of tourism are not as well developed as established types but may hold important opportunities for new tourism development.*

- **Adventure and Outdoor Tourism**
- **Sports Tourism**
- **Sustainability Tourism**
- **Under-tapped Niche Markets**

# 2012-2020 Strategic Tourism Plan

## Focus Areas:

# TOURISM FOUNDATION

*Tourism foundation focus areas enhance the tourism economy by enabling the success of all tourism types.*

- **Marketing**
- **Transportation**
- **Workforce Development**
- **Festivals and Events**
- **Beautification, Signage & Public Art**
- **Downtown Ithaca and The Commons**