

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

# 2040

## Long Range Transportation Plan

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Executive Summary

## History of Transportation Planning in Tompkins County

In 1992, the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (ITCTC) was formed to serve as the local MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) for the Ithaca-Tompkins Urban Area. An MPO is an agency that plans and programs federal surface transportation funding for areas with urban populations of 50,000 or more, as required by the 1974 Federal Aid Highway Act. The ITCTC has a three-tiered structure consisting of the Transportation Policy Committee, the Transportation Planning Committee, and the Central Staff. The Policy Committee is the final MPO decision-making authority consisting of local government and stakeholder representatives. The Planning Committee coordinates transportation planning activities from a technical standpoint and makes recommendations to the Policy Committee. The ITCTC staff manages the day-to-day operations of the agency. The planning area for the ITCTC includes all of Tompkins County.

## What is the Long-Range Transportation Plan?

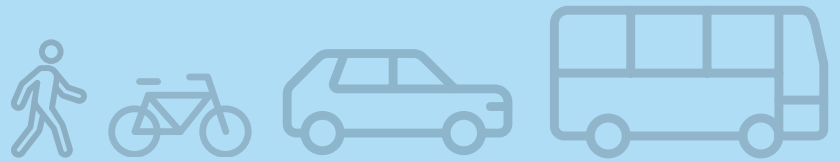
Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), also called Metropolitan Transportation Plans, are federally mandated 20-year plans for transportation systems and programs. The ITCTC's LRTP is updated and revised every 5 years in order to reflect population growth, land-use changes, new technologies, transportation trends, and to adjust for changes in local, state, or federal laws and regulations.

The plan considers current and potential future trends, anticipates change, and provides specific guidance for prospective legislative and administrative actions. It reflects the results of community engagement, technical analysis, and the judgment of decision-makers. The maps, goals and objectives of the plan provide the framework for policy, programs and services that serve the travelers in Tompkins County.

### The 2040 LRTP is organized into three basic components:

- **Introduction**, including the executive summary, the MPO's organizational structure, community data profile and summary of the community engagement process
- **Topical chapters** which contain goals and objectives, an overview of existing and future transportation demand and system resources, and a list of planned and desired transportation projects
- **Supporting documents** consist of a series of appendices, including the Tompkins County priority trails strategy, a glossary of terms, a chronological list of transportation plans and reports from the community, and a summary of public comments and responses





## Chapter 1: The Plan Goals and Objectives

This chapter presents the vision for the 2040 LRTP through a series of goals and objectives. The plan embraces the concept of Sustainable Accessibility, which views transportation systems as mobility networks that meet the needs of all travelers while addressing congestion, equity, energy and environmental concerns. The LRTP highlights eight primary goals/guiding principles for Tompkins County;

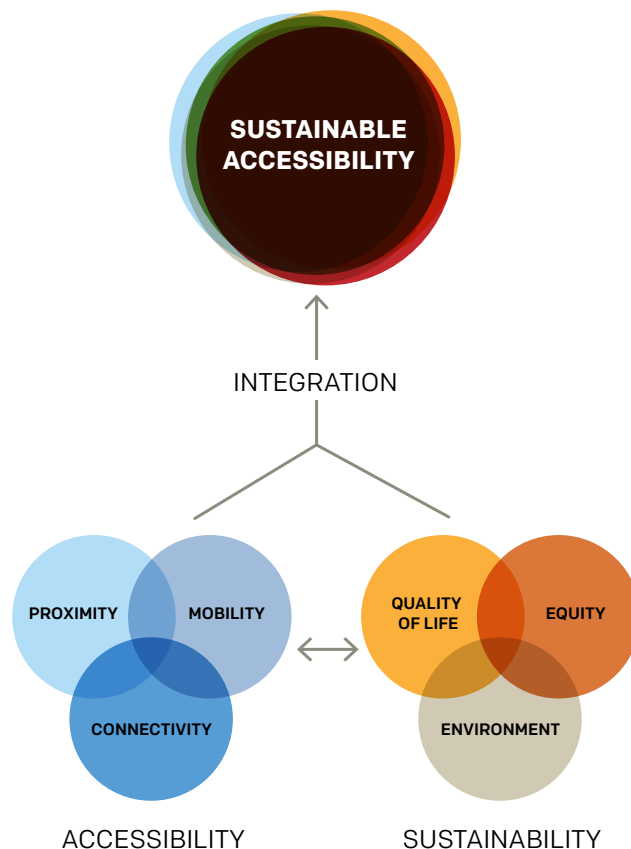
- **Sustainable accessibility** – the overall goal of the plan. Aims for a transportation system that is sustainable, equitable, and efficient
- **Mobility** - as a means of increasing connectivity between different modes,
- **Connectivity** - as a means of linking more modes and thereby more people to more destinations
- **Proximity** - as a means of fostering land development that connects people to multimodal transportation opportunities
- **Coordination of accessibility components** - as a means of creating multimodal cooperative partnerships that facilitate seamless connections between modes
- **Equity** - to ensure quality access for all people
- **Quality of life** - as a means of ensuring that the transportation sector contributes positively to the many factors that affect the living environment and well-being of a community
- **Environment** - to create a transportation system that has a net-zero impact on the environment

### Action Plan for Sustainable Accessibility

LRTP Action Plan narrows the action areas for transportation initiatives that will help achieve the plan's goals and objectives. There are three main action areas: maintaining existing transportation infrastructure and systems; expanding and promoting multimodal options and integration; and fostering inter-agency cooperation in the transportation sector.

### Performance Based Planning

Federal regulations require that MPOs participate in a performance-based planning process and specify seven national performance goals: safety; capital assets condition; congestion reduction; system reliability; freight movement and economic vitality; environmental sustainability; and reduced project delivery delays. The LRTP includes a System Performance Report addressing performance goals and targets. The ITCTC goes beyond federal minimum requirements and tracks data on several other transportation factors of importance to Tompkins County. These are reported in the ITCTC Objectives and Performance Measures table, p.22-23.



## Chapter 2: the Transportation Demand Overview

Chapter 2 summarizes the demographic, employment, economic, travel trend, traffic incident, and congestion characteristics of Tompkins County. It describes what are the main factors affecting the demand for transportation services. It highlights the importance of the educational sector as the region's primary employer and housing market driver. College students comprise 30% of the county's population, thereby creating substantial seasonal fluctuations in transportation demand and services. While this plan focuses primarily on work-based trips due to their disproportionate impacts on congestion, it also recognizes that they consist of only 20% of the county's total trips. The other 80% of trips are recreational, shopping, and social in nature. This chapter shows that the total overall mode share is still largely oriented towards single occupancy motor vehicles (61.3%) when compared to other modes: carpooling (9.4%), walking (14.2%), public transit (6.5%), and bicycling (1.64%). The plan aims to reverse this trend by prioritizing alternatives to private motor vehicle use.

While total county vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has increased, overall traffic fatalities have gone down due to improvements in road safety management and driver education. When it comes to congestion, this chapter concludes that shifting even a small percentage of the county's population over from single-passenger vehicles to other transportation modes would help alleviate congestion, especially at key choke-points. The plan also recognizes the importance of equity considerations in the transportation sector. Minority and low-income communities have reduced access to cars and are more dependent on other modes, particularly walking and transit.

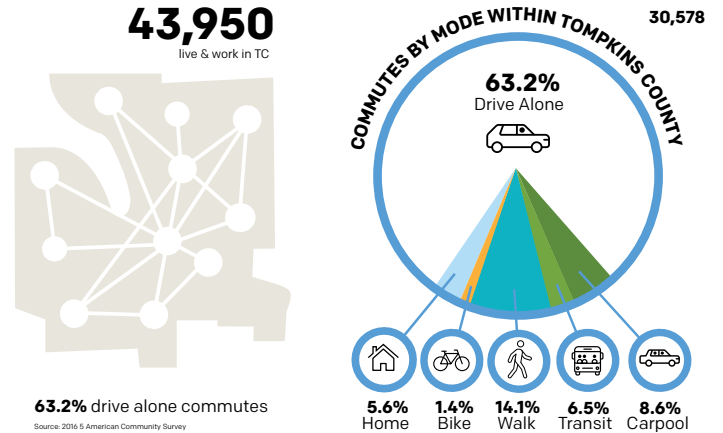
## Chapter 3: The Transportation System

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the existing transportation system in Tompkins County. It includes data and discussions on numerous topics and describes steps needed to advance the plan's ultimate goal of Sustainable Accessibility.

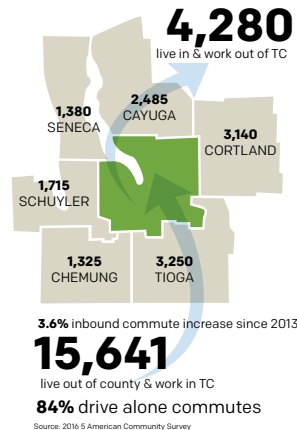
Included in this chapter:

- Roadway network data and classifications, p. 49
- Bridge and bridge conditions – maps and analysis, p.53
- Transit – data, maps and analysis, p.56
- Paratransit and Shared Transportation, p.59
- Coordinated Planning – public transit and human services transportation, p.60
- Intercity Bus Service, p.60
- Multimodal/Intermodal facilities – freight, travel service, p. 61
- Non-motorized transportation facilities – bicycle, pedestrian – maps, analysis, p. 64
- Multiuse trails - map, p.69
- Parking facilities – map and discussion, p.70
- Complete Streets Network – map and analysis, p.71
- Environmental Concerns – emissions, land use, impacts on natural environments, historic resources and scenic resources – maps and analysis, p.72
- Community collaborations – analysis, p.81

### TOMPKINS COUNTY COMMUTER FLOW

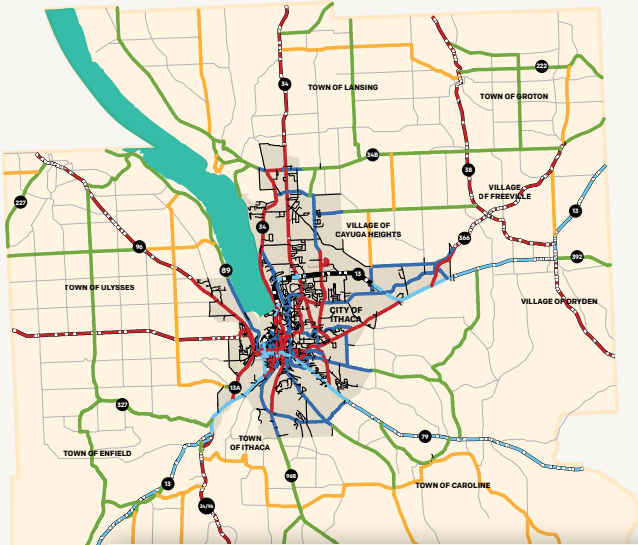


2.5% outbound commute decrease since 2013



- Looking to the Future - ITCTC's long-term vision for shifting travel modes away from single-occupant vehicles towards more sustainable transportation options, including public transit, walking, and cycling – analysis and graphics, p. 82
- Safety Element – analysis and federal requirements, p. 85
- Financial Element - including estimates of federal highway and transit funding managed by the ITCTC to finance both existing and future transportation needs, p. 88.

**2010 TOMPKINS COUNTY HIGHWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM COUNTY WIDE**



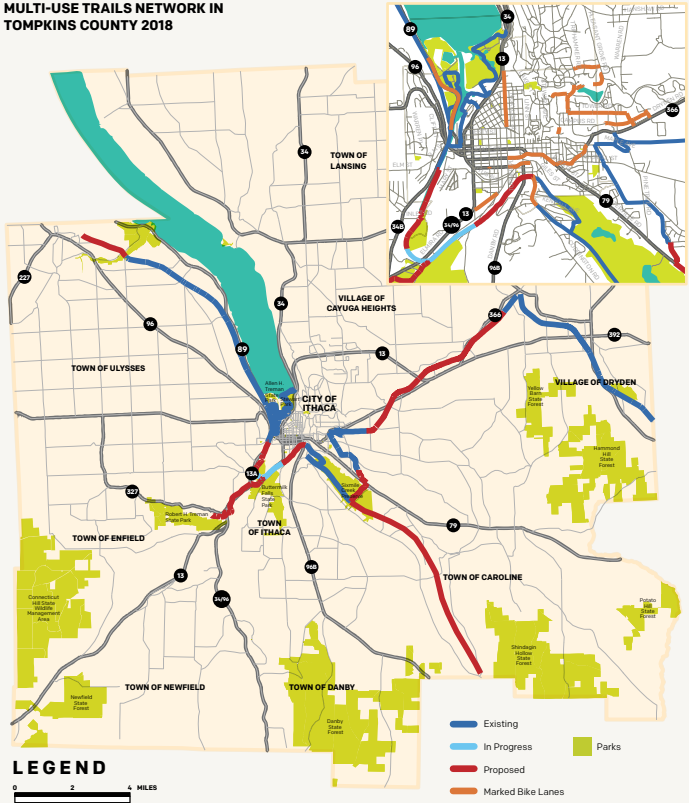
**LEGEND**

**TOMPKINS COUNTY INTERMODAL FACILITIES 2018**



- InterCity Bus Stop
- Intermodal Bus Stop
- Park and Ride
- Airport
- Rail Yard

**MULTI-USE TRAILS NETWORK IN TOMPKINS COUNTY 2018**



**LEGEND**

0 2 4 MILES  
SCALE

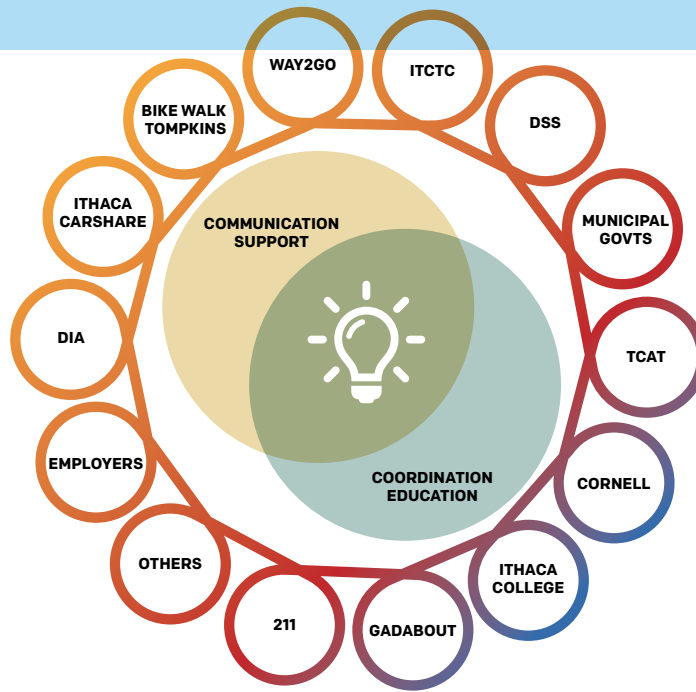
- Existing
- In Progress
- Proposed
- Marked Bike Lanes
- Parks

**Looking to the Future**

Experience and analysis show that in the transportation sector there is no single solution to meet the needs of all travelers. Every person has individual needs and although it will be possible to serve many with particular services such as fixed route transit, there will always be some that are left out and will need different strategies to meet their needs. There is also an operational imperative to increase safety and help reduce negative impacts to our communities and the environment. In summary, the ITCTC's action plan seeks to meet the transportation challenges in our community by maintaining existing infrastructure and systems, expanding and promoting multi-modal mobility, and expanding community collaboration for transportation demand management, mobility services, education and promotion.

## Collaborations

The key to success for maintaining and building a world-class transportation system in Tompkins County revolves around cultivating collaborative partnerships across different citizen groups and government agencies. Throughout the county's history, successful programs like Gadabout, TCAT, Ithaca Carshare, Way2Go, Finger Lakes Rideshare and others have been created by bringing together government agencies, institutions of higher education, civic groups and interested citizens to work on solutions. As a result, Tompkins County offers an unusually rich menu of transportation options for a small upstate NY urban



area. Despite its size and missing the economies of scale of larger urban areas, Ithaca-Tompkins County transportation providers and planners have worked together to improve service efficiency and take advantage of all available funding opportunities. The ITCTC will continue to lead in efforts to forge strong partnerships and coalitions in the transportation sector.

## Chapter 4: Projects for Implementation

Chapter 4 expands on the previous chapter with an overview of completed, ongoing, and proposed projects under consideration in Tompkins County. Between 2014 and 2019, several projects and initiatives have been successfully implemented, including:

- Back Up Ride Home Program - a safety net for people who do not commute via a personal automobile
- Bike Sharing through Lime Bike
- Finger Lakes Rideshare Program
- Travel Demand Management program through the Downtown Ithaca Alliance
- Study of Electric Vehicle Technology Adoption – Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure plan; EV promotion and installation of 11 electric vehicle charging stations.
- TCAT Transit Operational Improvements & Customer Information System – technology needs assessment and implementation

Currently there are several ongoing transportation studies in the community including:

- Center for Community Transportation Bicycle Blueprint – 2019-2020
- City of Ithaca 2019-2020 Parking Study
- City of Ithaca Transportation Plan
- TCAT Transit Development Plan
- Downtown Ithaca Alliance 2030 Downtown Plan
- Tompkins County – Route 13 Corridor Study
- Downtown Ithaca Alliance 2030 Downtown Plan

## YOUR EVERYDAY TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS WITHIN TOMPKINS COUNTY

## Appendices

The plan includes four Appendices:

- Tompkins Priority Trails Strategy - plan to expand and connect five major multiuse trails in Tompkins County
- Glossary of Transportation Acronyms, Definitions and Web Sites
- Inventory of Transportation Documents - inventories 157 county planning documents, studies and plans going back to 1969
- Summary of Comments and Responses - includes all the public feedback that the ITCTC received on the LRTP.

## Contact Information and Access to the Plan

For more information about the 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan please contact us as follows:

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

121 E. Court St.

Ithaca, NY 14850

Email: [itctc@tom-pkins-co.org](mailto:itctc@tom-pkins-co.org)

Phone: 607-274-5570

[www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc)

The plan may be viewed online at: [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc/lrtp](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc/lrtp)





Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council  
121 E. Court St.  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
607-274-5570  
Email: [itctc@tompkins-co.org](mailto:itctc@tompkins-co.org)  
Phone: 607-274-5570  
[www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc)

